

Comparative study:
Conservation areas of Ku-ring-gai
and Sydney's suburbs



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Illustration: Killara and development along the north shore rail line looking south in 1933-34.
(Source: State Library, <https://collection.sl.nsw.gov.au/record/nGm303jY>)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Heritage conservation areas demonstrate more than just an aesthetic character or streetscapes. From the inner city, across west, east, south and north Sydney, the identified heritage conservation areas provide evidence of the history of Sydney's planning and development. Through their surviving cohesion, these heritage precincts tell the story of Sydney's settlement from key periods, perhaps better than any individual site. Historic areas like those found in Ku-ring-gai specifically demonstrate the process of suburbanisation, arguably one of the most important in Australia's European development history – to the extent that Sydney has been described as the 'City of Suburbs'.

More than just housing or architecture, historic areas demonstrate important shifts in Australia's governance, technology, economy and society. Sydney's heritage conservation areas demonstrate key historic changes of European settlement that formed greater Sydney – from a penal colony to Australian federation, from city plague to city beautification, from rental to home ownership, from inner city to suburbs, as well as changes in population migration and education. Concentrated areas of historic housing document the extension of important transport routes from rivers to trams, bridges, rail and roads. Historic areas of housing also embody the changing aspirations of Australian society for living and home ownership, perhaps best known from the twentieth century as the 'great Australian dream'.

Each heritage conservation area demonstrates its own part in this broader development of Sydney, with an identity particular to its locality and historic period. The surviving unity of heritage conservation areas is no accident, but the result of key historic influences, their original planning and development, and subsequent community value and protection.

A comparison of Ku-ring-gai's southern conservation areas with other Sydney conservation areas has revealed that Ku-ring-gai has no equal for demonstrating the development of Sydney's suburbs during the twentieth century in three aspects. These are the cohesive and intact Federation and inter-war housing patterns with relatively little Victorian or inter-war flat layers, the singular pattern of development along the spine of the rail line, and the high proportion of architect designed dwellings.



Above: Killara, Locksley Street, in 1915 (Source: Ku-ring-gai local history collection)

BACKGROUND

Purpose

While acknowledging every heritage conservation area contributes to the history and identity of its locality, this comparative analysis seeks to establish the relative merit of heritage conservation areas in Ku-ring-gai compared to others in greater Sydney. This seeks to provide an overview and evidence base for comparisons with Ku-ring-gai's areas, not a detailed review of all areas. This analysis focuses on suburban Sydney with the most comparable European development patterns to Ku-ring-gai.

Methodology

This comparative study was prepared by Dr Kirrily Sullivan, Heritage Research Assistant, with oversight by Claudine Loffi, Heritage Specialist Planner, for Ku-ring-gai Council in 2024. It commenced with a review of references on the history of Sydney's development. Comparable local government areas and their conservation areas were then reviewed according to period, typology and influences, as follows.

1. Thematic history:
 - References reviewed on Sydney's planning and development for historic context.
 - Key historic themes and influences identified with a focus on Sydney's suburbs.
2. Sydney heritage conservation areas review:
 - Sydney's listed heritage conservation areas identified through NSW Planning Portal.
 - Area information reviewed from Council assessment, primarily in Development Control Plans and on the State Heritage Inventory.
 - Predominant housing periods mapped for the heritage conservation areas.
3. Identified conservation areas of similar period and typology to Ku-ring-gai:
 - Including Federation or inter-war single family dwellings and gardens.
 - Excluding areas with a high proportion of Victorian and/or inter-war flat development.
 - Excluding areas with a high proportion of workers' cottages, timber housing, semi-detached dwellings, terraced housing, inter-war flats.
4. Local government areas compared for similarities and differences:
 - Key points of difference and similarity identified between conservation areas of Ku-ring-gai and other Sydney local government areas.
 - Local government areas identified below as somewhat comparable to Ku-ring-gai.
5. Comparisons table:
 - Identified the key types and distribution of development and architecture, plus key development influences and infrastructure.
 - Identified the local government areas with conservation areas comparable to those in Ku-ring-gai in terms of key historic dwelling types and periods including:
 - Burwood – 3 areas
 - Strathfield – 6 areas
 - Inner West – 3 areas
 - Canada Bay – 5 areas
 - Mosman – 5 areas
 - North Sydney – 2 areas
 - Randwick – 4 areas
 - Waverley – 4 areas
 - Woollahra – 4 areas

KILLARA HEIGHTS

A DELIGHTFUL POSITION FOR SUBURBAN RESIDENCES ON THE
NORTH SHORE RAILWAY LINE
only 5 minutes walk from Killara Station
 GENTLY SLOPING PARK LIKE SITES

FOR PRIVATE SALE BY
CHAPMAN & HAZLEWOOD
 Property Agents
 127 KING ST

Special Advantages
 Large Blocks all fronting Government Roads
 Excellent Drainage Facilities.
 Gas and City water available.
 Altitude of 400 feet above sea level.
 Surrounded by Superior Residential Properties.

LOCAL SKETCH

TERMS
 10 PER CENT CASH DEPOSIT
 Balance at 6, 12, 18 and 24 months
 with interest at 5 per cent.

Above: Killara subdivision (undated)
 (Source: State Library, <https://collection.sl.nsw.gov.au/record/74VvqLNPNgQX>)



Above Killara, Arnold Street, and station in approximately 1933-34.
 (Source: State Library, <https://collection.sl.nsw.gov.au/record/nGm3O3jY>)

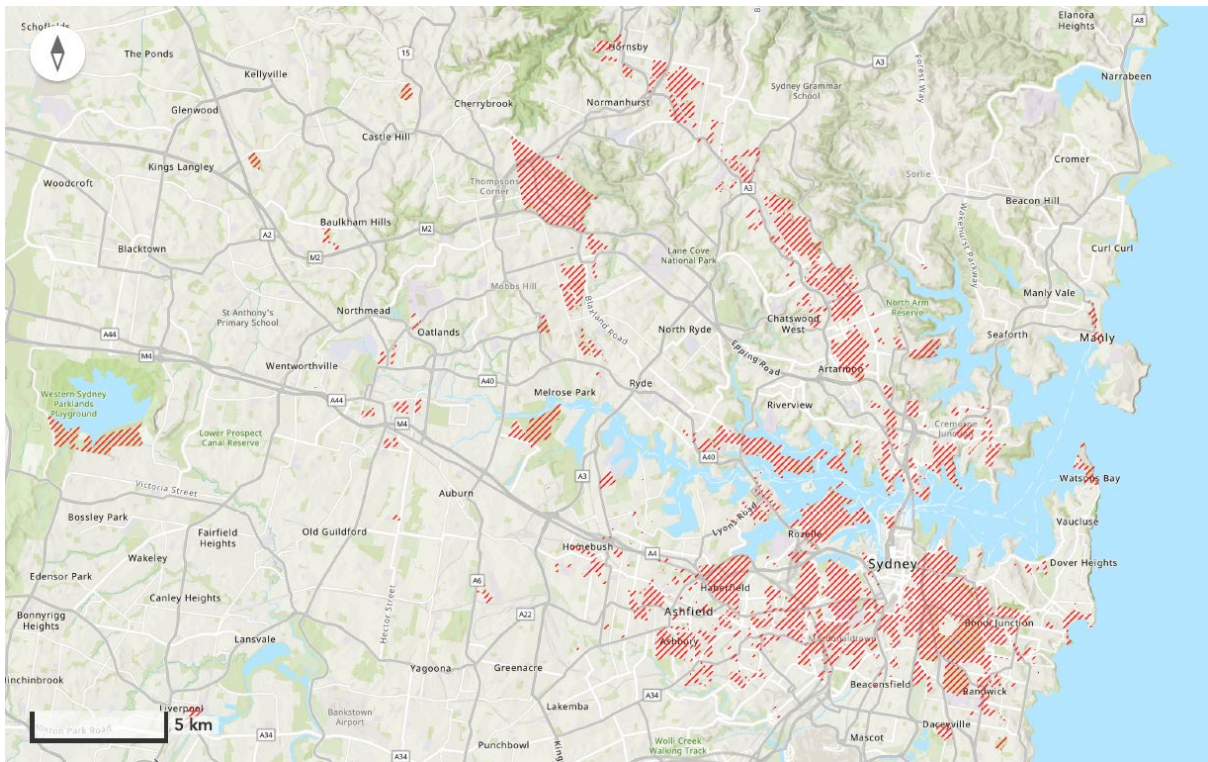
MAPPING: CONSERVATION AREA OVERVIEW

The following maps provide an overview of the heritage conservation areas of Sydney, developed for housing during the nineteenth and first half of the twentieth century. By their location and predominant period of development, these identified heritage conservation areas demonstrate the early patterns of Sydney's European settlement. These areas also mark the core areas of Sydney's historic settlement that have survived with sufficient value and integrity for recognition as heritage. For more detail on these areas, refer to the relevant council for the available information.

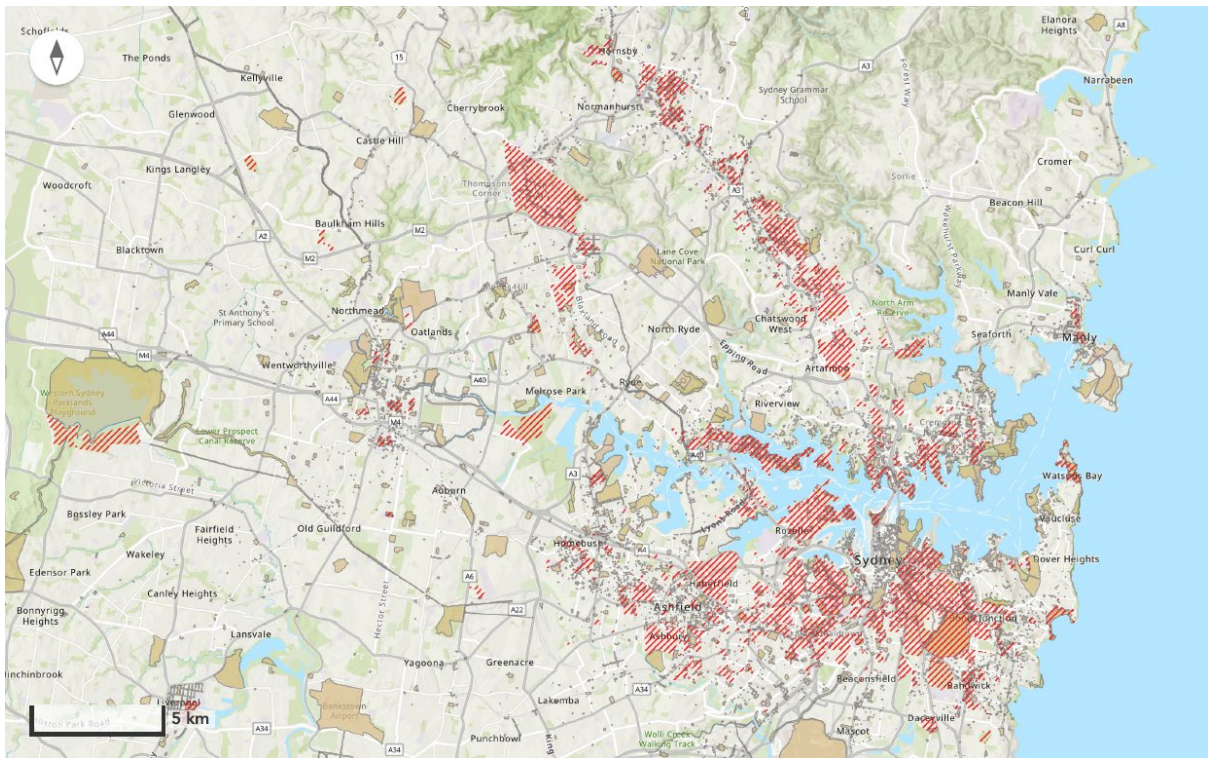
Many more unlisted historic areas have since been redeveloped and are therefore unrecognisable from the historical period or did not have the same original value to merit listing in the first instance. Some further areas may also have a built form and history of potential merit that is simply unrecognised and unprotected due to the lack of statutory heritage listing. These are sometimes identified in other ways, such as a 'character area' or a National Trust urban conservation area, however are not included in this study because they do not have the same confirmation of heritage significance and certainty for conserving the built form as with statutory heritage listing as a heritage conservation area.

Heritage items identify places of individual heritage value. While not the focus of this study, some heritage item listings for large or connected sites can indicate historic precincts in another form, typically for public parks or sites, such as Parramatta Park and the city Macquarie Street row of public buildings. Where areas and item listings overlap, this indicates a conservation area contains places of both individual and collective heritage value. The heritage items outside of areas are shown in some maps below for context.

