

GRAYTHWAITE - SHORE SCHOOL

LANDSCAPE DESIGN REPORT



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1.0 FOREWORD



Middle Terrace: Location of former tennis courts



Driveway: Looking up entry



Graythwaite: View from Middle Terrace

This report has been prepared to accompany a revised Part 3A application by Shore School to use and develop the Graythwaite site for school purposes. This report provides further details in relation to the landscape proposal for the Graythwaite site.

Originally developed as a grand residential estate in the late nineteenth century, and subsequently converted for use as a hospital for returned soldiers in the early 20th century, Graythwaite was purchased by the adjacent Sydney Church of England Grammar School (Shore School) in 2009.

Proposed works include the adaptive re-use of the retained historic buildings, including Graythwaite House, the addition of a number of new buildings and the upgrade and enhancement of the landscape of the 2.7 hectare site. To the western boundary, new plantings will be implemented between the neighbouring properties and the proposed new West Building.

The intent of the landscape design is to provide a suitable setting for the House that incorporates the heritage values of place and accommodates the proposed use and requirements of the School. This design has been arrived at through careful analysis of the landscape significance of the site and an understanding of the landscape evolution of the site. This comprehensive understanding provides a clear strategy of providing a parkland setting for the site that emulates the style and character of the site as it was established in the late 19th and early 20th century, with the integration of native bushland to the lower terraced embankments that acknowledges the evolving nature and character of the site. This approach highlights the retention of the mature fig trees that are the dominant vegetation of the site, the retention of the grassed terraces, the re-establishment of the detailed gardens around the House commensurate with the style and character of the House, and the removal of much of the subsequent weed growth that has occurred over the last 20 years in particular. Some of the subsequent plantings by the local community have to a degree enhanced the setting for the House and site incorporating selected vegetation communities.

The existing landscape of the site is proposed to be strengthened through supplementary planting to the periphery of the site, particularly at the interface of the immediate House curtilage and the School. In place of the existing Ward Building, appropriate tree planting will be positioned so as to provide a stronger curtilage to the House, filtering the new building form and creating a transition of the driveway planting to the eastern face of the House. Supplementary tree planting is proposed for the driveway to augment gaps to the driveway planting with Brushbox trees.

In summary, the landscape works are summarised below.

Stage 1

- Detailed landscape around Graythwaite House
- Transplantation of palms
- Supplementary tree planting to drive
- Bush regeneration
- Forward planting to Western Boundary

Stage 2

- Landscape around new building
- Ongoing bush regeneration and planting

Stage 3

- Landscape around new West Building
- Ongoing bush regeneration and planting

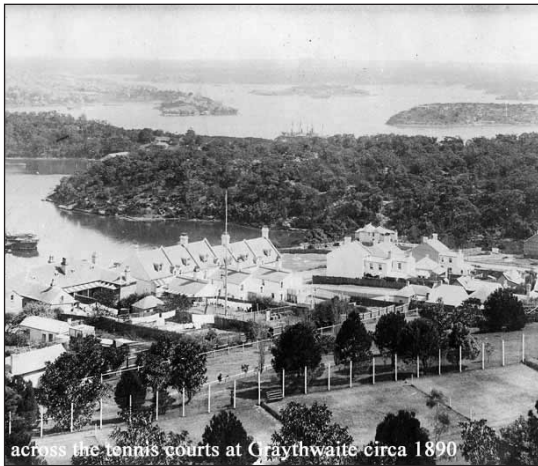
2.0 SITE HISTORY: LANDSCAPE



Graythwaite: c.WWI



1936 Oblique Aerial of site



across the tennis courts at Graythwaite circa 1890
Historic Image of tennis court terrace c.1890

The landscape development of the site has been characterised by three dominant periods. First, a relatively long period of occupation by aboriginal culture, secondly a landscape associated with the Colonial period through to the Federation period, and thirdly an adaption of the House and grounds for institutional use.

EARLY HISTORY OF THE AREA

The natural environment of the site is characterised by its location. As it is situated on the south west slopes of the main North Sydney ridgeline linking to the elevated plateau lands of the Crows Nest to the north and Berry's Bay to the south. The upper levels of the site share a high point on the ridge in the form of a mount that over time has been modified to accommodate the built form on the site.

The dominant underlying geological formation is that of Hawkesbury sandstone with an overlay on the top of the site of Ashfield Shale. The erosion of this geological formation leads to clay soils. The nature of these geological formations provide opportunities for freshwater springs to occur.

The original flora of the site would have been represented with varying extents of heath to the top of the site with woodland and forest vegetation to the lower slopes. The dominant trees of the woodland may have been Blackbutt *Eucalyptus pilularis* to the top of the site and Sydney Red Gum, *Angophora costata* and Red Bloodwood *Corymbia gummifera* to the slopes of the site.

