

# Wahroonga (North) Heritage Conservation Area

## Review

**Final Draft Report**  
**September 2010**

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

## Background

In August 2004 Hornsby Council resolved to progress a study to assess the potential heritage significance of Wahroonga (North) as a heritage conservation area. The study resulted from a petition by local residents which sought protection of the heritage and streetscape qualities of Wahroonga in the area bounded by Myra Street, Alexandria Parade, Edgeworth David Avenue and the F3 Freeway.

Heritage consultants Godden Mackay Logan (GML) were appointed to undertake the *Wahroonga (North) Heritage Conservation Review*. The final report, dated July 2005, recommended (in part) that Council adopt a new heritage conservation area to be known as the Wahroonga (North) Heritage Conservation Area.

The process of establishing Wahroonga (North) as a Heritage Conservation Area required a draft Local Environmental Plan (LEP) to be prepared to amend the *Hornsby Shire Local Environmental Plan (HSLEP) 1994*. The draft LEP would include the proposed Heritage Conservation Area within Schedule E (Heritage Conservation Areas) of the *HSLEP 1994*. However, the draft LEP was delayed by advice from the Department of Planning in October 2004 that draft LEPs seeking to establish new heritage conservation areas would not be progressed until the Department had undertaken a review of these areas in consultation with the then NSW Heritage Office.

In 2005, Council resolved to prepare a draft LEP to establish the Wahroonga (North) Heritage Conservation Area in accordance with the recommendations of the GML study. The LEP process did not proceed as the Department would not support or progress the draft LEP amendment. Council was advised to allocate resources to the preparation of a comprehensive LEP in accordance with the NSW Government's *Standard Instrument*. This would allow the draft heritage conservation area to be considered in the context of the broader strategic planning objectives for Hornsby Shire rather than as a stand-alone proposal.

## Purpose of report

It has been five years since the GML report was completed. Accordingly, it is appropriate to review the findings of the report in the context of development approvals within the area since the report was finalised. The findings of this review will provide input to Council's new principal LEP with a view to determining whether or not to proceed with the draft Wahroonga (North) Conservation Area in the Comprehensive LEP.

The Review utilises the background information contained in the GML report. This includes details about the area's history and development. The review process has also included:

- Site inspections of the area
- Review of development approvals granted within the area since 2005
- Review of court decisions affecting sites within the area
- Review of the threats and opportunities relevant to the area in the context of its particular heritage and/or streetscape qualities
- Review of sites identified as contributory in the GML report.

The Review's findings and recommendations are based on a reassessment of current conditions in the Wahroonga (North) area, and consideration of the NSW Heritage Office heritage assessment criteria including inclusion and exclusion guidelines.

## 2. DEVELOPMENT HISTORY

The earliest subdivisions in Wahroonga (North) were offered for sale from the 1890's coinciding with the opening of the North Shore Railway Line. This is consistent with the key historic themes and development patterns of the upper North Shore, where development typically followed the transport (road and rail) corridors, and the more accessible and level land along the ridges.

The Wahroonga (North) area is associated with the subdivisions of the following Estates:

- Bundarra Estate - 1892, 1893 and 1895
- Bundarra Estate (Ingalara portion) – 1913
- Wahroonga Heights Estate – 1926
- Highlands Estate – 1933
- Hordern Estate – 1938
- Neringla Estate - 1950.

Despite land in the area being offered for sale from the 1890's, the post War period is the predominant development phase represented in the area. This is noted in the GML report as follows:

“While there had been advertised sales in the area from the early 1890's, the focus of the subdivisions and development was to the south and west of the study area, between the railway line and the Lane Cove Road (now Pacific Highway), around the developing Wahroonga Village.”

“Highlands” (No 9 Highlands Ave), is one of the earliest remaining houses in the area. “Highlands” was built in 1892-93 for Alfred Horden and his wife, and was located on twenty-four acres of land in the area between Edgeworth David Avenue, Myra Street, the railway corridor and Bundarra Avenue.

A section of the Highlands Estate was sold to the Government in 1923 for the construction of a school (now Waitara Public). The first general subdivision of the Highlands estate was in 1933, following the death of Alfred Hordern. The subsequent 1938 subdivision of the Hordern Estate saw previously unsold lots along offered again for sale along Myra Street between Oleander Road and Alexandria Parade, together with lots fronting the new Highlands Avenue.

The 1930 and 1943 aerial photographs confirm that the Wahroonga (North) area was at the western fringe of Wahroonga village well into the post War period. The 1943 aerial shows the pattern of more formally developed land on the eastern side of Douglas Avenue, being the area now to the east of the F3 Freeway, and the effect of Spring Gully creek as a physical barrier to development. The pattern of development evident from the 1943 aerial includes:

- Groupings of houses in Ingalara and Churchill Avenues and to a lesser extent the northern end of Woonona Avenue
- Groupings of smaller lots with houses at the southern end of Bundarra Avenue (near Alexandria Parade)
- Houses on larger estates on the western side of Bundarra Avenue in the area of the 1933 Highlands Estate subdivision.

Figure 2.1 shows a composite map of the major subdivisions of the area. The major subdivisions are closely linked to the main building periods of the area. This is generally reflected in Victorian/Federation and some Inter War buildings in the southern half of the area, and Inter War and Post War buildings in the north.