Sydney overall – Heritage listings

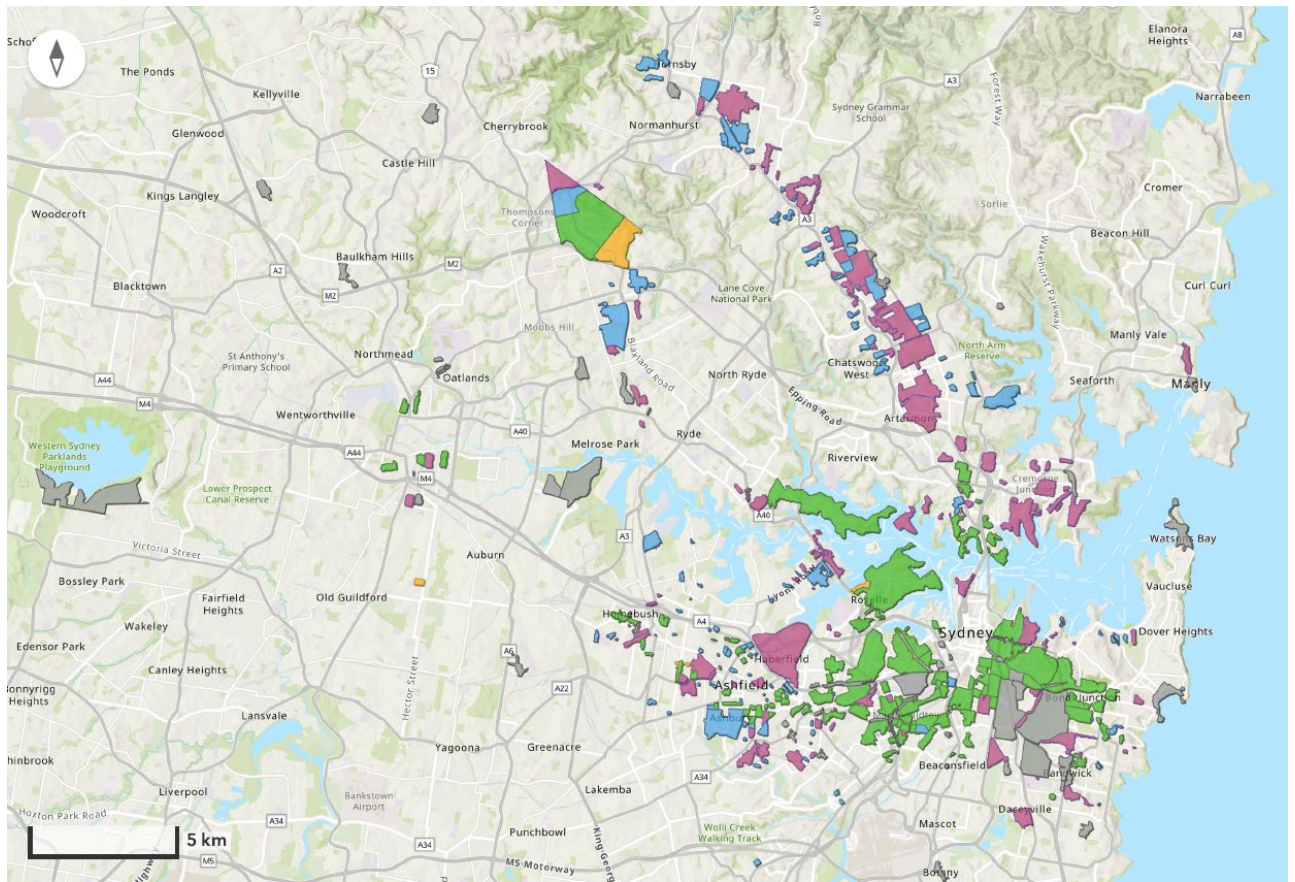


Above: Sydney's conservation areas listed on local plans, hatched red. A few conservation areas are located outside of the boundaries of this map. (Map: Ku-ring-gai Council)

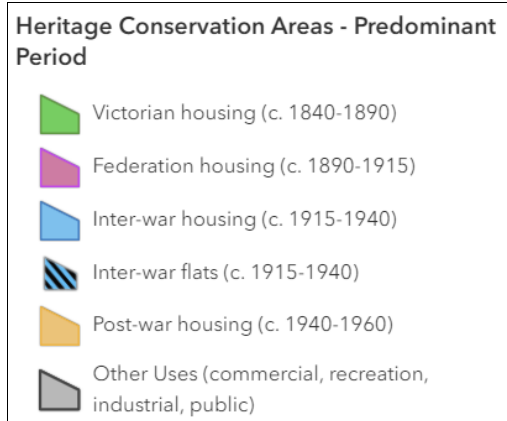


Above: Sydney's conservation areas plus nearby heritage items, shaded brown, listed on local plans. (Map: Ku-ring-gai Council)

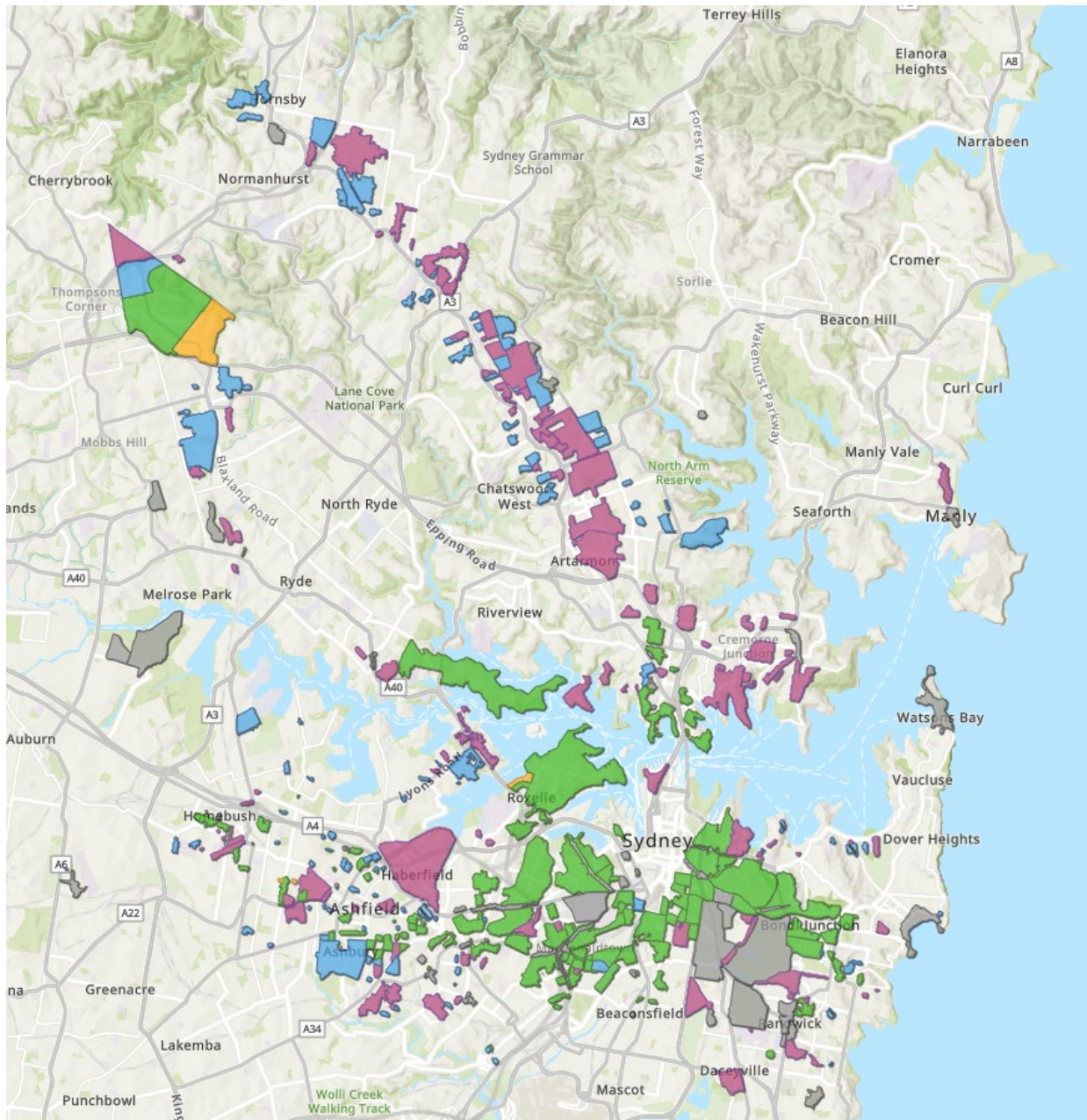
Sydney overall – Housing periods



Above: Predominant housing period of Sydney’s heritage conservation areas. Refer to the key below for the housing period or other category. Southern Sydney outside of the map is shown separately below. (Map: Ku-ring-gai Council)

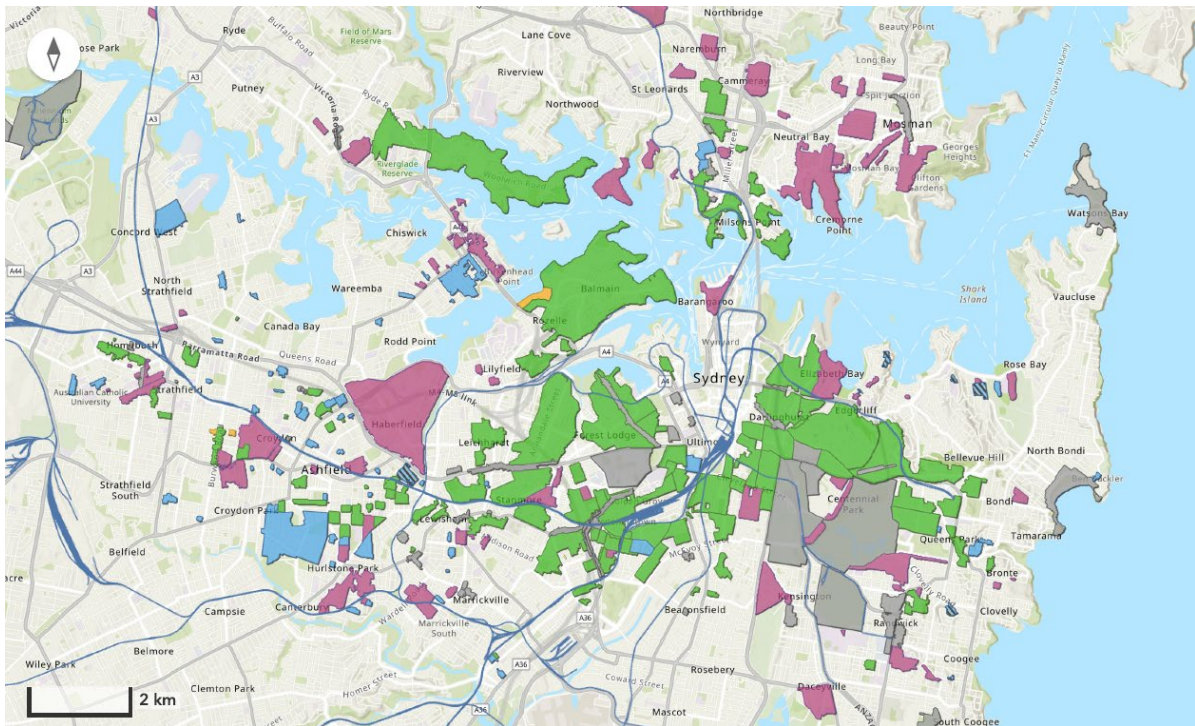


North and South of Sydney Harbour



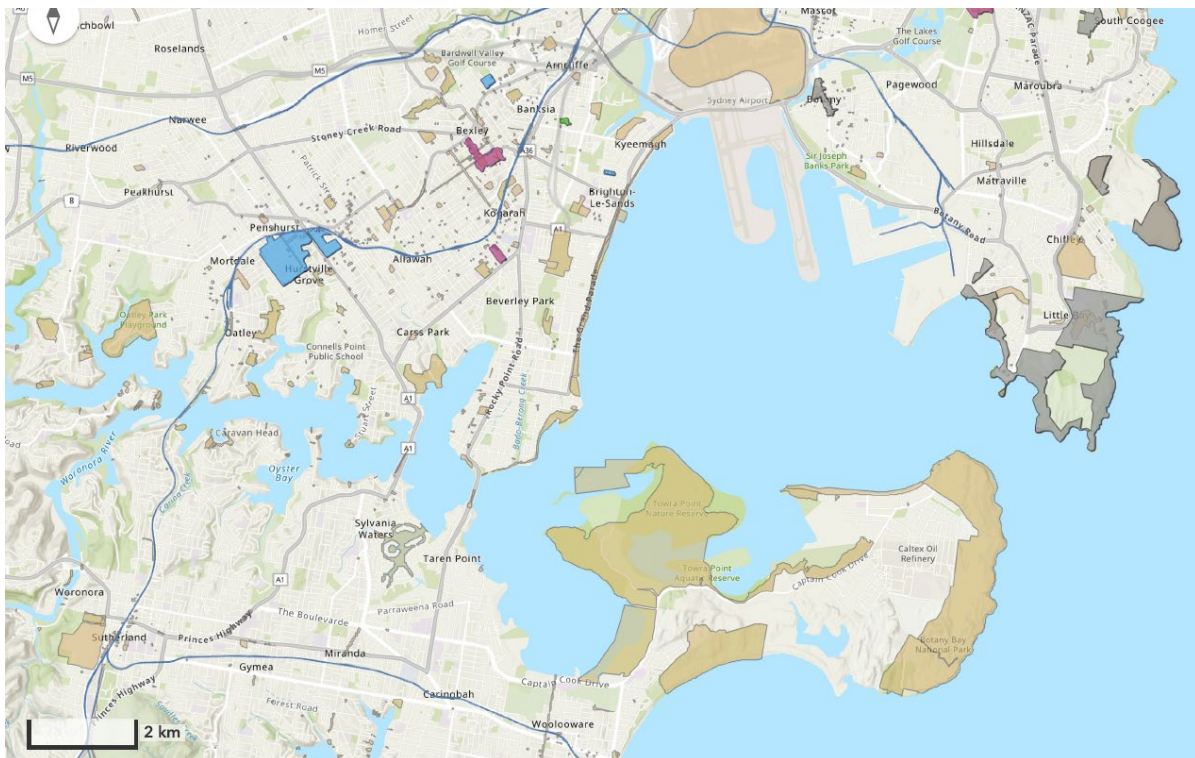
Above: Predominant housing period of Sydney's heritage conservation areas north and south of Sydney Harbour. (Map: Ku-ring-gai Council)