Aboriginal people in the Sydney district were clans of larger groups sharing a common language. Three language groups have been identified in the Sydney Region - the Ku-ring-gai (or Guringai), the Dharug (or Dharruk / Dharuk / Darug), and the Dharawal (or Tharawal). The Walumedegal are thought to have been within the Dharug speaking area.

The land is more specifically the Gamaragal clan group who occupied the north side of Port Jackson and to the north west of Sydney Cove.

ORIGINAL LAND GRANTS - COLONIAL PERIOD

The original site was a land grant of 39 acres of land in Sydney's north shore granted on the 6 October 1832 to Thomas Walker. On the 25 October 1833 Walker conveyed 13 acres of his grant to William Miller. Both Walker and Miller built houses on the upper slopes that were almost adjacent to each other and both Houses enjoyed panoramic views across to Sydney and its harbour setting.

Walker's House was named 'Euroka'. In the 1847 description of the site, it was referred to as a cottage with a large garden stocked with fruit trees. E M Sayers owned the property between 1853-1873, who increased the size of the House. A road was formed from Union Street to the terrace area above the vineyard. The characteristic of the landscape at this time was of a very open landscape with much of the planting around the House and the yards to the north with Pine trees *Pinus* species and Century Plant, *Agave* sp evident.

VICTORIAN PERIOD

During the Victorian period of 1873-1881, the ownership of the property was under Thomas Allwright Dibbs and the occupation of the property by his brother. The landscape characteristics of this period were of a continual evolution of the fencing and buildings to the northern area of the site with the former orchard area fenced in and used for the grazing of cattle. New tree planting was regularly spaced along the edge of the terrace and appeared to be a mixture of Fig trees *Ficus* sp. and Monterey Pines, *Pinus radiata*. The plantings are located along the south west of the House complex and appeared to maintain a vista to Sydney City. Also planted around this time is a Cooks Pine *Araucaria cookii*, which may well be the tree that is a local landmark today.

With the late Victorian period of 1881-1890, Thomas Dibbs moved into the property and called it Graythwaite. He built Kailoa for his son fronting Union Street in the western portion of the former orchard.

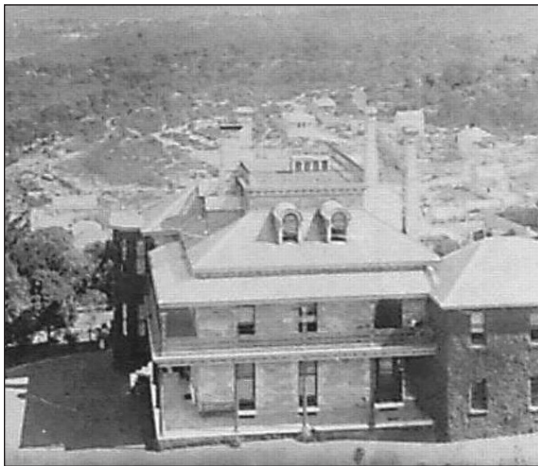
2.0 SITE HISTORY: LANDSCAPE



Arbor on the west side of the House in 1919
Source: Repatriation, March 1919



Driveway c.1920's



Graythwaite House turn of 20th Century

The House was substantially changed with the main drive reconfigured, the building of a coach house to the northern boundary and a fern house on the eastern boundary with a tennis court, between the fern house and The Main House.

FEDERATION PERIOD

The Federation Period of 1890-1915 sees the substantial changes instigated by Dibbs continue with the planting of a considerable bamboo clump to the south west of the House; a Norfolk Island Pine, *Araucaria heterophylla* next to the drive and adjacent to the tennis court; a plantation of Fig trees *Ficus macrophylla* and Pine trees *Pinus* sp. to the western boundary; and a white picket fence delineating the western gardens. A rose garden was located to the east of the kitchen block with a painted trellis fence further defining the northern yard. Photographic evidence of the time shows extensive covering of the wall with Virginia creeper, *Parthenocissus tricuspidata*.

In the later Federation period of 1915-1919 Gibbs offered the home as a gift to the state as a convalescent home for wounded soldiers, and it opened in the 1st March 1916 as the Graythwaite Soldiers' Convalescent Hospital. A new Ward Building was located on the tennis court and 3 new tennis courts were located on the grassed terrace below the House. A mesh fence was located to the southern or downhill side of these courts. It would appear that planting along the drive was extended to the south east with planting of Camphor Laurel, *Cinnamomum camphor* and Brushbox, *Lophostemum confertus* and Monterey Pine, *Pinus radiata*. It would appear that the trees to the immediate south of the House were removed at a later date so as to ensure views of the harbour from the House. To the west of the House, the gardens appear to have been conserved and adapted with arched arbours and climbing plants.

THE INTERWAR PERIOD

The Interwar period of 1920-1939 saw further building works to adapt Graythwaite to serve

its hospital functions with a brick laundry and billard room. Plantings during this time may have included the Mexican Fan Palm *Washingtonia robusta* and White Poplar *Populus alba*.