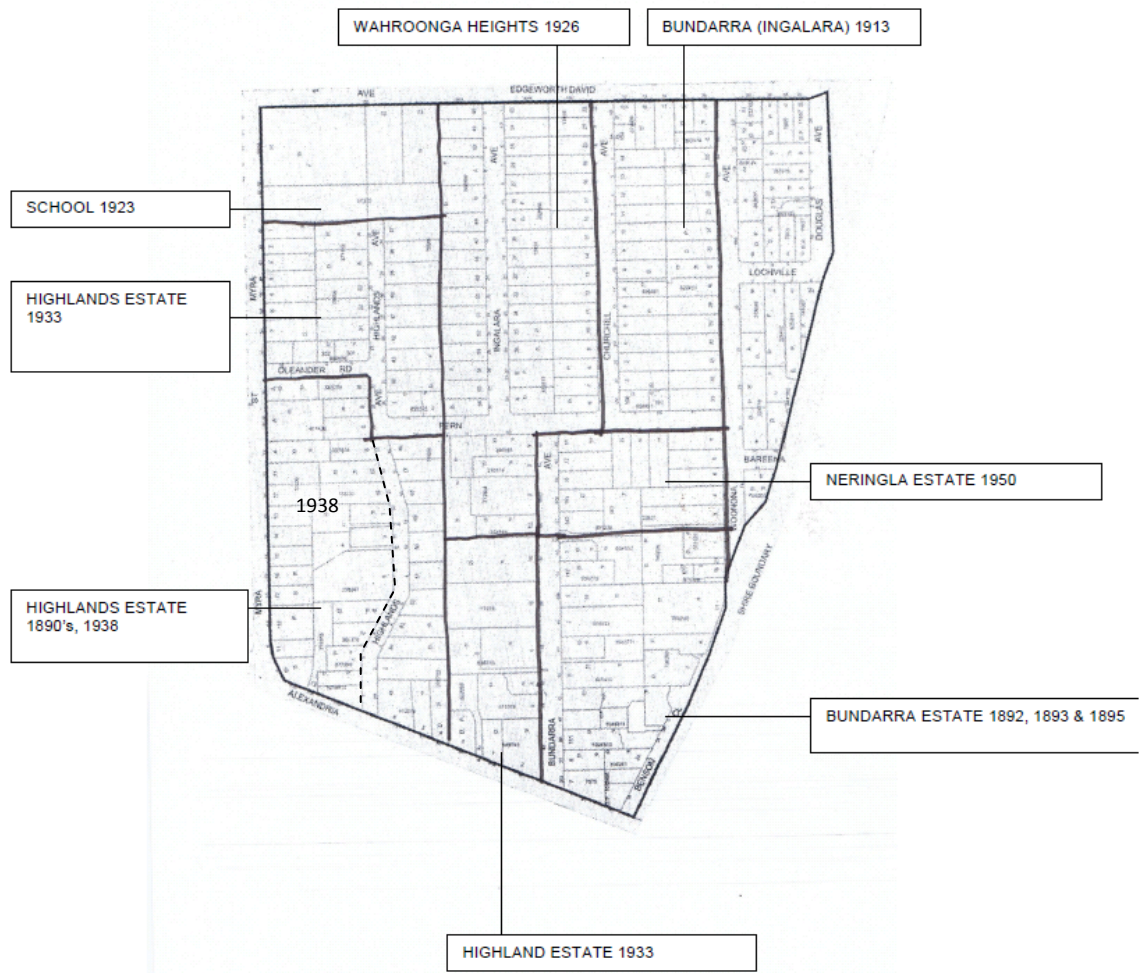


Figure 2.1 Major subdivisions – Wahroonga (North)

NOTE: There was some overlap in the area as part of the Bundarra Estate did not sell at the early auctions and was the subject of later subdivisions. The area to the east of Woonona Avenue was part of a larger land holding and was not part of the subdivision pattern of the other areas. The construction of the Freeway has placed it in the area.

**SUMMARY**

Details about the history and major subdivisions of Wahroonga (North) are derived from information contained in the GML report. Composite mapping of the historic estate boundaries (from the extracts of plans from the various estates as they were offered for sale included in the GML report) has highlighted relationships between the area’s incremental subdivision and patterns of development.

The composite map (Figure 2.1) clarifies the physical boundaries between the major subdivisions thereby allowing insight to the underlying factors influencing the different major development periods within the area.

### 3. STREETScape AND CHARACTER

The Wahroonga (North) area has two distinct precincts with different streetscape characters. These are the areas to the north and south of Fern Avenue. This section considers the characteristic features of the streets within each precinct with reference to the underlying subdivision history and pattern, building stock, landform and landscape features.

#### **Bundarra (Ingalara) and Wahroonga Heights Estates**

The area north of Fern Avenue includes the land that was subdivided in the Ingalara (1913) and Wahroonga Heights (1926) subdivisions. The lots are representative of typical suburban building lots of the period (800-900sqm) with frontages typically 18.29m.

The predominance of buildings from the Inter War and Post War periods reflects the delay between subdivision and take up of land in the area. The buildings range from modest brick houses, some well detailed, to contemporary infill buildings.

Existing heritage items include:

27 Churchill Avenue (House)

31 Ingalara Avenue (House)

Woonona Avenue (Street trees)

Items recommended for heritage listing by the GML report include:

15 Ingalara Avenue (House)

22 Ingalara Avenue (House)

The GML report also recommended listing of Nos. 58 and 60 Woonona Avenue. However, Council resolved not to progress with the heritage listings of these items. The Heritage Advisory Committee (HAC) did not support the heritage listing of No. 58 Woonona Avenue. The Committee commented that an approved subdivision involving the excise of the front garden of the parent property would negatively affect the streetscape presentation and setting of the property. Council also resolved that alterations and additions made to No. 60 Woonona Avenue detracted from its streetscape presentation and therefore heritage listing was not supported.

**Douglas Avenue** is a typical suburban street with development on the western side of the road. The land slopes down to the Freeway and houses are set into the landscape. The barrier of the Freeway is apparent in terms of disconnection with Wahroonga to the east and is comparable to the barrier to the area's development in the years post subdivision created by the creekline and steep topography.

**Lochville Street** is a short link road between Woonona Avenue and Douglas Avenue. New infill houses have been built on the southern side of the road. A group of single storey fibro Post War Austere buildings on the northern side of the road are representative of the area's later development.

Street trees, including a number of street tree heritage items, are dominant in the streetscape of **Woonona Avenue**. The landscape quality of the street is accentuated by the combination of topography, narrow road reserve and the subdivision pattern of long blocks to the western side of the street where houses typically have large setbacks. Between Fern Avenue and Lochville Street the character has been affected by the construction of contemporary dwellings which have replaced the original housing stock, and by subdivision creating infill sites.

**Churchill Avenue** marks the division between the Bundarra (Ingalara) Estate and the Wahroonga Heights Estate. The differentiation between the two estates is not apparent in the streetscape or building stock. The streetscape is characterized by a wider road reserve, with street trees a dominant and unifying feature.

**Ingalara Avenue** is characterised by a narrow road reserve with grass verges. New houses have been built at the southern end of the road at Nos. 20, 28 and 30. The most significant adverse impact on the street’s character is from the removal of a substantial native street tree in front of No 30. This occurred during the course of the Review.

### **Bundarra, Highlands and Hordern Estates**

The southern half of the Wahroonga (North) area comprises the earlier (1895) Bundarra Estate and the land progressively sold from the Highlands landholding (Highlands 1933 and Hordern 1938). Lots are typically larger, especially on the western side of Bundarra Avenue, where the area retains a character of larger estates with infill development. The character derives from the tree canopy, wider frontage of lots, more generous setbacks, low fencing and the irregular road layout of Highlands Avenue.

Existing heritage items include:

- 9 Highlands Avenue (“Highlands House” and garden)
- 34 Highlands Avenue (House)
- 43 Bundarra Avenue (Garden)
- 44 Bundarra Avenue (Garden and fence)
- 45 Bundarra Avenue (Garden)
- 46 Bundarra Avenue (Tree and fence)
- 48 Bundarra Avenue (Garden – “Landskrona”)
- 50 Bundarra Avenue (House)
- 51 Bundarra Avenue (Garden)
- 54 Bundarra Avenue (Garden)
- 55, 57 and 57A Bundarra Avenue (Garden)
- Bundarra Avenue (Street trees)
- 42 Woonona Avenue (“Cherrygarth” and garden)
- 46 Woonona Avenue (“Neringala” and garden)

Items recommended for heritage listing by the GML report include:

- 79 Alexandria Parade (House and fence)
- 58-60 Bundarra Avenue (House and garden)
- 64 Bundarra Avenue (House)

The GML report also recommended listing of No. 80 Alexandria Parade and No. 4 Highlands Avenue. Council resolved not to progress with the heritage listing of these items. The HAC did not support the heritage listing of No. 89 Alexandria Parade as it acknowledged that the house has had substantial additions over time and therefore, its integrity has been compromised. The house at No. 4 Highlands Avenue recommended for listing by the GML report has been demolished.