Sydney Harbour surrounds detail



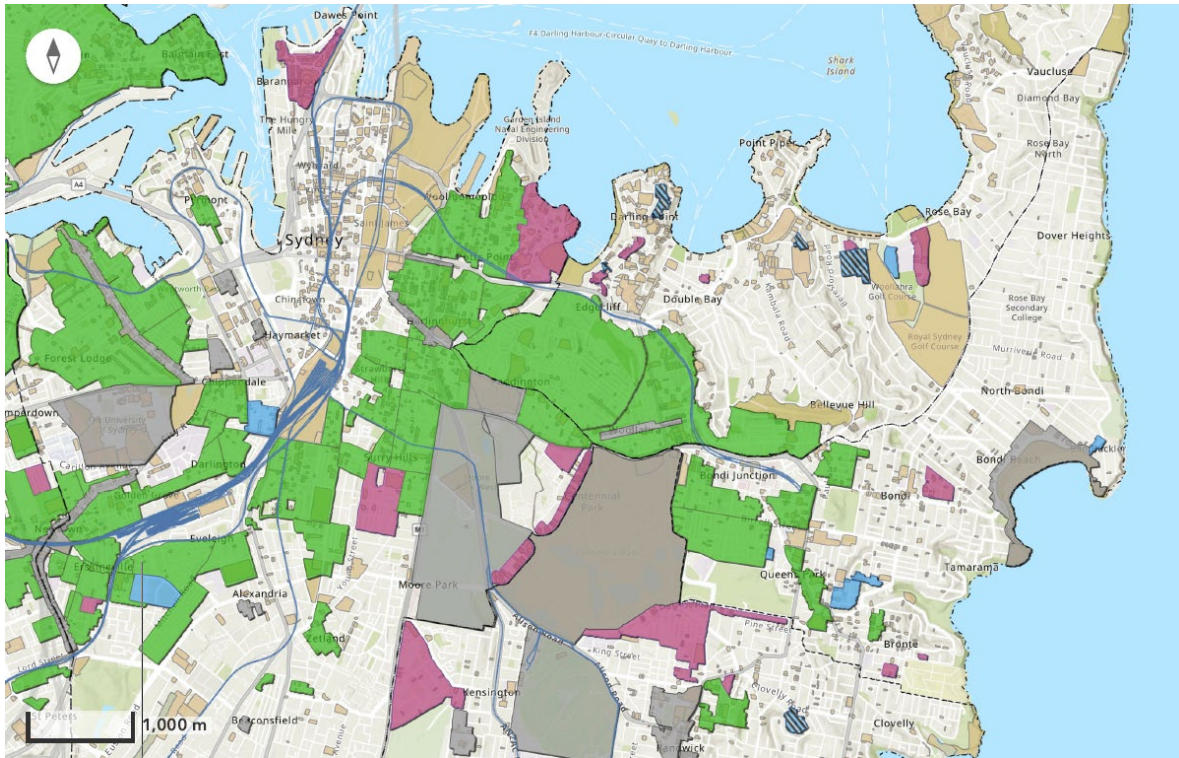
Above: Predominant housing period of heritage conservation areas around Sydney Harbour and south of Sydney Harbour. (Map: Ku-ring-gai Council)

Southern Sydney detail



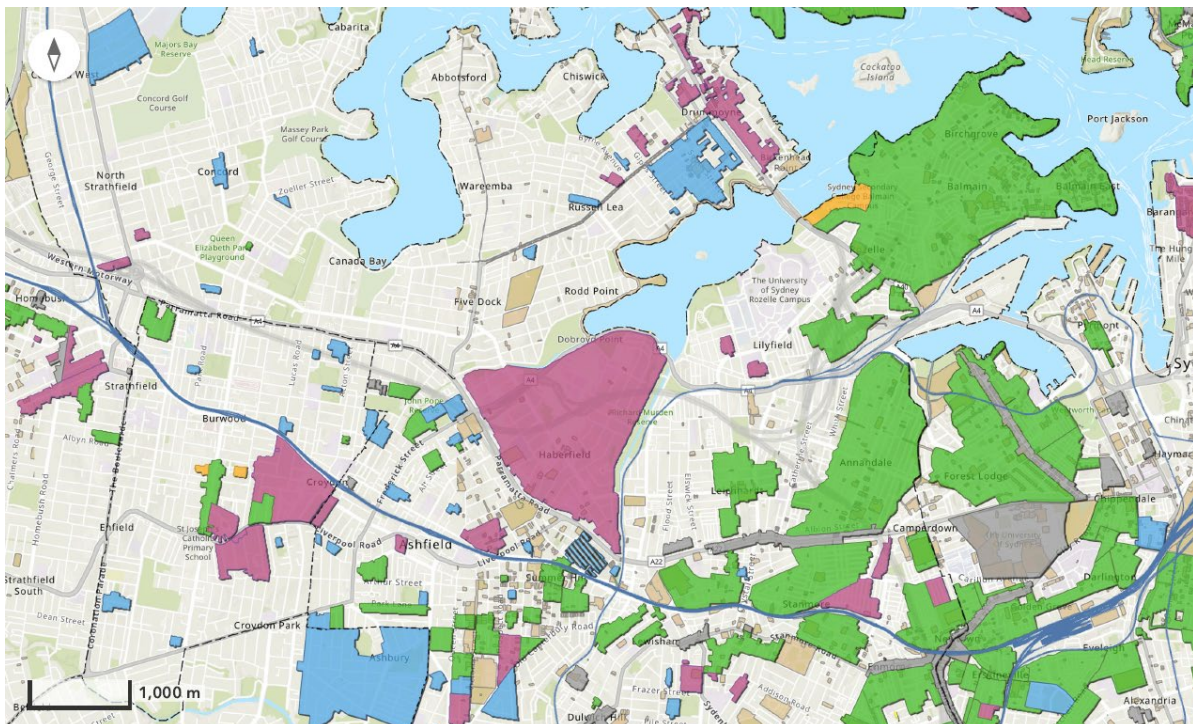
Above: Predominant housing period of Southern Sydney's heritage conservation areas, plus heritage items shaded brown. (Map source: Ku-ring-gai Council)

Inner and Eastern Sydney detail



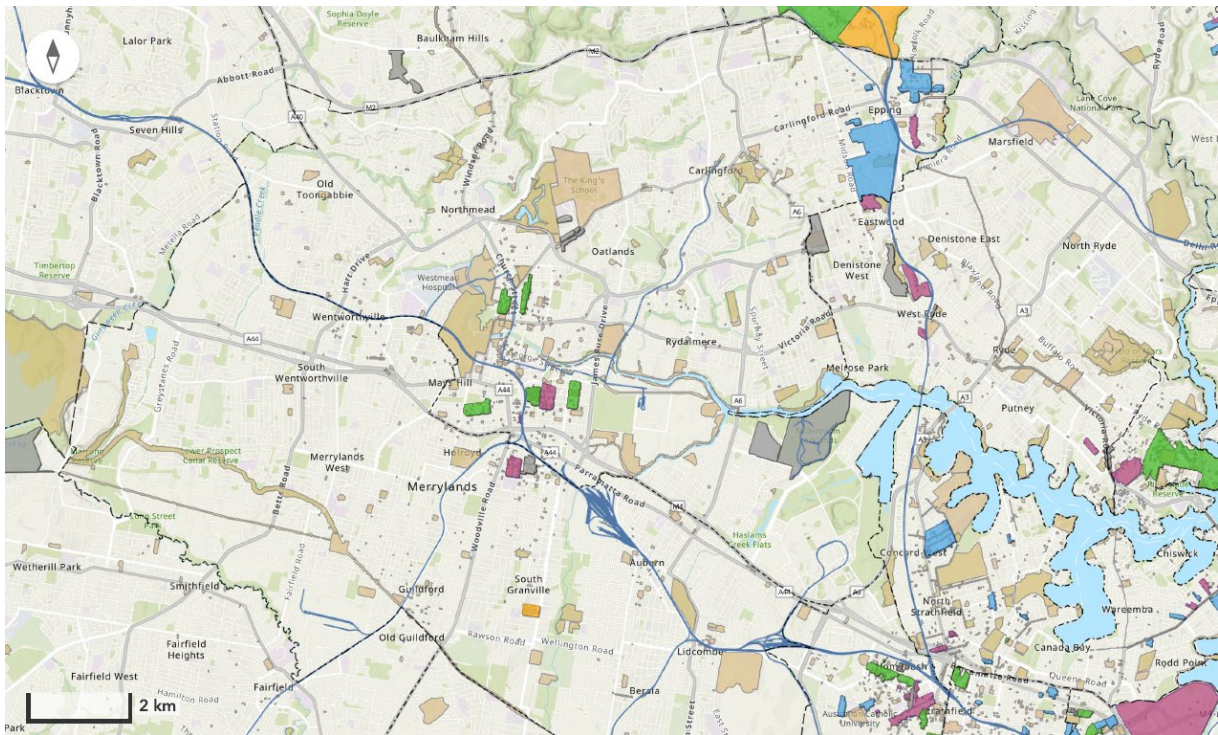
Above: Predominant housing period of Inner and Eastern Sydney's heritage conservation areas, plus heritage items shaded brown. (Map source: Ku-ring-gai Council)

Inner West Sydney detail



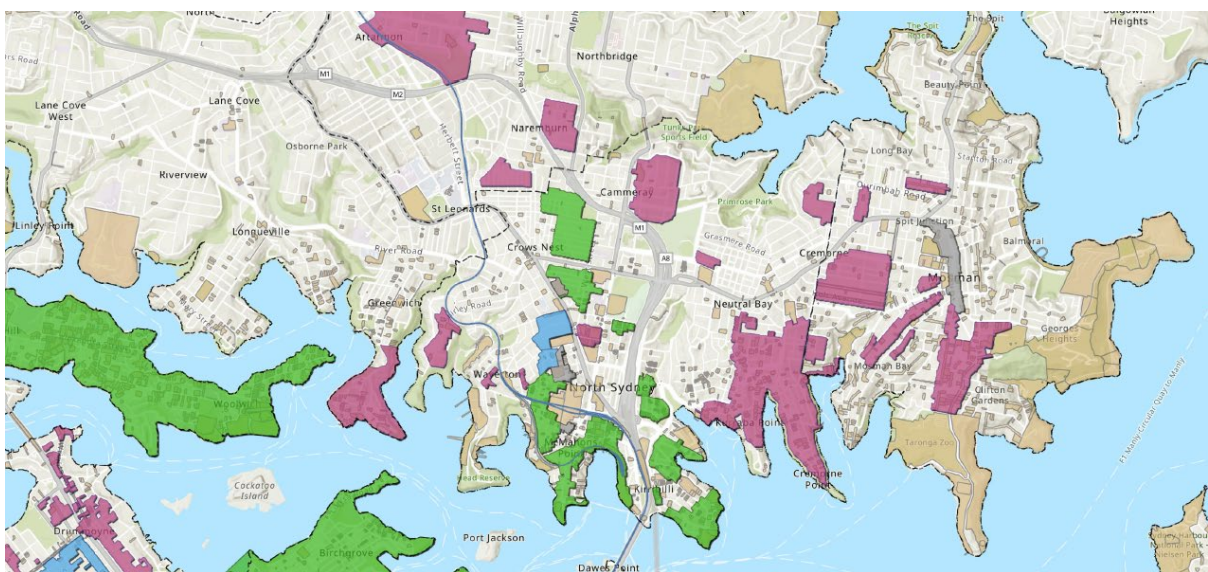
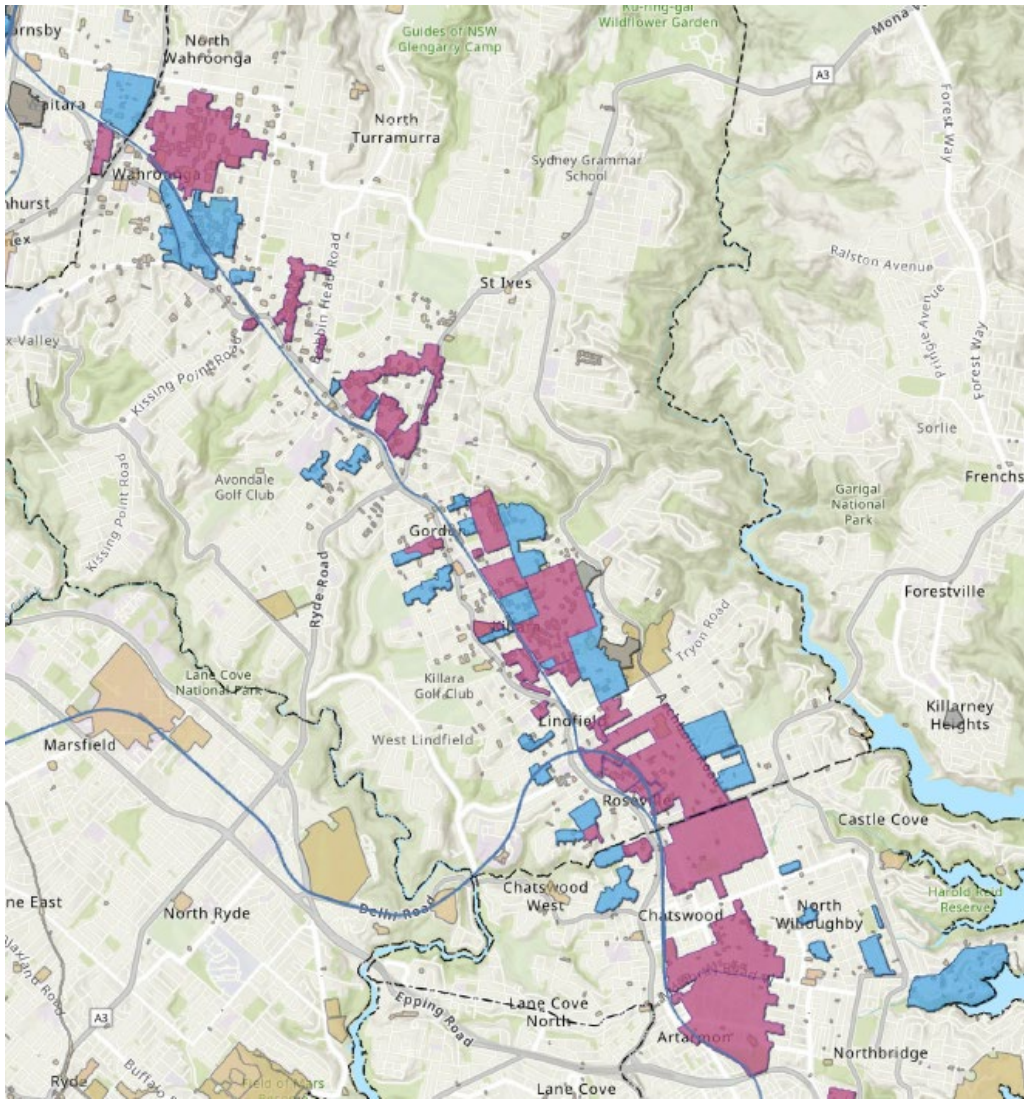
Above: Predominant housing period of Inner West's heritage conservation areas, plus heritage items shaded brown. (Map source: Ku-ring-gai Council)

Western Sydney detail



Above: Predominant housing period of Western Sydney's heritage conservation areas, plus heritage items shaded brown. (Map source: Ku-ring-gai Council)

North shore detail



Above: Predominant housing period of conservation areas of the upper north shore (top) and lower north shore (bottom), plus heritage items shaded brown. (Map: Ku-ring-gai Council)

COMPARISON TABLE: CONSERVATION AREAS IN SYDNEY

HOUSING TYPE AND DISTRIBUTION – PART A				
LGA - KEY FEDERATION HCAs	TYOLOGIES - DWELLINGS	TYOLOGIES – OTHER	MAIN EARLY HOUSING PERIOD	OTHER SIGNIFICANT DEVELOPMENT PERIODS
KU-RING-GAI HCAs of Roseville Lindfield Killara Gordon	1-2 storey single family dwellings	Churches Schools Shops Recreational facilities	Federation	Inter-war
BURWOOD Appian Way Badminton Road Malvern Hill	1-2 storey single family dwellings 2-3 storey apartment buildings	Churches Schools Shops	Victorian Federation	Inter-war
STRATHFIELD Albert Road Broughton Road Churchill Avenue Homebush Road Pair Queen Anne Redmyre Road	1-2 storey single family dwellings 2-3 storey apartment buildings	Churches Schools Shops	Victorian Federation	Inter-war Post-war
INNER WEST Haberfield Croydon – Ivanhoe Estate, Gads Hill	1 storey single family dwellings Semi-detached dwellings	Churches Schools Shops	Victorian Federation	Inter-war
CANADA BAY Birkenhead & Dawson Estates Bourketown Drummoyne Park Salisbury Thompson	1 storey single family dwellings Semi-detached dwellings	Commercial buildings Schools Churches Civic	Victorian Inter-war	Federation
MOSMAN Bradleys Head Road The Crescent Holt Estate Raglan Street Shadforth Street	1-2 storey single family dwellings Semi-detached dwellings	Churches Schools	Federation	Post-war
NORTH SYDNEY Cremorne Cremorne Point	1-2 storey single family dwellings 2-3 storey apartment buildings	Churches	Federation	Victorian Inter-war
WAVERLEY Blenheim Street Brighton Blvd Brown Street Imperial Avenue	1-2 storey single family dwellings Terraces, semis 2-3 storey apartment buildings	Commercial buildings Schools Churches Civic	Victorian Inter-war	Federation
WOOLLAHRA Etham Avenue Mona Road Balfour Estate Kent Road	1-2 storey single family dwellings Terraces, semis 2-3 storey apartment buildings	Recreational facilities	Victorian Inter-war	Federation

HOUSING TYPE AND DISTRIBUTION – PART B

LGA - KEY FEDERATION HCASs	KEY DEVELOPMENT MILESTONES	SCALE & GROUPING	ARCHITECTURAL STYLES	ARCHITECTS WORKS REPRESENTED
KU-RING-GAI HCAs of Roseville Lindfield Killara Gordon	1890-1905 Subdivision boom to create residential estates after the railway expansion	Approx # properties -	Federation – Queen Anne, Free style, Arts & Crafts, Bungalow Inter-war – Georgian Revival, Mediterranean, Spanish Mission, Art Deco, Old English, California Bungalow	W Hardy Wilson ET Blacket Thomas Cosh Thomas J Darling Oliver Harley Kent, Budden & Greenwell J Aubrey Kerr Neave & Barry James Peddle Peddle & Thorpe Robertson & Marks Spain & Cosh Waterhouse & Lake BJ Waterhouse Leslie Wilkinson Douglas Agnew Augustus Aley John Brogan AJ Brown Budden & Greenwell James Thomson Chambers Bruce Dellit Clifford Finch Carlyle Greenwell Walter Burley Griffin Greenwell & Shirley F Glynn Gilling AHA Hanson Joseland & Gilling Leith McCreadie CC Ruwald Sydney Ancher Neville Gruzman Russell Jack John James Geoffrey Lumsdaine Ian Mackay Ancher Mortlock Glen Murcutt Bruce Rickard Harry Seidler John Suttor

LGA - KEY FEDERATION HCASs	KEY DEVELOPMENT MILESTONES	SCALE & GROUPING	ARCHITECTURAL STYLES	ARCHITECTS WORKS REPRESENTED
BURWOOD Appian Way Badminton Road Malvern Hill	1903-1911 Land for Appian Way & Malvern Hill purchased 1903 and houses constructed	Approx # properties – Appian Way 37 Malvern Hill 200	Federation – Queen Anne, Free style, Arts & Crafts, Bungalow Nb. sold as homes already designed and/or built	William Richards (master builder) designed and built the houses in Appian Way
STRATHFIELD Albert Road Broughton Road Churchill Avenue Homebush Road Pair Queen Anne Redmyre Road	1850-1890 First economic boom – wealthy merchants and professionals	Approx # properties – Albert Rd 4 Broughton Rd 4 Churchill Ave 45 Homebush Rd 25 Pr Queen Anne 2 Redmyre Rd 100	Victorian - Italianate Federation – Queen Anne, Free style, Arts & Crafts, Bungalow Inter-war – Art, Deco, California Bungalow	BJ Waterhouse John Lyon Gardiner (builder)
INNER WEST Haberfield Croydon – Ivanhoe Estate, Gads Hill	1875-1915 Sale and subdivision of Govt Farm created suburb of Croydon 1901-1914 Haberfield	Approx # properties – Haberfield 1500 Ivanhoe Estate Gads Hill	Federation – Queen Anne, Free style, Arts & Crafts, Bungalow High quality, modest Nb. sold as homes already designed and/or built (Haberfield)	Haberfield: 1901-04 – D Wormald – early Federation 1905-1914 – John Spencer-Stansfield – Mid-Federation
CANADA BAY Birkenhead & Dawson Estates Bourketown Drummoyne Park Salisbury Thompson		Approx # properties – Birkenhead 250 Bourketown 500 Drummoyne Park 40 Salisbury 6 Thompson 7	Victorian Italianate Federation – Arts & Crafts, Edwardian Inter-war – flats	
MOSMAN Bradleys Head Road The Crescent Holt Estate Raglan Street Shadforth Street		Approx # properties – Bradleys Head Road 250 The Crescent 20 Holt Estate 250 Raglan Street 21 Shadforth Street 240	Federation – Queen Anne, Arts & Crafts, Bungalow – high quality	E. Jefferson Jackson Howard Joseland James Peddle Florence Parsons Waterhouse & Lake John Burcham Clamp J Rutledge Louat

LGA - KEY FEDERATION HCASs	KEY DEVELOPMENT MILESTONES	SCALE & GROUPING	ARCHITECTURAL STYLES	ARCHITECTS WORKS REPRESENTED
NORTH SYDNEY Cremorne Cremorne Point	1890-1925 Neutral Bay Land Co. purchased land and appointed architects to design houses	Approx # properties – Cremorne Cremorne Point	Victorian Federation – Arts and Crafts, Edwardian Inter-war flats	WL Vernon William Wardell
RANDWICK Caerleon Cres Dudley Street St Marks West Kensington		Approx # properties – Caerleon Cres 22 Dudley Street 22 St Marks 70 West Kensington 220	Victorian – workers cottages, terraces Federation – Queen Anne, Arts & Crafts, Inter-war flats	
WAVERLEY Blenheim Street Brighton Blvd Brown Street Imperial Avenue	2-3 storey apartment buildings	Approx # properties – Blenheim Street Brighton Blvd Brown Street Imperial Avenue	Victorian – workers cottages, terraces Federation – Queen Anne, Arts & Crafts, Inter-war flats	
WOOLLAHRA Etham Avenue Mona Road Balfour Estate Kent Road	1900-1920 Subdivision of mansion estates 1920-1935 Construction of flats Conversion of houses to duplexes/triplexes	Approx # properties – Etham Avenue Mona Road Balfour Estate Kent Road	Victorian - terraces Federation – Arts & Crafts, Queen Anne	

INFLUENCES AND ASSOCIATIONS – PART A

LGA - KEY FEDERATION HCAs	KEY INFRASTRUCTURE INFLUENCES	PREDOMINANT EARLY POPULATION BACKGROUND	CHURCHES, SCHOOLS, RELIGION	PLANNING/ GOVERNANCE
KU-RING-GAI HCAs of Roseville Lindfield Killara Gordon	1890 – Opening of the rail line 1890 – Roseville, Lindfield, Gordon Stations opened 1899 – Killara Station opened 1927 - Electrification North Shore line Train timetable built around ferries 1932 – Harbour Bridge opening	Scottish, English	First schools 1823 School at St Johns 1871 Gordon Public School 1896 Barker 1898 Abbotsleigh 1872 St Johns Church Gordon	1906 Shire of Ku-ring-gai 1928 Municipality of Ku-ring-gai
BURWOOD Appian Way Badminton Road Malvern Hill	1855 – Redfern to Parramatta line opened – Burwood Station was one of the initial six stops - opened 1855	Irish, English Post war European	First schools 1869 Burwood Public School 1863 Newington 1888 PLC 1890 MLC 1894 Santa Sabina 1909 Christian Brothers	1874 Municipality of Burwood
STRATHFIELD Albert Road Broughton Road Churchill Avenue Homebush Road Pair Queen Anne Redmyre Road	1855 – Redfern to Parramatta line opened – Strathfield Station opened 1876 (Homebush opened 1855 and made Strathfield accessible	Irish, English Post war European	First schools 1930 Strathfield Public School 1863 Newington 1888 PLC 1890 MLC 1894 Santa Sabina 1909 Christian Brothers	1885 Municipality of Strathfield
INNER WEST Haberfield Croydon – Ivanhoe Estate, Gads Hill	Haberfield on the Abbotsford Tram Line via Leichhardt and Five Dock	Irish, English Post war European	First schools 1884 Croydon Public School 1863 Newington 1888 PLC 1890 MLC 1894 Santa Sabina 1909 Christian Brothers	1871 Municipality of Ashfield

LGA - KEY FEDERATION HCAs	KEY INFRASTRUCTURE INFLUENCES	PREDOMINANT EARLY POPULATION BACKGROUND	CHURCHES, SCHOOLS, RELIGION	PLANNING/ GOVERNANCE
CANADA BAY Birkenhead & Dawson Estates Bourketown Drummoyne Park Salisbury Thompson	1882 – Opening of Iron Cove Bridge	Irish, English Post war European	First schools 1940 Drummoyne Public School	1883 Municipality of Concord 2000 City of Canada Bay (merge Concord & Drummoyne)
MOSMAN Bradleys Head Road The Crescent Holt Estate Raglan Street Shadforth Street	1861 – Ferry services across the harbour established 1870 – Military Rd constructed 1893 – Military Rd tramline opened 1932 – Harbour Bridge opening	English, Scottish	First schools 1880 Mosman Bay Public School	1893 Municipality of Mosman (separated from Borough of St Leonards)
NORTH SYDNEY Cremorne Cremorne Point	1861 – Ferry services across the harbour established 1870 – Military Rd constructed 1893 – Military Rd tramline opened 1911 -Cremorne Pt tram opened 1932 – Harbour Bridge opening	English, Scottish	First schools 1874 North Sydney Public School 1901 Loreto Kirribilli 1903 St Aloysius	1860 North Sydney Council – Borough of East St Leonards
RANDWICK Caerleon Cres Dudley Street St Marks West Kensington	1881 – Tram line opened to Randwick 1883 - Racecourse opened	English, Irish	First schools 1883 Randwick Public School	1859 Municipality of Randwick
WAVERLEY Blenheim Street Brighton Blvd Brown Street Imperial Avenue	1890 – Tram line opened to Waverley	English, Irish	First schools 1879 Waverley Public School 1903 Waverley College	1859 Municipality of Waverley
WOOLLAHRA Etham Avenue Mona Road Balfour Estate Kent Road	1898 – Watsons Bay Tram opened along New South Head Rd	English, Chinese Postwar European & Jewish	First schools 1883 Double Bay Public School 1887 Kambala 1895 Scots College 1942 Moriah College	1860 Municipality of Woollahra

INFLUENCES AND ASSOCIATIONS – PART B

LGA - KEY FEDERATION HCAs	DESIGN CONCEPT INFLUENCE	BUILDING/DESIGN STANDARDS	LOCAL PROGRESS ASSOCIATIONS
<p>KU-RING-GAI HCAs of Roseville Lindfield Killara Gordon</p>	<p>Arts & Crafts Influence (1850-1914) "City Beautiful" UK - Morris, Pugin, Webb, Shaw, Voysey, Lutyens US – Sullivan, Wright, Griffin</p>	<p>Use of the 1919 LGA Act – Residential District Proclamation 1925 - to prohibit flat construction, commercial and industrial development (as per Garden City Movement)</p> <p>Low demand for inter-war flats due to distance from city</p>	<p>Lindfield - 1894 Gordon - 1901 Roseville – NA Killara – 1904</p> <p>Improvement of roads, post, water, sewerage, telephone, transport, schools, agitation for bridge across harbour Many prominent members worked in city - bridge 1902 – Joint Committee of Northern Suburbs PA – including Willoughby – to push for Bridge</p>
<p>BURWOOD Appian Way Badminton Road Malvern Hill</p>	<p>Arts & Crafts Influence (1850-1914) "City Beautiful" UK - Morris, Pugin, Webb, Shaw, Voysey, Lutyens US – Sullivan, Wright, Griffin (Includes central recreation area/tennis courts)</p>		<p>Burwood - 1906</p>
<p>STRATHFIELD Albert Road Broughton Road Churchill Avenue Homebush Road Pair Queen Anne Redmyre Road</p>		<p>Development under the War Service Homes Commission – loans to ex-servicemen – many built in Strathfield</p>	<p>Strathfield - 1908</p>
<p>INNER WEST Haberfield Croydon – Ivanhoe Estate, Gads Hill</p>	<p>Garden City Movement 1898-1914 "Planned Communities" Ebenezer Howard Parker Unwin Clarence Stein (Does not include all features of garden suburb eg. open spaces, parks)</p>	<p>Haberfield – no hotels, corner shops, factories Covenants – single storey, one per, uniform setbacks, materials</p>	<p>Haberfield – 1907 Croydon - ?</p>
<p>CANADA BAY Birkenhead & Dawson Estates Bourketown Drummoyne Park Salisbury Thompson</p>			<p>Five Dock - 1905</p>

LGA - KEY FEDERATION HCAs	DESIGN CONCEPT INFLUENCE	BUILDING/DESIGN STANDARDS	LOCAL PROGRESS ASSOCIATIONS
MOSMAN Bradleys Head Road The Crescent Holt Estate Raglan Street Shadforth Street			Mosman - 1903
NORTH SYDNEY Cremorne Cremorne Point			Cremorne - 1906
RANDWICK Caerleon Cres Dudley Street St Marks West Kensington			
WAVERLEY Blenheim Street Brighton Blvd Brown Street Imperial Avenue			
WOOLLAHRA Etham Avenue Mona Road Balfour Estate Kent Road			Rose Bay – 1911

ILLUSTRATED OVERVIEW OF OTHER SYDNEY CONSERVATION AREAS

The Ku-ring-gai conservation areas are illustrated in other sections throughout this study. The following illustrations provide an overview of other heritage conservation areas of Sydney, developed for housing during the nineteenth and first half of the twentieth century, including some identified in above comparisons table and mapping. These are the available illustrations sourced from the relevant councils and historical societies or other government archives.