The **northern end of Highlands Avenue** between Oleander Road and Waitara Public School is characterized by the consistent setbacks and scale of the buildings which are in garden settings

with mature landscaping. The land was used by the military as a field park regiment camp during World War 2. The 1943 aerial confirms that the land was undeveloped at the time.

The streetscape of the **southern end of Highlands Road** draws its character from the tree canopy, irregular road pattern and by the wider frontages of the lots. The buildings, particularly on the western side of the road are typically substantial in size, often two storeys and with larger setbacks. This section of the area retains the character of larger estates from the 1938 subdivision of the land.

**Bundarra Avenue** retains a pattern of long lots with regular frontages, particularly on the eastern (Bundarra 1895) side of the road. Houses on the western side of the road (within the Highlands 1933 subdivision) are typically larger in scale with substantial setbacks. The streetscape character derives from the wide, straight road reserve and the landscape setting, which is a combination of the bush setting and significant street trees, and the mature landscaping of front gardens and fences.

#### *SUMMARY*

GML noted that the area's streetscape "presented as two categories" being the "earlier grand estates and 'first subdivisions'" and "the later interwar subdivisions" (p.28). The character assessment in Section 3 of the GML report identifies stand-out examples of the streetscape and building stock. The report concludes that the "potential conservation area is of interest for the manner in which it illustrates the evolution of closer settlement on Sydney's Upper North Shore – from the initial land grants and timber-getting interests, to the grand estates of the merchant gentry, to the eventual subdivision of cottage lots" (pg. 30).

The Review has independently re-assessed the study area's streetscape and character through an evaluation of the characteristic features of each street. The analysis highlights connections between the building stock, street layout, landform and landscape elements in the context of the boundaries between the primary subdivisions of Wahroonga (North).

The approach is intentionally different to that used by GML and provides a platform to test the veracity of the GML findings in the sections that follow. In particular, there is a concern that the GML conclusions do not adequately reflect the importance of the distinctions between the northern and southern precincts of Wahroonga (North).



## 4. DETERMINING SIGNIFICANCE

### *Defining Heritage Conservation Areas*

The Comprehensive LEP Standard Instrument defines heritage conservation areas as

“an area of land:

- (a) shown on the Heritage Map as a heritage conservation area or as a place of Aboriginal heritage significance, and
- (b) the location and nature of which is described in Schedule 5, and includes any heritage items situated on or within that area”.

This definition does not provide any insights to the qualities that make a conservation area. The NSW Heritage Act 1977 uses the term “heritage precinct” to mean:

“An area which contains one or more buildings, works, relics or places which are items of environmental heritage and which have a character which should be conserved”.

When the National Trust considers urban conservation areas for classification the factors set out below are considered. These factors are consistent with the considerations used in the current work:

- subdivision layout
- pattern of development
- parks and gardens
- style and form of buildings
- types and functional uses
- historical or symbolic sites
- streetscapes and skylines
- urban spaces
- landmarks and
- views within and towards the area.

It is accepted that not all elements within a heritage conservation area will have heritage value. The presence of elements with little or no heritage value does not diminish the value of the area.

### *Heritage assessment criteria and gradings of significance*

An item or area can be considered to be of local heritage significance if it can be found to satisfy one or more of the NSW heritage assessment criteria. The criteria, and inclusions and exclusion guidelines are set out in Section 6 of this report.

The NSW Heritage Manual sets out criteria for gradings of heritage significance (below). The gradings acknowledge that different components of a place can make different relative contributions to heritage value. Loss of integrity or condition can also diminish significance.

<b>Grading</b>	<b>Justification (local significance)</b>	<b>Status</b>
EXCEPTIONAL	Rare or outstanding element directly contributing to an item's local significance.	Fulfils criteria for local listing
HIGH	High degree of original fabric. Demonstrates a key element of the item's significance. Alterations do not detract from significance.	Fulfils criteria for local listing
MODERATE	Altered or modified elements. Elements with little heritage value, but which contribute to the overall significance of the item.	Fulfils criteria for local listing
LITTLE	Alterations detract from significance. Difficult to interpret.	Does not meet criteria for local listing
INTRUSIVE	Damaging to the item's heritage significance.	Does not meet criteria for local listing

#### *SUMMARY*

This section responds to a concern that there was a need to provide further clarity on the types of considerations to be taken into account when determining whether the GML conclusions were valid for Wahroonga (North). The considerations which form the rationale for the Review are generally consistent with those that are implicit in the GML report.

The gradings to justify local heritage significance are extracted from the NSW Heritage Manual and are the same as used by GML. They are included for the purposes of clarity.

## 5. ANALYSIS

### Characteristic elements

Analysis of the area’s subdivision patterns and housing stock the area confirms that Wahroonga (North) can be split into two sections being the South and North Precincts. The Southern Precinct is described first as it represents the earlier phase of the area’s development and history.

**Southern Precinct:** Bounded by Oleander Road (south side), Fern Avenue, the F3 Freeway, Alexandria Parade and Myra Street. The Southern Precinct includes the southern end of Highlands Avenue, Bundarra Avenue, Woonona Avenue (south of Fern Avenue) and Bareena Avenue.

**Northern Precinct:** Bounded by Edgeworth David Avenue, the F3 Freeway, Fern Avenue, Myra Street and Oleander Road. The Northern Precinct includes Ingalara Avenue, Churchill Avenue, the northern end of Woonona Avenue, Lochville Street and Douglas Avenue.



Figure 5.1 – Northern and Southern Precincts, Wahroonga (North)

The Southern and Northern Precincts are distinguished by their subdivision dates and patterns, built form, streetscape, landscaping and characteristic building period. The characteristic elements for each precinct are described below, and are key to understanding the potential conservation area’s key qualities.

Later infill has occurred in both precincts. In the Southern Precinct this has taken the form of re-subdivision of earlier, larger landholdings. In contrast, the Northern Precinct has seen greater demolition of earlier buildings to make way for contemporary housing.

The heritage items in each precinct make an important contribution to the built character. The Southern Precinct includes three examples of substantial late Victorian/Federation houses while the Northern Precinct includes two Inter War examples. The characteristic development patterns are readily distinguishable, and are supported by the historic development of each area.