For more detail on these areas, refer to the relevant council for the available information.



Above: Haberfield in 1949 (Source: State Archives, https://search.records.nsw.gov.au/permalink/f/si1pl2/ADLIB_RNSW116043993)



Above: Appian Way – Burwood – in 1929 (Source: State Archives, https://search.records.nsw.gov.au/permalink/f/si1pl2/ADLIB_RNSW115785431)



Above: Birkenhead & Dawson Estates – Drummoynes – in 2005 (Source: Canada Bay Council, State Heritage Inventory)



Above: Drummoynes Park – Drummoynes – in 2005 (Source: Canada Bay Council, State Heritage Inventory)



Above: Thomson Street – Drummoynes – in 2005 (Source: Canada Bay Council, State Heritage Inventory)

Above: Bourketown – Drummoynes (Source: Drummoynes Heritage Study)



Above: Kent Road – Rose Bay – in 1940s (Source: State Library, <https://collection.sl.nsw.gov.au/record/114dZbe1>)



Above: Daceyville conservation area in 1994 (Source: State Archives, https://search.records.nsw.gov.au/permalink/f/1ebnd1/ADLIB_RNSW116626118)



Above: Daceyville marketing before completion showing the “garden suburb as it will appear” in circa 1913-1918 (Source: State Archives, https://search.records.nsw.gov.au/permalink/f/1ebnd1/ADLIB_RNSW112570376)

COMPARATIVE CONCLUSIONS

A comparison of Ku-ring-gai's southern conservation areas with other Sydney conservation areas has revealed that Ku-ring-gai has no equal for demonstrating the development of Sydney's suburbs during the twentieth century in three aspects. These are summarised below.

1. Cohesion and intactness of Federation and inter-war housing:

The majority of other conservation areas investigated have significant other layers of development. In some cases, there is extensive Victorian period architecture within the area, and almost always significant inter-war period flat development.

The absence of a Victorian layer throughout Ku-ring-gai or significant inter-war flat development which was prevalent in most other areas in the majority of Ku-ring-gai has resulted in a Federation and inter-war housing layer which is comparatively consistent and intact when compared to other areas.

2. Singular pattern of development

Unlike other comparable areas, housing in Ku-ring-gai developed almost exclusively along the twin spines of the railway line (opened in 1890) and the Pacific Highway. Other local government areas (LGAs) within the study developed in more complex ways, largely based on the earlier networks of trains (from 1855), trams (from 1880) and ferries (from 1861). The diverse collection of transport routes in these other areas provided multiple points of access to the city and other hubs, leading to a more scattered, and often diluted, pattern of development across the suburbs and LGAs.

The singular pattern of development in Ku-ring-gai is evident in the cohesive streets of Federation residences which very rapidly fall away once a certain distance from the rail line is reached.

3. High proportion of architect designed dwellings

Ku-ring-gai has a very high number of architect designed residences from both the Federation and inter-war periods, particularly when compared with other local areas. Two of the most well-regarded Federation areas in Sydney – Appian Way, Burwood and Haberfield, were both developed as single dwelling housing in a similar period to much of Ku-ring-gai. Appian Way was a small, high quality development with an impressive collection of 37 Queen Anne and Arts and Crafts style homes, and Haberfield was a much a larger development of over 1500 homes, which although were of high quality were more modest in size and cost. Both areas, however, were developed and designed by a single architect and sold as properties with completed homes. Whilst the result is a cohesive development, they lack the depth of architectural variety and research potential that exist in many of the Ku-ring-gai conservation areas.

ROSEVILLE

THE GARDEN ESTATE

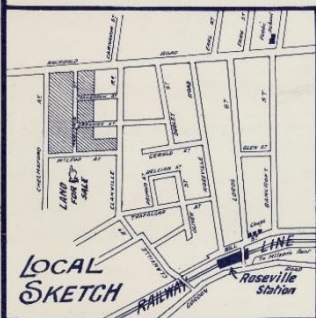
12 Minutes from Roseville Station.
 Some of the Finest Land in this Popular District
54 CHARMING BUILDING SITES in LIBERAL AREAS.

For Auction Sale On the Ground at 3.15pm **SAT 6th MARCH** 1920.

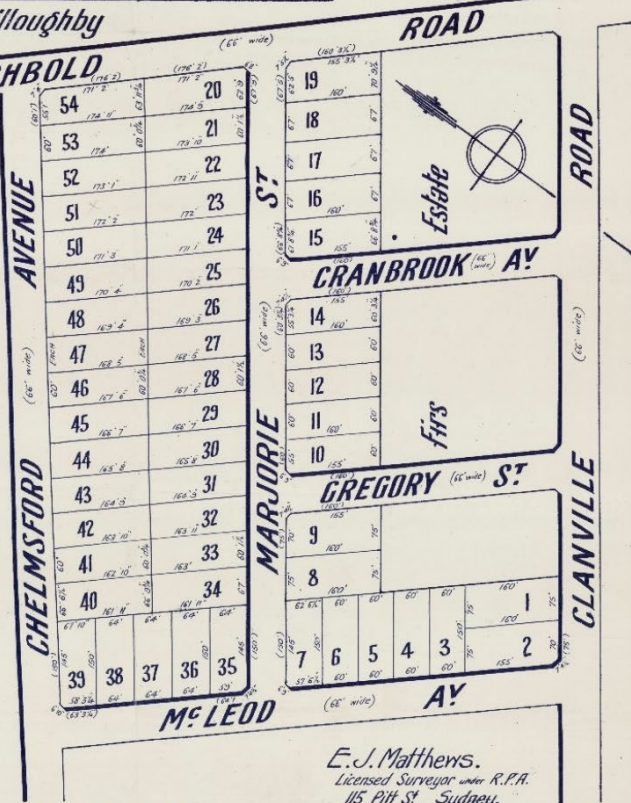
W. ROBJOHNS LTD
 Auctioneers, 78 Pitt Street, Sydney
 IN CONJUNCTION WITH

H. R. CORRIGAN & CO
 Estate Agents, Willoughby

EASY TERMS
 10 Per Cent Deposit,
 Balance by 48 Monthly Payments
 Interest 5 per Cent.
TORRENS TITLE.



J. A. Thompson.
 Solicitor to the Estate
 83 Pitt St Sydney.

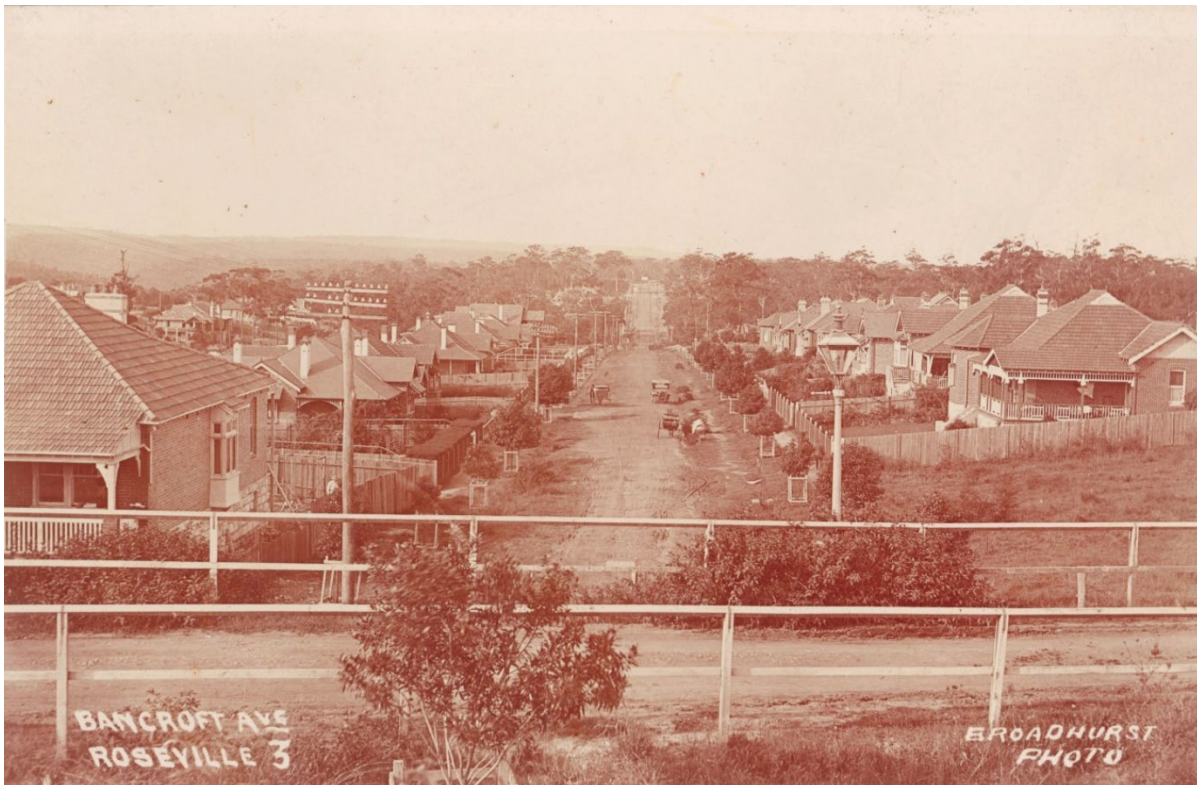


E. J. Matthews.
 Licensed Surveyor under R.P.A.
 115 Pitt St, Sydney.

All measurements subject to Deposited Plan.

F. Cunninghame & Co. Ltd., Litho, Sydney

Above: 1920 subdivision sale of Roseville, typically referencing the station and gardens.
 (Source: State Library, <https://collection.sl.nsw.gov.au/record/74Vvde7KVJwy>)



Above: Roseville, Bancroft Avenue and Roseville Avenue, in approximately 1900-1927.
(Source: State Library, <https://collection.sl.nsw.gov.au/record/9qoZL3J1>)



Above: Roseville Avenue and other streets in 2024.

THEMATIC HISTORY

The following notes are organised under common identified themes from the given references at the end. These focus on the aspects of themes relating to Ku-ring-gai's heritage conservation areas.

Sydney's improvement – 1909 Royal Commission

By the late 1800s, reform was on the agenda of most Australian cities and a plethora of social reform societies had emerged. Municipal and colonial governments were also concerned about inadequate infrastructure in the rapidly expanding cities.

In 1900, the bubonic plague outbreak in Sydney resulted in large areas of the commercial waterfront being razed. Working class areas were emptied of residents and razed. The city had acquired a poor reputation by the century's close as physically and morally poisonous as a result of the plague (Karskens, in Kelly p.132).

In 1909, a 'Royal Commission for the Improvement of the City of Sydney and its Suburbs' was launched to investigate ideas for the improvement of Sydney at the time and the remodelling of Sydney. Ku-ring-gai residents, Fitzgerald and Sulman, were principal witnesses.

The Royal Commission was largely concerned with urban transport. The most far-reaching recommendation was the creation of a metropolitan transport system. Engineer John Bradfield supervised the creation of the CBD underground railway system, the Sydney Harbour Bridge and the electrification of suburban rail. The resulting underground City Circle loop assisted employment on the CBD and allowed the workforce of the proposed new suburbs to access their jobs more easily.

The Royal Commission recommended "working class families should be encouraged to live in separate houses in the suburbs". Garden Suburbs were recommended to address the overcrowded inner suburbs. Public acquisition of land for workers housing in the suburbs was also recommended. It included the public housing plan for 400 houses in Daceyville and 67 cottages in the Soldiers Garden Village for Matraville, plus the 'remodelling' of slum areas. It was argued that all classes should be able to live in the suburbs. This mode of thinking was also to develop in other Australian cities.

Many advocates of suburban life also strongly believed in the mental and physical health benefits of living away from the congestion and crowding, the lack of sun and fresh air, the noise, garbage and sewage of inner-city districts (Alpin, in Kelly p.203).

City Beautiful Movement and Garden Suburbs

The public health problems of Sydney Town were small compared to those of the heavily industrialised cities of Britain or North America - of Liverpool, Manchester or Chicago. It was in these cities that the urban reform movement was born, as a reaction to mid nineteenth century studies identifying a direct link between poor urban sanitation and poor public health. Perhaps the best remembered early reformer is Ebenezer Howard and his treatise "Garden Cities of Tomorrow". Howard and his colleagues advocated for the separation of land uses, particularly the separation of industrial activities from residential land. Howard further advocated for the creation of cities, not as huge conglomerations, but as a series of smaller self-sufficient urban villages, separated by green belt and linked together by rail.

In 1893, the global City Beautiful Movement culminated with the World's Columbian Exposition of Chicago. At this Exposition, the architect Daniel Burnham laid out grand axial and symmetrical avenues with vistas along tree-lined boulevards, statues and grand parks. Grand plans were also developed for Washington's capital, and later for Canberra.

In Australia, it was John Sulman who coined the term "town planning" in the early 1900s. Sulman, a British trained architect, lived and practiced in Australia, based in Ku-ring-gai.

Whole cities like Adelaide, laid out by the military surveyor Colonel Light – reflected a very rational grid. Sulman was critical of the relentless grid patterns, called instead for a radial 'spider web' or more romantic approach that included diagonal streets.

In the early 1900s, the Garden Suburb concept spread throughout Australia. By 1914, the Garden Suburb had become the dominant planning model in Australia. The Garden Suburb was planned as an 'ideal' community, aspiring for a better environment for the lives of the average family.

This ideal was then translated by others around Australia into low density suburbs of bungalows and gardens. From this time onwards there may be observed a manifest preference for the low-density cottage suburbs such as that created in Haberfield by Richard Stanton between 1904 and 1914.

While Haberfield may not include all the features of the Garden Suburb such as open spaces and parks, it was one of the first developments to make provision for the motor car. It also offered an early example of the land and house package that was to become the most common form of development. Similar developments such as Appian Way in Burwood would create memorable serpentine, tree-lined streets with central green areas containing tennis courts and other community places.

Overlapping with the Garden Suburb, the Railway Suburb also emerged between 1850 and 1920. In many ways the Railway (or Commuter) Suburb was a precursor to the Garden Suburb, making it possible for middle income workers to live in low density suburban environment and commute to their place of work in the commercial city. (Cox et al., 2011)

Community developments - Arts & Crafts City Beautiful (Cox et al p.56)				
Period	Influences	UK	US	Australia
1850-1914	- Morris, Pugin, Webb, Shaw, Lethaby, Voysey, Ashbee, Bailie-Scott, Lutyens, Parker & Unwin - Richardson, Sullivan, Olmstead, Burnham, Wright, Griffin	Bedford Park (1875) Port Sunlight (1888) Bournville (1895)	Riverside (1869) Forest Hills (1910)	Appian Way Burwood (1911) North Shore Railway Suburbs (1920s-30s) Toorak (1880s-1920s) Federation Suburbs (Sydney, Melbourne, Perth) St Vincent Gardens, Albert Park (1864-70)

Sydney's suburbanisation

Sydney has been described as a 'City of Suburbs' (Kelly 1987). Historians have concluded the process of suburbanisation is arguably one of the most important developments in Australia's European history. (Ashton 2008)

Early European settlements in Sydney followed the waterways on the shores of Sydney Cove and Parramatta River, when transport was by water and horse. Early dwellings of the 19th century were government or estate homes, generally referred to as 'gentleman's villas', plus workers cottages and attached housing such as terrace rows, located within the inner parts of Sydney plus Parramatta. From the late 19th century, the concentration of homes in Sydney areas followed the extension of transport links along tram and rail lines, then roads with the advent of the car from the 1920s.

The creation of suburbs in Sydney responded to the outbreak of bubonic plague during 1900. The resulting 'slum clearances' removed many houses in the inner-city. There was a widespread perception that high density housing meant slums and therefore a new healthier environment was needed (Cox et al 2011).

In the early 20th century, reformers of the time proposed visions of a utopian metropolitan city that would be 'rich, healthy, and beautiful – a true Commune'. The development of suburbs reflected the ideology of progress in the form of improving human well-being by modifying the environment. It expressed the belief that general material advancement through home ownership would lead to improved living conditions for all and to the moral improvement of society (Ashton 2008).

The growth of the suburbs also reflected the ideals of egalitarianism. The Australian attitude of the "fair go" translated by many to the right to a house on a quarter acres plot of ground. (Cox et al 2011).

Unlike urban cities and towns, suburbs have their origins in the village ideal. Suburban villages, such as Beecroft, Lane Cove, Manly, Randwick and Hunters Hill, evolved into municipalities. These were part of a tradition for 'subtopias' in Britain established by town planning pioneer Ebenezer Howard. Using standardised materials and architectural styles, these built-up rural or semi-rural places created a village atmosphere that blurred the boundaries between country and town. (Ashton 2008)

In 1913, the Town Planning Association NSW was founded by Florence Taylor. Members included WB Griffin, RF Irvine, JD Fitzgerald and JJC Bradfield.

Early NSW legislation affected town planning and development patterns, including Acts such as the Width of Streets and Lanes Act 1881. In 1919, the Local Government Amending Bill 1919 set standards for predominantly new suburbs. This specified minimum lot sizes of 2500 (sq ft), as well as separation of residential areas from industrial and commercial sites. It prevented 'noxious' hoardings. It also specified widening and improving of main traffic arteries, and the graduated size of roads to suit their prospective uses (Karskens, in Kelly p.135).

Grace Karskens observed that the suburb of Concord "enjoyed its sense of place in a way that no outsider could fully appreciate. In shaping their environment so successfully suburban people created one of the earliest recognisable cultural landscapes."

The growth of suburbia boomed from the second decade of the twentieth century. In 1911, census figures reveal that more than a third of Sydney's population resided in the City of Sydney and its adjoining suburbs within walking distance – Glebe, Newtown, Redfern, Paddington, Erskineville and Waterloo. A decade later that figure fell to just under one quarter. At the 1933 census, only 16% of the inhabitants of greater Sydney lived in the City and its immediately adjoining inner suburbs. (Ashton 2008)

There was a clear suburban hierarchy in the cost of both new dwellings and land, closely related to the social class of the area (Spearritt, p.30). The businessmen who moved to Gordon parish during the 1890s were wealthy and built large homes set in several acres of gardens. The area began to show exclusive pockets of expensive housing designed by people such as John Sulman and Horbury Hunt. Eccleston de Faur, who was instrumental in having declared Ku-ring-gai Chase declared a national park in 1892, built his house "Pibrac" in Warrawee in 1888-89. Long settled residents of the area included James G Edwards, WH McKeown, the McIntosh family and the Waterhouse family.

A number of suburbs were developed as model or garden suburb estates, as part of land speculation. In 1902, Richard Stanton developed Haberfield, utilising Australian motifs designed by John Spencer Stansfield, planned for 1500 houses as a "garden suburb". In 1903, George Hoskins developed Appian Way in Burwood for 30 large Federation homes. In 1909, Croydon's Malvern Hill Estate was developed. In 1907, Henry Halloran developed Seaforth. In 1921, Arthur Rickard developed the Portico Estate in Toongabbie 1921 as a "garden suburb" (Freestone, in Kelly p.62). JJC Bradfield, founding member Town Planning Association, lent his name to West Killara redevelopment of Moore Estate into distinct suburbs. Walter Burley Griffin developed Castlecrag as "first class, safeguarded, homogeneous, residential waterside suburb" (Freestone, in Kelly p.64).

High levels of migration following World War I from 1921 to 1933 maintained pressure on Sydney's housing stock. Rent levels rose in response to the demand for houses. Although the suburban cottage was still regarded as the ideal, the number of such house did not meet demand. "The flat" was, by the 1920s, adding a new dimension to suburban Sydney. Between the wars in 1935, most of the buildings approved for erection in Mosman, Woollahra and Waverley were blocks of flats.

The suburbs continued to expand during the long boom after World War II in a different economic environment, style and influences. In the 1940s, soon after the war, owner-builders constructed modest suburban cottages. This was followed from the late 1950s by project builders. The Great Depression and war left housing shortages. Wartime rationing of building materials continued into the 1950s. Young working-class couples struggled in early married life to establish a home. Planning for the dream home would increasingly take into consideration cars, television and American-style freeways and shopping centres.

At the beginning of the 1960s, just over one-fifth of Australia's population lived in suburbs in metropolitan Sydney. (Ashton 2008)



Above: Killara Station and surrounding housing in 1924 (Source: State Archives, https://search.records.nsw.gov.au/permalink/f/1ebnd1/ADLIB_RNSW115668623)

Ku-ring-gai's town planning and settlement

The major defining force in the history of Ku-ring-gai's development, and its evolution to the distinctive suburbia of the present is the coincidence of the urban and architectural reform movements with the building of a railway down the Hornsby Plateau (Pike, 2000, p.11).

Early Ku-ring-gai residents were generally labelled "settlers" and were looked upon as of the bush. The Ku-ring-gai area was then referred to the Gordon parish and the Pacific Highway was then known as Lane Cove Road and Gordon Road. In contrast to Lane Cove, which relied on train line to the city via St Leonards station and Crows Nest, the settlements of Ku-ring-gai were developed as houses clinging "closely to the railway" and no house "more than half a mile from open bushland" (Spearritt p.46).

By the end of the 1890s, changes in the Gordon parish were beginning. The postal service was extended. Train timetables were built around the ferry times. Local roads were established around areas with new housing. Lane Cove Road was still in poor condition.

Ku-ring-gai's subdivision booms began with the first wave after the 1880 railway and tramway expansion. By the early 1900s the Ku-ring-gai landscape was still largely rural. Orchards remained, with dirt tracks and expanses of open paddocks.

In 1906, the shire of Ku-ring-gai was founded. The “railway suburbs” from Roseville to Wahroonga were incorporated into the new shire under the Local Government Act on 28 Dec 1906. At the end of 1906, a council of six officers took office, to serve a population of approximately 9000. Wealthy residents dominated local politics and were instrumental in having the entire area proclaimed a shire.

Following World War I, there were many new subdivisions in Ku-ring-gai, with many advertised for sale from 1921. The 1920s boom brought an end to the rural atmosphere. Blocks were marked out for sale and cleared. Ideal allotments were flat and regular. Subdivisions of the land referred to as the “The North Shore Line District” opened up large areas of land for development.

In Ku-ring-gai, the space of new allotments allowed for a house surrounded on all sides by a garden separating it from its neighbours and the street. No provision was made for semi-detached or attached houses. The new streets were wider than those in the earlier estates and, anticipating sewerage, no back lanes were provided. Much of the subdivided land was also sold with covenants requiring a quality of housing, such as for brick, tile or slate materials, minimum value and single dwellings.

Front gardens were largely a symbolic and little-used area. The backyard was intensively used and more utilitarian. The lawn was usually flat and safe, with a paling fence, clothesline and space for a garage. For many, the backyard was also a source of food – large vegetable gardens, chooks, particularly during the depression.

Street trees were often planted by council on the verge, part of the Garden Suburb ideal. These trees were significant in providing a visual context for the perception of uniformity and rhythm, so important in the built environment and the architectural character of the area. Eventually the edges were sealed and nature steps contained between concrete guttering and footpaths.

In Sydney, the 1920s-30s saw a proliferation of flats in certain parts of the city, not including Ku-ring-gai. Ku-ring-gai had one of the lowest proportion of flats. There were 4.7% recorded flats in Ku-ring-gai in the 1933 census. This reflected the low demand, with the distance from the city. It also reflected the policy of most middle-class north shore councils to use the Residential District Proclamation provision of the 1919 Local Government Act to prohibit flat construction in all but a few selected areas (Spearritt p.71).

It was largely the work of the Sydney own Planning Association which brought about the Local Government Act of 1919, and particularly the town planning regulations of Part XIIA, which were gazetted as an amendment to the Act in 1920. Ku-ring-gai was at the forefront of local government planning at the time, using residential district proclamations to set aside land for residential purposes, to exclude industry and pubs (except for two already existing at Killara and Pymble) and to assign only particular areas for flats or shops. By the 1930s it had 81 residential district proclamations, more than any other local government area in NSW.



Above: Gordon Station and surrounding housing in 1924 (Source: State Archives, https://search.records.nsw.gov.au/permalink/f/1ebnd1/ADLIB_RNSW115668621)

Progress Associations

The first Progress Association in the Ku-ring-gai area, possibly New South Wales, were established as the Lindfield Progress Association and Wahroonga Progress Association. Both were in existence by 1896. In Ku-ring-gai, these were followed by the Pymble Progress Association in 1901, Gordon Progress Association in 1901, the Roseville Progress Association of undetermined date, Killara Progress Association of 1904 and Turramurra Progress Association of 1905.

These lobbied on behalf of the local middle-class newcomers for the provision of the amenities of metropolitan Sydney, including roads, street lighting and rail services. They also advocated for small local projects, such as public park for Pymble. Following 1900, the Progress Associations advocated for a bridge across the harbour. The Progress Associations continued to lobby for water and sewerage supplies, better train timetables, improved roads. They also raised money for local improvements.

Many of the prominent residents commuted to the city, with the result that the Progress Associations spent a large proportion of their time making requests to the Railway Commissioners.

By the second annual report of the Lindfield Progress Association in 1902, topics covered included the population growth, postal facilities, Towns Police Act, public school, Lindfield station, telephone connection, parks, water rates, division of electorate, Conference of Progress Associations, railway hoardings, tram to Field of Mars, drainage, St John Ambulance Association, roads, bridge across the Harbour. As so many progress associations had many common interests, in July 1902 a Joint Committee of the Northern Suburbs was formed combining those of Ku-ring-gai and Willoughby Council.

There was a certain amount of rivalry between the suburbs with local patriotism in each small suburb. Distinct identities developed as a result. The railway was the centre of each small community. These were divided from each other by acres of bush and woods.

The suburbs varied in size so their financial resources were unequal. In 1906, Lindfield was the largest suburb in the parish of Gordon, but according to its Progress Association annual report, Wahroonga was the most prosperous.