*Southern Precinct – Characteristic Elements*

Date of subdivision	Bundarra Estate 1892, 1893 and 1895 Includes Highlands Estate (1933) and Hordern Estate (1938)
Subdivision pattern	Large irregular lots with later subdivisions and battleaxe lots
Built form	Large, two storey houses on substantial landscaped lots
Streetscape	Winding or sloping streets with mature street plantings
Landscape	Large, well planted gardens with mature trees
Characteristic building period	1892-1939
Characteristic style	Federation, Inter War

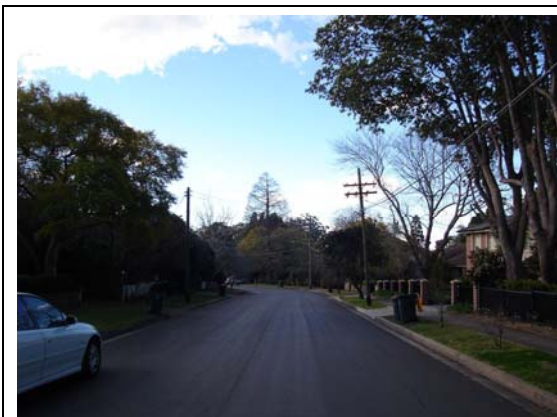


Image 1  
Highlands Avenue



Image 2  
Modern infill development, Highlands Avenue



Image 3  
“Highlands House”, a substantial Federation house built in 1895



Image 4  
Inter War infill, Highlands Avenue



Image 5  
Inter War infill, Highlands Avenue

*Northern Precinct – Characteristic Elements*

Date of subdivision	Bundarra Estate 1892, 1893 and 1895 Includes Bundarra (Ingalara) Estate (1913) and Wahroonga Heights Estate (1926)
Subdivision pattern	Regular lots with no later subdivisions
Built form	Small, single storey houses on landscaped lots
Streetscape	Level and sloping streets with street plantings
Landscape	Planted gardens with mature trees
Characteristic building period	1913-1950
Characteristic style	Inter War/Post War





Image 6  
34 Highlands Avenue, substantial Inter War house



Image 7  
Inter War house, Ingalara Avenue



Image 8  
Heavily altered Inter War house, Ingalara Avenue

	<p>Image 9 Inter War colonial style house that has been subdivided with new two storey houses, Fern Avenue</p>
	<p>Image 10 Inter War colonial style house that has been subdivided with new two storey house, Churchill Avenue</p>
	<p>Image 11 Inter War fibro houses that were part of the larger development area to the east. Note loss of street trees in front of photo</p>

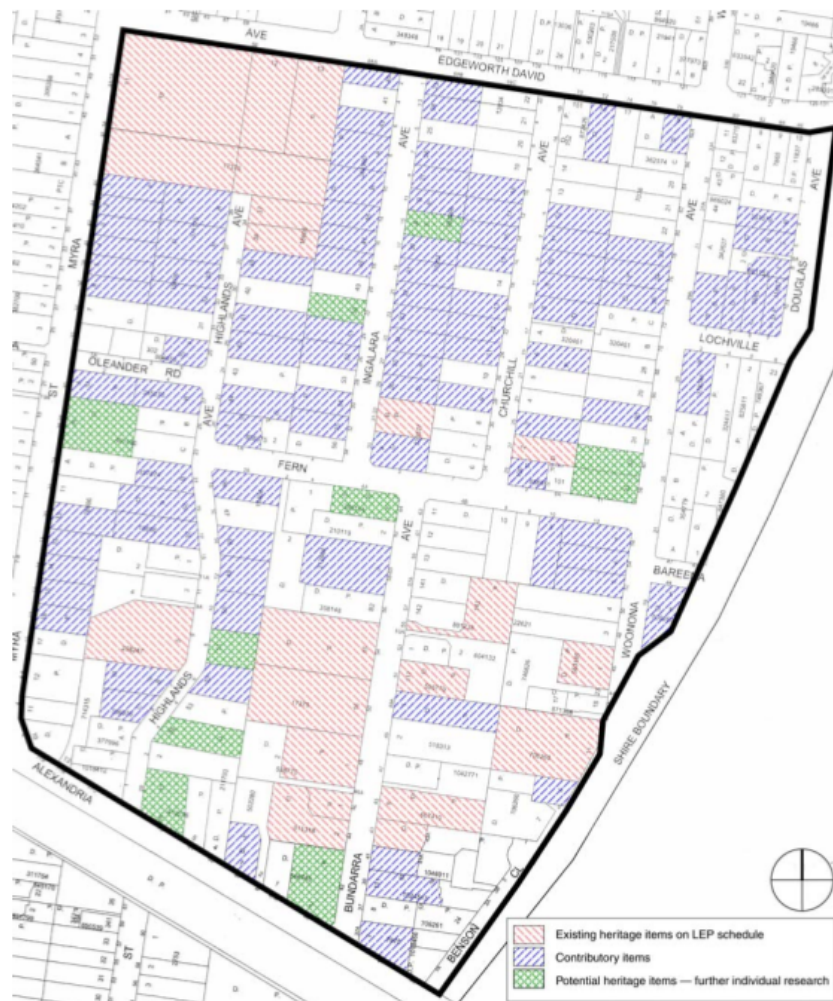
**Building contribution analysis**

The GML investigation assessed the contribution of buildings within Wahroonga (North) in relation to the area’s significance. The process was based on the conservation principle that a major objective of conservation management is “to retain evidence of (an area’s) history, as well as other considerations such as aesthetic values” (pg 39).

Contributory items were defined as:

A place, building or other feature that contributes to the significance of the conservation area or precinct, usually for its historic or aesthetic values, or both. Upon further research and investigation, some may potentially be heritage items in their own right. Contributory items may also include some buildings whose appearance has been adversely altered but which still demonstrate historic values of significance.

The GML findings are shown in Figure 5.2 (being Figure 5.1 of the GML report).



**Figure 5.1** Study Area Wahroonga (North) Potential Heritage Conservation Area, showing existing heritage items, contributory items and potential heritage items.

Figure 5.2 (Figure 5.1 from GML report)

Current best practice uses contribution ratings to evaluate key aspects of an area’s character or qualities that underpin the heritage significance, particularly in terms of key phases of development. That is, greater emphasis is placed on significant historical periods or building phases for the area.



Definitions developed for the City of Sydney by Paul Davies Pty Ltd, Architects and used by Davies for the Ku-ring-gai Town Centres Heritage Conservation Areas Review (September 2008) are considered current best practice. These definitions have been used to re-assess the Wahroonga (North) area for this report as shown in Figure 5.3:

Contributory	Significant historical period layer, highly or substantially intact Significant historical period layer, altered, yet recognizable and reversible
Neutral	Significant historical period layer, altered in form, unlikely to be reversed New sympathetic layer or representative of a new layer
Detracting	Non significant historical period layer Detracting (in either scale or materials/details) New detracting development Other detracting development

The revised mapping shows a smaller number of contributory items due to construction of new dwellings and/or alterations and additions. However, both assessments confirm that there are a large number of properties in each precinct that contribute to the significant character of the area.

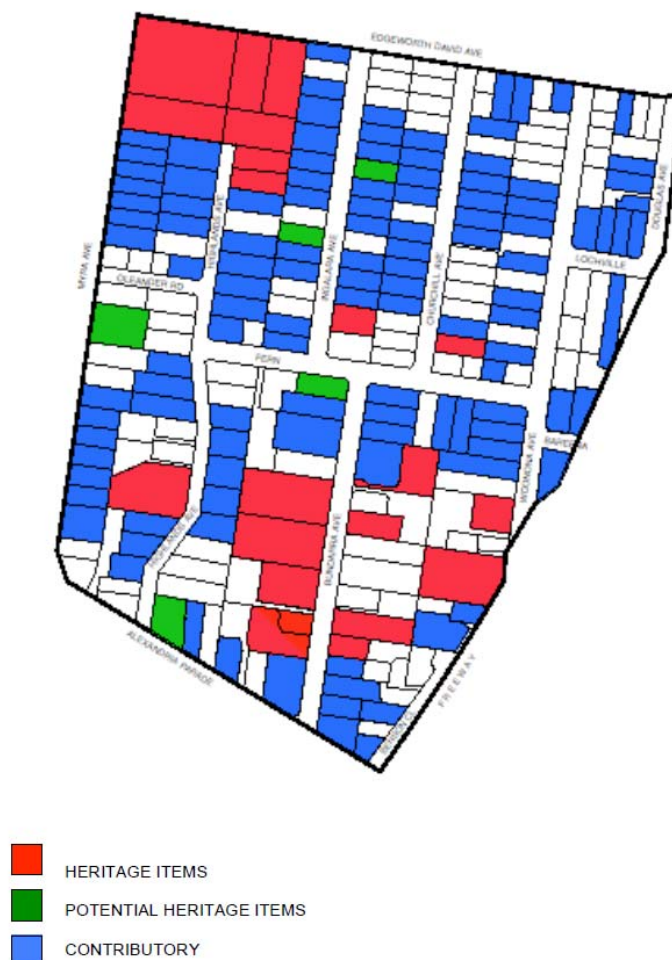


Figure 5.3 – Building contribution mapping, Wahroonga (North) 2010

## Review of threats and opportunities

### *Myra Street Senior's Living Development*

An appeal against the deemed refusal of a Seniors Living development proposal for 24-28 Myra Street and 25-27 Highlands Avenue was heard by the Land and Environment Court in April 2005. The case considered impacts on neighbourhood amenity and streetscape, heritage including impacts on heritage listed street trees in Myra Street, landscape and a range of general planning matters.

The court appointed heritage expert Jennifer Hill considered the potential heritage significance of the existing house at 26-28 Myra Street. The building had been recommended for listing as a local heritage item in a report prepared by Tropman Architects (18 January 2005) as part of Hornsby Council's Heritage Review Stage 3. A second report by Noel Bell Ridley Smith found that the building was not worthy of listing "due to its representative nature".

Hill notes in her evidence:

"The National Trust in its letter of 15 December 2004, notes that the site and building are worthy of listing. The Trust notes that "the building is not part of a cohesive streetscape but this is because many of the buildings in the area have clearly been demolished and replaced with fairly standard houses that bear no relationship to their immediate surroundings.

The NSW Heritage Office in its letter of 25 January 2005, considers that the property at 26-28 Myra Street is unlikely to meet the threshold of State Heritage significance."

The evidence provides the following comparative assessment of the Myra Street property:

"A preliminary assessment of the 800 inventory sheets in the Hornsby LEP would indicate a large number of representative examples. Many of the inventory sheets describe representative examples as good examples and typical examples as unusual. Overall, the thresholds used are lower than in equivalent local government areas. The recent listing by Tropman & Tropman would also suggest a lower threshold.

A review of Myra Street, Oleander Avenue and Highlands Avenue would suggest that the area does not meet the threshold for listing as a Conservation Area."

The Court appointed expert's opinion was accepted by the Commissioner, who found that the existing building at 26-28 Myra Street was "unexceptional in its quality and was unusual only in that it was a large building in a large setting." The application was approved although the applicant was required to revise the plans to delete one dwelling and alter the design to better reflect the character of the area. Importantly, the case highlights the importance of ensuring the thresholds for any future recommendation in response of the area is consistent with current best practice.

### *Contemporary infill housing and developments since 2005*

A number of developments have been approved in the Wahroonga (North) area since completion of the GML report. Details of development approvals are included in Appendix A.

Field work confirms that some of the approved developments have affected (or have potential to affect) the special qualities of the area or its potential heritage significance. This includes:

- New dwellings, particularly two storey buildings that do not respect the established setbacks, materials, form and massing, landscaping or similar elements of the locality
- Subdivisions and infill development on newly created lots

- Works to heritage items that adversely affect their significance or setting, including demolition of heritage items
- Removal of significant trees and street trees, especially where they contribute to the area's bush character.

The analysis confirms that Wahroonga (North) retains sufficient integrity to satisfy the thresholds to support listing as a heritage conservation area. However, there are real concerns about the extent of change that has occurred. This includes changes documented in the GML report and subsequent developments. The area is considered to be close to the point where the significant qualities will be critically reduced should further unsympathetic incremental change occur.

### **Comparative analysis**

The Wahroonga (North) area has been considered in relation to comparable areas to the north and west as a means to:

- ensure appropriate thresholds are used for this Review and
- determine whether the alternate areas have greater potential to demonstrate the qualities seen in Wahroonga (North).

No other areas were found to exhibit the same combination of underlying development history and built and landscape qualities as found in the proposed heritage conservation area as summarised below.

#### *North Waitara*

The area to the north of the railway exhibits some of the characteristics of Wahroonga (North) in terms of scale, use and housing styles, but lacks a recognizable, early subdivision pattern and the large residences that anchored the development of the Wahroonga (North) area. The larger, early houses are central to the character that derives from the early built form, subdivision pattern and landscape that distinguishes the proposed heritage conservation area.

#### *Hornsby*

The area to the north of Edgeworth David Avenue and west of the F3 Freeway has buildings from the same periods as the Wahroonga (North) area, but lacks the early subdivision pattern and large residences that anchored the development of the Wahroonga (North) area.

This area has been the subject of considerable post war and modern development, particularly in the western section, where a number of three storey apartments have been constructed. The Hornsby and Ku-ring-gai Hospital has overlaid the residential origins with a predominance of non-residential/special use/medical related uses, which have in turn distorted the street alignments through traffic management measures and the like.

*SUMMARY*

The GML report acknowledges the key characteristics and variations between what it describes as the “earlier grand estates and ‘first subdivisions’” and the later Interwar subdivisions, but does not differentiate between these areas in the description of the significant characteristics of Wahroonga (North). In comparison, the distinctions between the northern and southern sections are central to the Review’s support of the proposed heritage conservation area. The characteristic elements for the Northern and Southern Precincts are generally consistent with those noted in the GML report.