The commercial hub of the entire area ran from Gordon to Turramurra, where the largest concentration of local tradesmen and primary producers were found.

Economy, population and migration

Sydney in the 1890s experienced a depression, drought, slow recovery from collapse of banks and slow development.

Following the Federation of Australia in 1901, Sydney experienced nationalistic enthusiasm, alongside high unemployment and a very full property market. From 1905, the economy improved, with increased industrialisation, end of drought and return of optimism.

The centralisation of rail transport and differential freight rates made Sydney the most profitable place to establish many manufacturing enterprises.

The establishment of unimproved capital value rating on suburban lands around Sydney opened up many new areas for development. Speculators and investors who held large area of and or small groups of allotments put them on the market to escape increased holding charges.

From 1901-1911, 75,400 people arrived in Sydney. From 1911-1921 214,100 people arrived in Sydney (Kass, in Kelly p.79). In the fifty years from 1921 to 1971 Sydney's population trebled, from less than a million to almost three million.

Ku-ring-gai population grew following World War I as follows:

- 1921 – 19,209
- 1933 – 27,931
- 1947 – 39,874
- 1954 – 52,615
- 1961 – 74,821
- 1966 – 88,876
- 1971 – 98,589
- 1976 – 100,100

(Spearritt p.255)

During the 1930s depression, Ku-ring-gai had one of the lowest levels of male unemployment in Sydney as documented in the 1933 census. By 1971, Ku-ring-gai had the highest average income per employed person at \$8317, following Mosman at \$7013 and Woollahra at \$6581 (Spearritt p.194-5).

Home ownership and aspiration

Rents increased rapidly in the first decade of the 1900s. In Ashfield in 1912, rents rose by 10-20% in one year (Kass, in Kelly, p.79), placing pressure on existing accommodation. Rapidly increasing rents encouraged many households to seek to purchase their own home.

In 1916, Arthur Rickard marketed ownership as "Fair rent is good. Be your own Landlord is Better!!" for land including Wahroonga Heights and Heart of Lindfield Estate. (Kass, in Kelly p 83).

By the end of World War I, the suburban cottage had become firmly established as the accepted ideal home for Australian citizens. Acquisition of a building site on suburban fringe was easier and cheaper than buying a house.

Home ownership became associated with patriotism. Sales were marketed as "a stake in the country" (Master Builders Association conference 1918 – Spearritt p.29). They also became egalitarian. The Master Builders Association in 1918 sought "instead of the Fair Rents Court, a system of encouraging the workers to have their own houses rather than pay rents." Home ownership became a bipartisan issue as people of all political parties came to see it as the panacea to the housing problem (Kass, in Kelly p.84).

Marketing at the time demonstrated this shift. The contemporary journal, "The Property Owner", originally aimed at interests of landlords and investors, re-emerged as "The Commonwealth Home". This began to inspire readers to "own a bit of the land you own". The real estate agency industry grew as rent rolls gave way to house and land sales. In 1918, Henry Gorman, of Hardie & Gorman Real Estate Agents, urged readers to seek a suburban home.

By the 1920s builders and real estate agents were exploiting the supposed link between paying rent and poverty, crowding, ill-health and social stigma (Karskens, in Kelly p.132). The stuccoed terrace became anathema. Replaced by desire for residences of Queen Anne Federation suburban houses and their 1920s successors, the cottages and bungalows, set on individual blocks on wide streets, the antithesis of city living and unmistakable sign of respectability. Building companies, speculators, financiers and some architects quickly took up the catch-cry, "For every man his home", and tied every possible middle class value to it. Much of the writing an advertising, however, showed that such professionals were out of touch with the aspirations and financial limitations of ordinary people (Karskens, in Kelly p.132). Local estate agents advertised Concord's "preponderance of brick buildings over weatherboard" which proves the popularity of this suburb for home seekers.

In the 1921 Census, the highest levels of owner occupied were in outer-suburban working class local government areas such as Canterbury (71%) and middle class such as Ku-ring-gai (73%). BY 1933, these numbers were 60% and 68%. (Karskens, in Kelly p.141). Women were frequently and intimately involved in buying, building and decorating processes.

It is from this post-war 1940s period of reconstruction that the home ownership ideal became more commonly referred to as the "great Australian dream." Typically, the dream represented ownership of a detached house on a quarter acre suburban block surrounded by a garden, for family life and prosperity. Australia-wide, while almost 50% of Australian households owned their homes through the first half of the century, this increased to more than 70% in the 20 years after World War II.

By 1966, Australia had achieved a rate of home ownership which was extremely high by world standards. The main causes included rent control, favourable economic circumstances of the period, liberal home loan policies and the difficulty obtaining accommodation other than home ownership.

Finance

Government policy sought to encourage home ownership, largely through the provision of housing finance, leaving the provision of land and the building of homes to private industry.

Government involvement in the financing of home ownership meant there were now two ways of financing home ownership. Before World War I, finance had been provided by banks, insurance companies and by small scale lenders. They tended to favour builders, housing investors and the middle class in steady employment as they were a more reliable risk.

The NSW Government, via the Government Savings Bank, made housing loans available.

The Commonwealth Government, via the War Service Homes Commission, provided loans to ex-servicemen, either to build new homes or purchase existing. By June 1929, 5788 houses in NSW, the bulk in Sydney suburbs, had been completed with assistance from the War Service Homes Commission (Kass, in Kelly p.86).

The majority of home loans were still through the private mortgage market.

NSW Premier Bertram Stevens created co-operative building societies to revitalise housing in Sydney based on British model. Aimed to bring cheap housing within the reach of more wage-earners, this was "preferable to the arbitrary method of fixing rents, which might have the effect of discouraging building enterprise".

Co-operative Building Societies could be formed by any group of people with some common interest. Once established in line with Government model, a loan from a lending institution could be negotiated. This money was then lent to society members. They were able to lend up to 90% of the value (previously lending institutions were generally to a max of 70%). Low deposit/low interest rate.

Architecture

In September 1921, the British-born Australian architect Leslie Wilkinson stated in relation to architecture, "it is estimated that fully 70% of the houses erected today are produced without reference to the [architect] profession. Until this state of affairs is altered and until the public appreciate the difference between the beautiful, the good and the horrid, admirable work will continue to be a rarity (Building, Sept 1921).

Prominent architects such as H. Desbrowe Annear, Leslie Wilkinson, William Hardy Wilson and many others condemned suburbia. Annear stated popular small houses invariably involved "perverted ideas of economy...(which) impel the budding householder to obtain cheap substitutes for his plans and specifications (and) the materials" (Karskens, in Kelly p.126). Annear blamed builders for the alleged poor planning and monotonous styles, because "the builder has but one rule and one method for the lot, and it is in the exact repetition that he scores, whether they prove suitable or not".

Professor Leslie Wilkinson wrote in 1919 that it was the great mass of ordinary residential work that must be improved", for "a country's domestic architecture will be judged on the general output and not by the bright example present in the struggling minority" (Karskens, in Kelly p.126).

The bane of the architects were the plebian builders and owner-builders. Most house designs of the twenties were the work of builders and owner-builders, often copied form plans in magazines such as George and Florence Taylors "Building" founded 1907, "Australian Home Builder" founded 1920s, "Home" (1920-42) and Florence Taylor's "Commonwealth Home" (1925-30). Architects were seen as the losers in the suburban boom, while untrained lay persons were shaping the face of new areas. From a historical point of view, architectural aesthetics cannot be used to understand the material culture of the 'ordinary' suburb" (Karskens, in Kelly p.128). By the 1960s, red-tiled suburban expanses became associated with suburban people (Spearritt).

Architects derided the "Queen Anne front Mary Anne back" syndrome since the turn of the century, including JR Brogan in "101 Australian Homes" (1936) and WR Butler in "Modern Architectural Design" paper read before RVIA Melbourne (1902).

John L. Berry won "The Ideal Australian Home" competition in 1921 with his essay and drawings of a Spanish style house – as different in colour, texture, siting and expense from the ordinary suburban home as he could make it.

Some suburbs and their buildings were designed and developed in a different model. The north shore was distinct as recorded in 1903, when Macleod wrote that "By contrast, the North Shore line is comparatively uncontaminated by the tail of the jerry-builder. The residents in that district are, for the most part, people of substance, who have been impelled thither by the praiseworthy desire to make for themselves, in the midst of beautiful surroundings a beautiful home. Nowhere in the suburban area does one find such a high standard of architecture as prevails here, nor can I call to mind any place where better kept gardens are to be found...at each place on the line one finds in existence a Progress Association, which is invariably a progressive body in fact as well as in name...beyond these local bodies, there is in existence a central organisation known as the Joint Committee of the North Shore line, which deals with the larger matters affecting the interests of the whole district. Each Progress Association has several representatives on the Committee."

Macleod further recorded in 1903 "the standard of domestic architecture on the North Shore is agreeably high...is worthy of warm commendation...The north shore line districts...are becoming thickly studded with red architectural gems of more or less value. Here the houses are mostly more imposing than those in the lower Northern Suburbs, and at, notably, Pymble and Wahroonga are to be found in all necessary plenty absolutely some of the finest examples of domestic architecture to which the State can lay claim. I can imagine no easier and few more pleasant tasks than the compilation of an album of selected residences in these places, and affirm that the work therein represented would receive nothing but praise from the most critical examiners...If there is one characteristic of our houses more in evidence than another it is suitability. Witness the prevalence of the bungalow type, and quote Mr. Barlow:-"The necessity for verandahs and balconies in this semi-tropical climate of ours, and the fondness of the people for the cottage – or, more properly speaking, the bungalow – principle of planning, is slowly but surely evolving a type of house which may be claimed to be almost distinctly Australian"... "Simplicity is the dominant feature in northern suburbs architecture, and all familiar with the latter must admit that it is a feature of the utmost desirability."

Architects and related professions

Architecture as a profession in Australia was relatively new in the twentieth century. In 1871 the Institute of Architects in Sydney was formed. In the 1880s, Sydney University began regular course in architecture and building. Specific education for architects was first offered in Sydney as a degree in 1919. Ku-ring-gai resident, Leslie Wilkinson, was the first architectural professor as the first Chair of Architecture for Sydney University.

Architects practicing in Australia before this time were semi-qualified (Boyd p.168) or gained a degree overseas typically from England. The state's first Colonial Architect from 1816, Francis Greenway arrived as a convict, trained in England. The first town planners of Sydney were arguably key early Governors of New South Wales - Arthur Phillip, Lachlan (and Lady) Macquarie, and their surveyors.

The primarily twentieth century development of Ku-ring-gai coincided with the burgeoning architecture and built environment professions in Australia. Ku-ring-gai became an enclave for the architects of the twentieth century, both as their place of residence and practice. As a result, Ku-ring-gai contains works from the most prominent Australian architects of the Federation, inter-war and post-war periods. Pike concluded in 2000 that Ku-ring-gai area represents one of Australia's most comprehensive repositories of fine twentieth century domestic architecture (Pike, 2000, p.13).

Prominent local architects were also influential in the town planning and transport for the development of Ku-ring-gai and more broadly Sydney. The most notable Ku-ring-gai residents and influential professionals of the period included architects John Sulman and Professor Leslie Wilkinson, and Harbour Bridge and railways engineer John Bradfield. Further leading architects that lived and/or designed homes in Ku-ring-gai included Howard Joseland, Walter Liberty Vernon, John Berry, William Hardy Wilson, John Burcham Clamp, John Brogan, James Peddle, Harry Seidler, Bruce Rickard, Sydney Ancher, Jack Russell, James John, amongst numerous others extending into the late twentieth century.

Further professions relating to the environment, culture and the arts also developed in Ku-ring-gai through leading figures who lived and/or worked on the north. For instance, prominent photographer Harold Cazneaux and heritage conservationist, Annie Wyatt who established the National Trust of Australia in the 1940s.

Architects and their inspiration			
Period	Movement	World Architects	Australian Architect
Victorian 1837-1901		Norman Shaw HH Richardson Louis Sullivan	Horbury Hunt Hardy Wilson
Federation 1901-1910	Queen Anne Arts and Crafts Californian Bungalow Mediterranean Art Nouveau	Philip Webb Edwin Lutyens CFA Voysey HM Baillie-Scott Frank Lloyd Wright Greene & Greene Parker & Unwin	Liberty Vernon Robin Dodds Desbrowe-Annear Robert Haddon Jefferson Jackson Leslie Wilkinson James Peddle Alexander Jolly

Inter-war 1918-1939	Art Deco International Modernism Organic Mediterranean	Le Corbusier Hendric Berlage Mies van der Rohe Oscar Niemeyer Frank Lloyd Wright	Raymond McGrath Bruce Dellit Harry Norris Emil Sodertsein John D Moore Walter Burley Griffin BJ Waterhouse
Post-war 1945-1960	Post-war Modernism Brutalism	Le Corbusier Mies van der Rohe Walter Gropius Marcel Breuer	Sydney Ancher Harry Seidler Arthur Baldwinson Robin Boyd

(Cox et al p.75)

Bungalow typology

Towards the end of the nineteenth century, there was a break with the Victorian way of design and construction. New methods were tried, such as the cavity wall (an Australian invention which became standard practice in 1895) as were new materials, such as the use of terra coat tiles (the Marseilles tile first appeared in Australia in 1886) (Pike, 2000, p.11).

At the same time in Britain, many reacted against the style of High Victorian architecture, and as early as the 1860s, the work of Phillip Webb and Norman Shaw who reinterpreted historical style in a new and creative way, were particularly influential. William Morris and the Arts and Crafts Movement looked back to a simpler way of life. They rejected the mass produced factory goods of the industrial cities and the cluttered interiors they encouraged. A number of influential British architects settled in Australia. In addition to John Sulman, also Spencer Stansfield, who designed most of the houses in Haberfield, and the Canadian Anglophile, John Horbury Hunt. Their work influenced Australian architects who were to design houses in Ku-ring-gai (Pike, 2000, p.11).