The building contribution analysis of the Review is similar in concept to that completed by GML. The key difference is the Review’s stronger connection to significant historical periods or building phases. The updated approach is consistent with current best practice, and further validates the need to consider Wahroonga (North) as two precincts within the one area. While the revised mapping shows a smaller number of contributory items, both assessments confirm that there are a large number of properties in the north and south precincts that contribute to the significant character of the area.

## 6. EVALUATION OF HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

### Heritage criteria assessment

The Heritage Assessment Manual establishes the criteria for assessing the significance of potential heritage items and areas in NSW. This section includes extracts of the Inclusion and Exclusion guidelines from the Manual together with the examples of items that meet the criteria.

Section 4.3 of the GML report provides a response to each of the heritage assessment criteria. It is implicit in the text that the statements are derived from the Heritage Assessment Manual Inclusion guidelines.

An independent statement for each criterion has been prepared as part of the Review. The updated statements are set out beside the GML assessment and reflect the re-evaluation of the characteristic elements and contributory building analysis. The revised statements place emphasis on different aspects of the area's character and development history compared to the GML statements. While there are differences in the framing of the statements, there is only one instance where the revised statement is significantly at variance with the GML conclusion. Comments are included in the text.

The major differences arising are from the Review's assessment of the heritage significance of Wahroonga (North) are:

- the GML report finds that the area has social significance where the Review has not found any evidence to confirm that the area meets this criteria
- the Review has excluded references to an association with the late Robert Klippel as part of Historic Associative significance as it was not able to be corroborated
- the revised statement of significance for the area is structured to respond to the heritage assessment criteria rather than as a general descriptive statement. While both approaches are valid, the revised statement is considered to give a stronger foundation for the assessment of future works within the area.

*Criterion (a) An item is important in the course, or pattern, of NSW’s cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area)*

Guidelines for INCLUSION:

- Shows evidence of a significant human activity
- Associated with a significant activity or historical phase
- Maintains or shows the continuity of a historical process or activity

Guidelines for EXCLUSION:

- Has incidental or unsubstantiated connections with historically important activities or processes
- Provides evidence of activities or processes that are of dubious historical importance
- Has been so altered that it can no longer provide evidence of a particular association.

Types of items which meet criterion (a):

- Items which demonstrate strong associations to past customs, cultural practices, philosophies or systems of government, regardless of the intactness of the item or any structure on the place
- Items associated with significant historical events, regardless of the intactness of the item or any structure on the place
- Significant cultural landscapes and other items demonstrating overlays of the continual pattern of human use and occupation and/or
- Items where the physical fabric (above or below ground) demonstrates any of the points described above.

GML Assessment	Review
<p>The Wahroonga North area is important in the history of Hornsby Shire as part of the area’s consolidation as a residential area of high quality and amenity. It reflects the evolution of the Shire from timber-getting through to merchants’ retreats and estates to the bush suburb idyll it still represents.</p> <p>In that the area is associated with a significant activity or phase, it conforms with the inclusion guidelines.</p>	<p>The development of the area is closely associated with the opening of the North Shore Railway line in the 1890’s. The area includes land in the Bundarra Estate (1892), an early subdivision of the locality.</p> <p>The area contains some important early houses including “Highland’s House” (1892), “Neringla” (1895) and “Cherrygarth” (1897).</p> <p>The area is also important for the Inter War subdivisions of the Bundarra Estate (Ingalara) (1913), Wahroonga Heights Estate (1926), Highlands Estate (1933), Hordern Estate (1938) and the Inter War development of the area.</p>
Local significance	Review assessment: High Local Significance

#### *Comment*

The Review finds that Wahroonga (North) meets this criterion through its association with the opening of the North Shore Railway line, subdivision history and physical links arising from the remaining early houses. The broader nature of the GML statement is reframed to identify the particular elements that are considered to contribute to meeting the criterion. This includes excluding references to timber getters and the early settlement of Hornsby which appear to be less directly relevant in this instance.

*Criterion (b) An item has strong or special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in the cultural or natural history of NSW (or the cultural or natural history of the local area)*

Guidelines for INCLUSION:

- Shows evidence of a significant human occupation
- Associated with a significant event, person or group of persons.

Guidelines for EXCLUSION:

- Has incidental or unsubstantiated connections with historically important people or events
- Provides evidence of people or events that are of dubious historical importance
- Has been so altered that it can no longer provide evidence of a particular association.

Types of items which meet criterion (b):

- Items which demonstrate strong associations to a particular event, historical theme, people or philosophies, regardless of the intactness of the item or any of its structures
- Items associated with significant historical events, regardless of the intactness of the item or any structure on the place and/or
- Items where the physical fabric (above or below ground) demonstrates any of the points described above.

GML Assessment	Review
<p>The character of the potential Conservation Area has been strongly influenced by the long endurance, but eventual subdivision of, the Hordern Family Estate, the Highlands, largely because of the commitment to the Estate of the family matriarch Caroline Hordern.</p> <p>Typical of the upper North Shore, the area has had notable residents from the arts and politics; for example, the late Robert Klippel, an important noteworthy Australian sculptor, and Sir Howard Beale, local representative in parliament and cabinet minister.</p> <p>The area is therefore demonstrated to be associated with significant local persons.</p>	<p>The area is strongly associated with significant local persons including the Hordern family (who built Highlands House) and the Hordern Family Estate, and particularly the family matriarch Caroline Hordern.</p>
Local significance	Assessment: High Local Significance

#### *Comment*

The Review agrees that Wahroonga (North) meets this criterion. However, the revised statement excludes references to the late Robert Klippel as they were unable to be corroborated. The statement should be updated should information confirming the relationship be found.

*Criterion (c) An item is significant in demonstrating aesthetic characteristics and/or a high degree of creative or technical achievement in NSW (or the local area)*

Guidelines for INCLUSION:

- Shows or is associated with creative or technical innovation or achievement
- Inspiration for a creative or technical innovation or achievement
- Aesthetically distinctive
- Landmark qualities
- Exemplifies a particular taste, style or technology

Guidelines for EXCLUSION:

- Not a major work by an important designer or artist
- Lost design or technical integrity
- The positive visual or sensory appeal or landmark and scenic qualities have been more than temporarily degraded
- Only a loose association with a creative or technical achievement.

Types of items which meet criterion (c):

- Items which demonstrate creative or technical excellence, innovation or achievement
- Items which have been the inspiration for creative or technical achievement
- Items which demonstrate distinctive aesthetic attributes in form or composition
- Items which demonstrate a highly original and influential style, such as an important early (seminal) work of a major architect and/or
- Items which demonstrate the culmination of a particular architectural style (climactic).

GML Assessment	Review
The potential Conservation Area is aesthetically distinctive, owing to the presence of a fine collection of residential dwellings of different periods and styles, but unified and made complementary by their bushland setting.	The potential Conservation Area is aesthetically distinctive, owing to the presence of a fine collection of residential dwellings including “Highland’s House” (1892), “Neringla” (1895) and “Cherrygarth” (1897) with an overlay of Inter War houses unified and made complementary by their landscaped setting.
Local significance	Assessment: High Local Significance

*Comment*

The revised statement agrees in principle with the GML assessment. Details of the surviving early houses have been inserted, and attention is drawn to the importance of the overlay provided by development from the Inter War period.



*Criterion (d) An item has strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group in NSW (or the local area) for social, cultural or spiritual reasons*

Guidelines for INCLUSION:

- Important for associations with an identifiable group
- Important to a community's sense of place

Guidelines for EXCLUSION:

- Only important to the community for amenity reasons
- Retained only in preference to a proposed alternative.

Types of items which meet criterion (d):

- Items which are esteemed by the community for their cultural values
- Items which if damaged or destroyed would cause the community a sense of loss; and/or
- Items which contribute to a community's sense of identity.

Items are excluded if they are only valued for their amenity (service convenience) or if the community seeks their retention only in preference to a proposed alternative.

GML Assessment	Review
The potential Conservation Area has demonstrated importance to its community's sense of place, expressed in the community consultation undertaken by Council to discover attitudes to the proposed implementation of the Conservation Area.	The area has no special associations for any particular group.
Indicated through community workshops and in submissions	Assessment: Does not meet the criteria

*Comment*

The Review has not found any evidence to demonstrate that Wahroonga (North) meets this criterion. This conclusion is at variance with the GML finding.

*Criterion (e) An item has potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of NSW's cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area)*

Guidelines for INCLUSION:

- Potential to yield new or further substantial scientific and/or archaeological information
- Important benchmark or reference site or type
- Provides evidence of past human cultures that is unavailable elsewhere

Guidelines for EXCLUSION:

- The knowledge gained would be irrelevant to research on science, human history or culture
- Little archaeological or research potential
- Only contains information that is readily available from other resources or archaeological sites

GML Assessment	Review
The potential Conservation Area retains an important capacity to reveal more about its significance through research and physical surveying, contributing to the community's better understanding of its history. In this capacity, it is arguably an important reference site for Hornsby.	The potential Conservation Area is an important reference site for Hornsby in relation to the early development of the area after completion of the North Shore Railway line and the later development in the Inter War period.  The area has potential to reveal its pre-Victorian development use through research.
Local significance	Assessment: Local Significance

*Comment*

The revised statement agrees in principle with the GML assessment. The statement has been reframed to be more specific about how the area is considered to meet the inclusion criteria through the major periods of subdivision and development.

*Criterion (f) An item possesses uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of NSW’s cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area)*

Guidelines for INCLUSION:

- Provides evidence of a defunct custom, way of life or process
- Demonstrates a process, custom or other human activity that is in danger of being lost
- Shows unusually accurate evidence of a significant human activity
- Is the only example of its type
- Demonstrates designs or techniques of exceptional interest
- Shows rare evidence of a significant human activity important to a community.

Guidelines for EXCLUSION:

- Not rare
- Numerous but under threat.

GML Assessment	Review
<p>The potential Conservation Area demonstrates residential development exhibiting qualities that are rare within Hornsby and which are endangered by continuing unsympathetic development activity.</p> <p>In the Highlands and fine housing of Ingalara Avenue, it has a property of exceptional interest and a streetscape of rare quality, amenity and integrity for the Hornsby LGA.</p>	<p>The potential Conservation Area demonstrates the post 1892 residential development of the area exhibiting built and landscape qualities that are becoming rare within Hornsby, and which are endangered by continuing unsympathetic development activity.</p> <p>“Highlands House”, and the fine Inter War housing in Ingalara Avenue, includes properties of high interest and streetscapes of considerable quality, amenity and integrity for the Hornsby LGA.</p>
Local significance	Assessment: Rare

*SUMMARY*

The revised statement agrees in principle with the GML assessment. The revised statement is reframed to include specific references to primary development phases of the area.

*Criterion (g) An item is important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of NSW's cultural or natural places or environments*

Guidelines for INCLUSION:

- A fine example of its type
- Has the principal characteristics of an important class or group of items
- Has attributes typical of a particular way of life, philosophy, custom, significant process, design, technique or activity
- A significant variation to a class of items
- Part of a group which collectively illustrates a representative type
- Outstanding because of its setting, condition or size
- Outstanding because of its integrity or the esteem in which it is held.

Guidelines for EXCLUSION:

- Poor example of type
- Does not include or has lost the range of characteristics of a type
- Does not represent well the characteristics that make up a significant variation of a type.

GML Assessment	Review
In its collection of largely intact and harmonious housing, outstanding within Hornsby for their quality and integrity as a largely contemporary group, and complemented by their remarkable bushland suburban setting, the area is arguably of high local importance to Hornsby.	<p>The area is representative of the residential development of the area following the establishment of the North Shore Railway with the early development of substantial houses on large lots followed by Inter War subdivision and development.</p> <p>The area is distinguished by its fine collection of Federation houses and good quality Inter War housing that provides a consistent built form in a landscaped setting.</p>
Local significance	<p>Assessment:</p> <p>Representative Historically at a Local Level</p> <p>Representative Aesthetically at a Local Level</p> <p>Representative Technically at a Local Level</p>

**SUMMARY**

The revised statement is consistent with the GML statement but includes more specific references to the primary development and building phases of Wahroonga (North).

**Statement of significance**

The Wahroonga (North) Heritage Conservation Area is closely associated with the opening of the North Shore Railway line in the 1890's, and includes land in the early estates of the locality, Bundarra Estate (1892) and its subsequent Federation development. It also includes the pre War and Inter War subdivisions of the Bundarra (Ingalara) Estate (1913), Wahroonga Heights Estate (1926) and the two divisions of the Highlands Estate (1933 and 1938) that led to the Inter War development of the area.

The Heritage Conservation Area is strongly associated with significant local persons including the Hordern Family and particularly the family matriarch, Caroline Hordern and the Hordern Family Estate which centered on their mansion, "Highlands House. "

The Heritage Conservation Area is aesthetically distinctive, with a strong collection of Federation residential buildings. This includes "Highlands House" (1892), "Neringla" (1895) and "Cherrygarth" (1897). The overlay of Inter War houses is unified and made complementary by the landscaped setting.

The Heritage Conservation Area is important as a reference site for Hornsby, particularly in relation to the early development of the area. The area has potential to reveal its pre Victorian development and use through research.

The Heritage Conservation Area demonstrates the post 1892 residential development of the area, exhibiting built and landscape qualities that are becoming rare within Hornsby and which are endangered by continuing unsympathetic development.

## 7. SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Wahroonga (North) area was first considered for possible listing as a heritage conservation area in 2004. A report commissioned by Hornsby Council and prepared by GML recommended that Council proceed with the listing of the area due to its heritage value. A draft LEP was prepared to facilitate the area's listing but did not proceed as Council was instructed to consider the matter as part of its Comprehensive LEP. The findings of this report will feed into the Comprehensive LEP.