From the end of World War I, Sydney and Ku-ring-gai experienced a second wave of suburban development. In Ku-ring-gai, this included domestic construction using the latest architectural ideals, including the Arts and Crafts style with work by Halligan, Colonial Revival works by Hady Wilson, Californian Bungalow works by Walter and Marion Burley Griffin and Alexander Jolly.

Bungalows, partly derived from the California bungalow style, were imported and promoted by builders and architects from approximately 1907. These were casual informal houses, intended to blend with natural settings and to express the unity of man and nature via honest craftsmanship. Built of wood and stone, bungalows were simply designed, with shallow pitched roofs, broad overhanging gables and cool, cavernous verandahs. Textures were rough and unfinished, rubble, stone, exposed timber, and the shapes thick and heavy (Karskens, in Kelly p.140).

In the suburban form of the California Bungalow, such as those at Concord, many feature were excluded, with the exception of the large gables. Nature was firmly excluded from consideration in anything but a negative sense in the design and building process. The function of middle class suburban houses, such as those in Concord, was not to invite nature in or harmonise within, but to keep it at bay and provide shelter from light and heat. Timber was subject to weather, termites, fire and was for those that could not afford brick, as aptly shown in magazines and brochures advertising small, cheap timber "bungalows and cottages for the working class" (Karskens, in Kelly p.140).

In Concord, the Marseilles tiles were economic and practical. This meant the roofs had to be more steeply pitched than a typical bungalow, reducing the idea of affinity with the earth. WB Griffin despised the tiles but homeowners liked them.

The acceptable variations to facades included the addition of window surrounds, doors, lead lights, tiles, Art Nouveau roses and tendrils. Windows on the bay projection had small awnings roofs with brackets or a pitched roof which ran on from the verandah. Verandahs had heavy piers and brick walls enclosed tile paving and glazed tile risers. Roofs often had a second or even third gable, pitched, hipped or flat. These had tapered piers in brick or roughcast and chunky colonettes about 30cm high, plus a mirrored plate with house name set by front door pre street numbering.

These bungalows had their own sense of formality based on unpretentious firmness. Important social mores, proper methods for social interaction. They spoke of middle-class virtues of industriousness and thrift, of sobriety and sensible pleasures, practical choices and avoidance of the outrageous, and above all, putting on and maintaining a respectable face.

In the period following world war II, architectural innovation continued in Ku-ring-gai, with the post-war work of Harry Seidler, as well as works by Bruce Rickard, John Brogan, Sydney Ancher, Allan Jack & Cottier, and the Petit + Sevitt “nuts and berries” houses of the seventies, mostly located on the edge of the bushland reserves. Into the twenty first century the tradition continued with designs by Glenn Murcutt.



Above: Typical Killara home off railway, as described by State Rail, c1910 (State Records, https://search.records.nsw.gov.au/permalink/f/1ebnd1/ADLIB_RNSW117024483)

Transport

Steam power allowed the suburban expansion necessary for the home ownership dream. The earlier horse-buses were ill-adapted to longer routes.

The topography of Sydney added complexity to the construction of rail lines. The rail line from Redfern to Parramatta opened in 1855. This remained the only train route until the 1880s.

In the 1880s, the construction of the tramway system made it possible for people to live some distance from their workplace. This opened up most of the middle class suburbs. However, this did not include Ku-ring-gai because the tram only extended as far as Willoughby.

In 1874, James G Edwards prepared a petition advocating for a north shore line. In 1881, a second petition campaign argued that a very attractive district could be opened for residential development if the railway was built (Dungey, p.17).

The prospect of a railway for the district immediately enhanced land values in the parish of Gordon. Land values escalated through the area during the 1880s. During the 1890s, the population of the parish grew from 1000 in 1891 to 4000 in 1901. In the decade to 1911 the population grew to 9,459 (Dungey, p.32).

Suburbs radiated out from the city along the railway lines. The railway was the unifying factor for the entire north shore district. When first listed in Sands in 1903, the area was identified by the subheading of "Milsons Point Line".

The railway and associated subdivision shaped the character of Ku-ring-gai. Development was so rapid that by 1909 the rail line was duplicated. There was still no town centre set aside for Ku-ring-gai, and no land reserved for Government buildings. The railway station was the centre of each village community, surrounded by shops on both sides of the line. It was at the station, or nearby, that each village built its war memorial, and the gardens attached to each station became a focus of civic pride and competition.

The form emerged in Sydney along the North Shore Line. This created a continuous line of suburbs with each station spaced at no more than 1.5km apart (Cox p.41).

The north shore line was finished in two stages – Pearce's Corners to St Leonards and then St Leonards to Milsons Point. The north shore line was more of a passenger conveyance than a goods line (Dungey p.41).

When the railway to Milsons Point opened in April 1893, this enabled a relatively simple journey for a workers to travel from his new home to the suburban station, train to Milsons Point, cross by ferry to Circular Quay. Contemporary records indicated that the Wahroonga to General Post Office was then a 45 minute journey.

In October 1888, soon after the construction had begun on the single line railway from Pearce's Corner to St Leonards, 1265 acres of Crown land close to Lindfield station was offered for sale. Auction disposed of 500 acres, average price of £66 per acre. The best blocks fetched £2566 per acre.

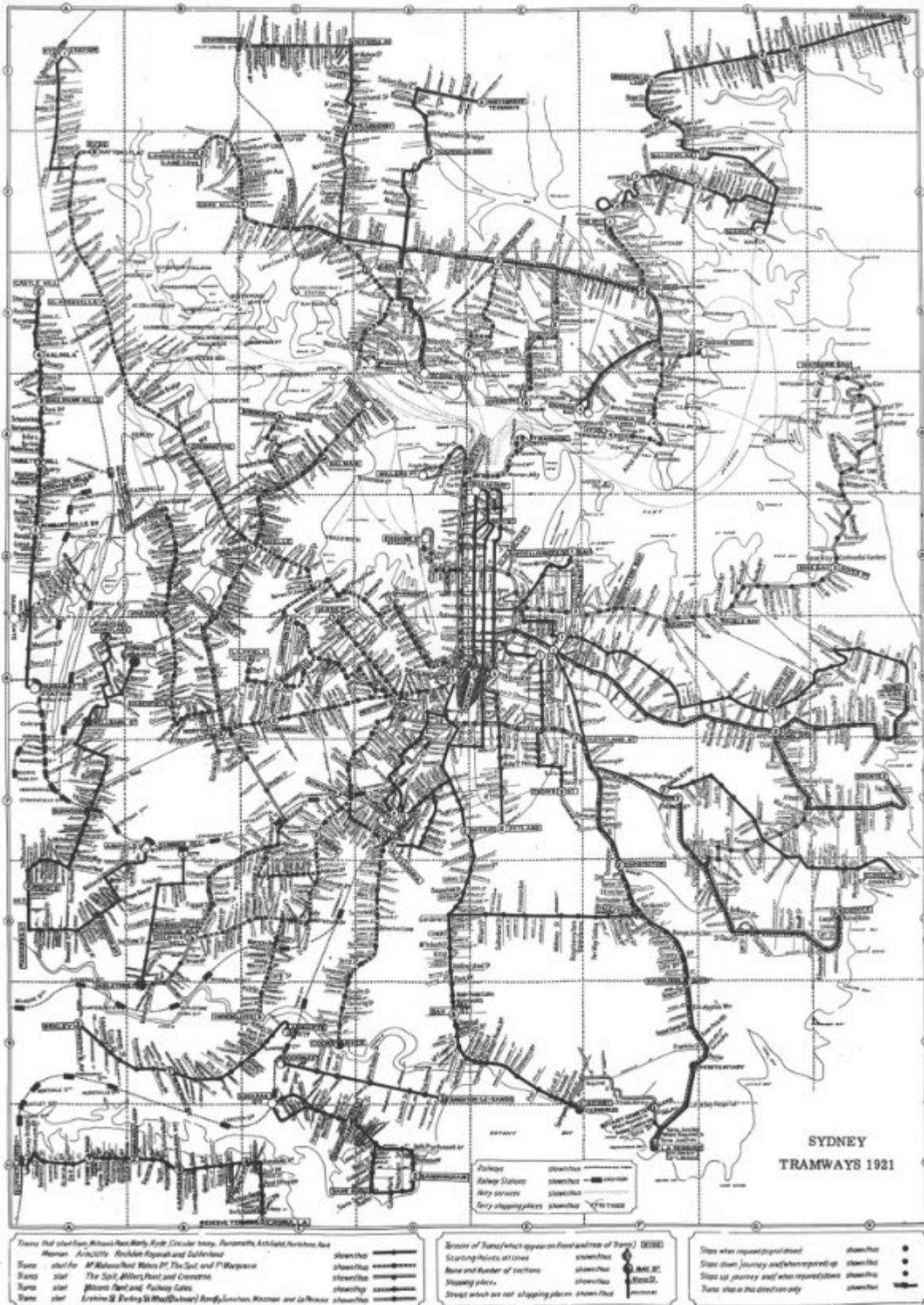
New stations opened along the line as the population grew, with Killara in 1899 and Warrawee 1900. Killara was the result of negotiations between the Railway Commissioners and some local residents. Warrawee was built largely at the behest of a prominent local resident, Mr John C. Remington (Dungey, p.33).

In 1932, the construction of Sydney Harbour Bridge was completed. This completed the extension of the city to Hornsby rail line. This made Ku-ring-gai readily accessible to the centre of Sydney.

The Aboriginal track which once provided the only land access to the Hornsby Plateau became part of the Pacific Highway, the main transport route to eventually encircle the country. The implications for the “garden suburb” were significant. Instead of suburban villages linked by rail, the suburbs are cut in two by an ever wider and ever busier highway (Pike, 2000, p.12).



Above: Roseville Station and surrounding housing in 1924 (Source: State Archives, https://search.records.nsw.gov.au/permalink/f/1ebnd1/ADLIB_RNSW115668622)



Above: The extensive former tramway network of Sydney and suburbs as documented in 1921 (Source: Transit Maps <https://transitmap.net/1921-sydney-tramways/>)



Above: The former tramway network in 1947, showing how trams extended to the most northern extent at Chatswood (Source: The Dictionary of Sydney, accessed 15 October 2024, <https://dictionaryofsydney.org/entry/trams>)

Religion, education and culture

Most of Ku-ring-gai was built as an exclusively residential area, with few pubs and some limited commerce along the railway and Pacific Highway spine. Beyond the City of Sydney, only the working class suburbs had substantial concentrations of pubs, such as in Balmain, Paddington, Redfern (Spearritt p.229). In Ku-ring-gai, besides housing, schools and churches predominated.

Early churches constructed included St James Turramurra and St Johns Gordon. These reflected the predominant protestant population and culture, as distinct from other parts of Sydney.

In 1927, Charles Witham in his unpublished "History of the North Shore" recorded Ku-ring-gai's population comprised "about 84% are protestants"... "The proportion of Catholics is smaller than in the districts on the south side of the harbour. There are a few Jews and many Scots" (Spearritt p.209). The census of 1921 and 1933 support those observations.

Some of the early constructed schools in Ku-ring-gai included Gordon Public School, Warrawee Public School, Roseville College, Pymble Ladies College, Abbotsleigh, Knox and Ravenswood.

By 1950, three-quarters of all non-Catholic primary and secondary private schools in Sydney were in four areas – 12 between Stanmore and Strathfield, 20 in the Eastern suburbs, 17 on lower north shore from Hunters Hill to Manly, and 16 of the upper north shore from Roseville to Hornsby.

Health and recreation were also a focus in Ku-ring-gai. Early sporting clubs were developed including the Killara Lawn Tennis, Killara Bowling and Killara Golf Club. Hospitals constructed in Ku-ring-gai included the Sydney Adventist Hospital at Wahroonga, Royal North Shore Hospital, Lady Davidson, and house hospitals such as Chasecote at Turramurra.

In 1903, Macleod wrote "it is agreed that no portion of Sydney is healthier than the North Shore, and no portion of North Shore healthier than the North Shore line. Plentiful evidence in support of this statement was afforded by the recent attempt on the part of the authorities to locate a consumptives' home at Hornsby. The people living along that line appreciated to the full the compliment thus paid the health-giving powers of the air in that district".

THEMATIC HISTORY CONCLUSIONS

Where historic areas are identified as having heritage value, known as 'heritage conservation areas', these demonstrate more than just an aesthetic character or streetscapes. Heritage conservation areas from the inner city, across west, east, south and north Sydney, provide evidence of the history of Sydney's planning and development. Through their surviving cohesion, these heritage precincts tell the story of Sydney's settlement from key periods, perhaps better than any individual site. Historic areas like those found in Ku-ring-gai specifically demonstrate the process of suburbanisation, arguably one of the most important in Australia's European development history – to the extent that Sydney has been described as the 'City of Suburbs'.

More than just housing or architecture, historic areas demonstrate important shifts in Australia's governance, technology, economy and society. Sydney's heritage conservation areas demonstrate key historic changes of European settlement that formed greater Sydney – from a penal colony to Australian federation, from city plague to city beautification, from rental to home ownership, from inner city to suburbs, as well as changes in population migration and education. Concentrated areas of historic housing document the extension of important transport routes from rivers to trams, bridges, rail and roads. Historic areas of housing also embody the changing aspirations of Australian society for living and home ownership, perhaps best known from the twentieth century as the 'great Australian dream'.

Each heritage conservation area demonstrates its own part in this broader development of Sydney, with an identity particular to its locality and historic period. The surviving unity of heritage conservation areas is no accident, but the result of key historic influences, their original planning and development, and subsequent community value and protection.



Above: Killara, Springdale Road, near station in c.1910 (State Archives, https://search.records.nsw.gov.au/permalink/f/1ebnd1/ADLIB_RNSW115668623)



Above: Killara, Springdale Road, Karranga Avenue and Arnold Street in circa 1933-34.
(Source: State Library, <https://collection.sl.nsw.gov.au/record/nGm3O3jY>)



Above: Killara, Karranga Avenue, in 1915 (Source: Ku-ring-gai local history collection)

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