The findings of this study confirm the previous findings of the GML report that the Wahroonga (North) area meets the objectives and criteria for inclusion as a heritage conservation area. The area is found to be of historic, aesthetic and technical scientific significance at a local level and represent the development of the Wahroonga area from the 1890's to the 1950's.

The current layout of the area represents the subdivision patterns from all major development periods and is clearly readable in the road pattern, built form and landscape of the area. The area contains a substantial number of characteristic buildings from the key development periods. This includes excellent examples of Federation and Inter War houses which are listed individually as heritage items. The review confirms the recommended heritage listing of the following items which were previously identified by the GML report:

- 15 Ingalara Avenue (House)
- 22 Ingalara Avenue (House)
- 79 Alexandria Parade (House and fence)
- 58-60 Bundarra Avenue (House and garden)
- 64 Bundarra Avenue (House)

It is noted that other properties recommended for further consideration in the GML report have been subject to review and are not recommended for listing.

The area is subject to ongoing threat from contemporary housing developments and loss of the native tree canopy on private land and in road reserves. A review of recent developments, including a number of approvals granted since the GML report, highlight the impacts to the area's integrity through unsympathetic alterations to characteristic buildings and in a few cases, demolition/redevelopment of buildings identified in the GML report as being characteristic. The loss of mature street trees and garden plantings compounds the impact of these changes.

Irrespective of the changes that have occurred since 2004, the area has been found to have a consistent development theme and sufficient integrity to justify listing as a heritage conservation area. The layout and built form reflects the major development periods in the area, being Federation and Inter War, and the shift from large houses in expansive, landscaped grounds to smaller homes on regular lots with well tended gardens. This is apparent in a north/south division of the area and it is recommended that the proposed heritage conservation area be split into two components. The precincts will allow controls to be tailored to reflect the historic and current subdivision pattern and primary building stock:

- Southern Precinct: Bounded by Oleander Road (south side), Fern Avenue, the F3 Freeway, Alexandria Parade and Myra Street. Includes the southern end of Highlands Avenue, Bundarra Avenue, Woonona Avenue (south of Fern Avenue) and Bareena Avenue.

Northern Precinct: Bounded by Edgeworth David Avenue, the F3 Freeway, Fern Avenue, Myra Street and Oleander Road. Includes Ingalara Avenue, Churchill Avenue, the northern end of Woonona Avenue, Lochville Street and Douglas Avenue.

It is recommended that Council proceed to formalise the area's listing as part of the Comprehensive LEP. The Heritage Conservation Area should be supported by development controls which support the matters previously identified by the GML report and the following additional considerations:

- Some flexibility for two storey dwellings in the Southern Precinct, especially where it can be demonstrated that the new building will be complemented by a reasonable landscaped setting
- Retaining the single storey, more modest scale in the Northern Precinct
- Avoiding changes to driveways and the like where street trees or existing mature plantings could be affected.

## APPENDIX A – Review of development approvals, 2005 to present

### *Bundarra (Ingalara) Precinct (1913 Subdivision)*

Address	Heritage status Date of building	GML Notes	Development
58 Woonona Ave	Original house pre-1943	Potential heritage item - an example of the smaller, individual houses scattered through the area	DA/1617/2009 New 2 storey house on subdivided lot fronting Woonona Ave Note: Heritage listing not proceeding
60 Woonona Ave	Original house pre-1943	Potential heritage item - as for 58 Woonona Ave	DA/2347/2004 Alts and adds to dwelling including extension forward of the former building line and second floor addition Note: Heritage listing not proceeding
29 Woonona Ave	Post 1943	Garden of contributory dwelling	DA/1728/2008 New infill dwelling, part single and part 2 storey, double garage Constructed
27 Churchill Ave	Heritage item Simple Inter-war weatherboard constructed 1925/26		DA/1981/2006 Alts and adds to building, carport and garage to rear Constructed
29 Churchill Ave	Post 1943	Contributory	DA/862/2005 Second storey addition

### *Wahroonga Heights Precinct (1926 Subdivision)*

Address	Heritage status	GML Notes	Development
6 Churchill Ave	N/A		DA/611/2005 Demolition of existing building and construction of new 2 storey dwelling Constructed
1 Ingalara Ave	N/A	Contributory	DA/761/2006 Demolition of existing building and construction of new 2 storey dwelling Constructed
25 Ingalara Ave	N/A	Contributory Former Post war austere brick building	DA/1732/2008 Alterations and additions including part 1 <sup>st</sup> floor addition, garage incorporated into façade and fence to 1500mm Constructed
35 Ingalara Ave	N/A	Contributory Former Inter war brick dwelling with Georgian detailing	DA/1198/2008 Demolition of existing house and construction of 2 new single storey dwellings (multit unit housing) Constructed
14 Ingalara Ave	N/A	Contributory	CC/1382/2005 1 <sup>st</sup> floor addition Constructed
28 Ingalara Ave	N/A		DA/1295/2005 1 <sup>st</sup> floor addition Constructed
30 Ingalara Ave	N/A	Contributory	DA/1674/2007 Demolition of existing dwelling and construction new 2 storey dwelling Constructed – street tree removed from front verge



*Bundarra Pre-1913 Subdivision*

Address	Heritage status	GML Notes	Development
47A Bundarra Ave	N/A		DA/363/2006 New dwelling on rear battle axe lot
57A Bundarra Ave	Heritage item (garden)		DA/998/2008 Front fence and gate Substantial new large house. Confirm heritage listing does not apply to fence
63 Bundarra Ave	N/A		DA/2165/2004 Double garage to Fern Street Constructed

*Highlands Precinct (1933 Subdivision)*

Address	Heritage status	GML Notes	Development
89 Alexandria Pde		Potential heritage item	DA/1350/2005 Alts and adds to dwelling DA/96/2005 New front and side fence Note: Heritage listing not proceeding

*Hordern Precinct (1938 Subdivision)*

Address	Heritage status	GML Notes	Development
26-28 Myra Ave and 25 Highlands	N/A	Potential heritage item	DA/1563/2004 Demolition of 4 dwellings and construction of seniors living development DA/996/2009 Subdivision into 3 lots. Seniors Living development did not proceed. Three lot subdivision approved 27 May 2010
30 Myra Ave	N/A	Contributory	DA/1959/2004 Demolition of existing building and construction of child care centre Constructed
2A Highlands Ave	N/A	Potential heritage item	DA/2212/2004 Demolition of existing building and construct new dwelling Constructed
4 Highlands Ave	N/A	NIL	DA/1879/2005 Demolition of existing building and construct new dwelling Constructed
14 Highlands Ave	N/A	Contributory	DA/2408/2001 Construct new single garage
18 Highlands Ave	N/A	Contributory	DA/1493/2004 Alts and adds to existing house and subdivision to create new lot to Fern Street Constructed