THE MODERN PERIOD

The Modern period of 1940-1980 is characterised by evolving of a residential landscape that would be found around a substantial late Victorian mansion to one that reflected the pragmatic requirements of a hospital. This was reflected in the increase in paved surfaces adjacent to the House to the north with the use of the Edward Street entry as a service entry to the site. The main entrance drive was bitumen sealed and widened with a concrete kerb to control vehicular movements and a new front entry gate was constructed.

Much of the detailed planting was removed or simply grassed over such as the Rose Garden. The extensive grassed areas of the site continued to be maintained with planted areas being subject to minimal maintenance with the result of the establishment of a substantial weed layer on the site. The Moreton Bay Figs *Ficus macrophylla* became the dominant landscape characteristic of the site, a legacy of the planting of Dibbs.

Graythwaite was administered by the Red Cross until 1977 when it came under the control of the Health Department. Concern by local residents in the state of the site led to the introduction of a number of Australian Native species to the under planting in sections of the site. Planting included Narrow Leaved Peppermint, *Eucalyptus nicholli* and Bangalay, *Eucalyptus botryoides*.

From 1980 to present, the landscape setting of the property became more degraded with the further domination of the middle and lower vegetation of weed species with smaller pockets of introduced Australian Native plantings. The site has evolved from an open landscape characteristic established in the late 19th century, into a landscape overgrown and dominating the built form of Graythwaite and its surroundings.

3.0 VEGETATION AND LANDSCAPE SETTING



Lower Terraced embankments; showing extensive weed growth



View from Middle Terrace looking to Union Street

Graythwaite is a cultural landscape which reflects a combined layering of evolving landscape from inception to present day. The forms comprise of terraced landform, buildings, structures, fences, garden areas, driveways, paved areas, grassed open space and mass plantings that are dominated by the treed canopy of figs of various species.

Its main landscape character is of institutional parkland that reflects the use of the place as a hospital notwithstanding its evolution as a residential estate largely in the 19th century. The additional buildings, concrete kerbs and bitumen roads are a reflection of this use and contrast to the 19th century sandstone of Graythwaite and the fig plantings that characterise the site.

The interwar planting such as palms and poplars contrast to the more staid fig and pine plantings of the Victorian era and of the Federation Period being the Figs and Brushbox. Planting of the mid to late 20th century is represented by Jacaranda and a range of Australian Native plantings that are normally associated with rainforest habitats together with mass plantings of grasses such as Lomandra species. Much of the extent of the mass planted areas, particularly those with a southerly aspect have become infested with weed species such as privet and Camphor Laurel. The weed infestations are a result in part of the maintenance regime that the site has experienced with the hospital use where works appear to have been limited to grass mowing and maintaining clear access for vehicular movements for the servicing of the hospital. This has resulted in substantial areas of the site being subject to weed infestations.

SITE LANDFORM

The site comprises of three landforms, the upper terrace on which Graythwaite stands, the upper terraced embankments that lead to the middle terrace that reflects the location of the former tennis courts and then to the lower terraced embankments that lead down to Union Street.

The site landform is the result of deliberate terracing and filling of the site to create reasonably level areas for building, grassed areas for recreation, (the tennis courts for example) and horticulture (gardens and orchards) the slopes to the upper terraced embankments grassed and the lower terraced embankments mass planted. The area to the west of the House that was once part of a former paddock has been informally filled with building rubble and soil.

3.0 VEGETATION AND LANDSCAPE SETTING



Middle Terrace: Showing tree and lawn character



Existing timber steps on Lower Terraced embankment



Lower Terrace: Open grassed character

VEGETATION

The substantial key planting to the site are the mature figs (*Ficus macrophylla*) a legacy of the planting in the Dibbs era of 1890 -1915 and they are planted generally in informal rows and adjoining the boundaries of the site, combined with the substantial topographic change defines the site. This key vegetated characteristic is supported by supplementary planting of Camphor laurels *Cinnamomum camphor* and Brushbox, *Lophostemum confertus* trees along the drive.

Since the site was first cleared in the middle of the 19th century with the establishment of vineyard terraces to the lower section of the site, the existing landscape is the result of deliberate planting of the fig trees, further modification to the topography with the inclusion of the grassed terrace for the tennis courts a site that has been substantially had a record of substantial change to the topography.

Photographic evidence dated around the turn of the century clearly shows an open landscape character in the early part of the 20th Century. Changes included the establishment of the grounds defined by the planting of substantial Moreton Bay Fig trees (*Ficus macrophylla*) and the clearing of all native vegetation to the site, firstly for the establishment of grounds around the House and then for the use and enjoyment of the grounds by ex servicemen for the purposes of recuperation, particularly noted with the establishment of the tennis courts around WWI.

The present condition of the landscape on site is poor and is the result of a minimal maintenance regime that has been instigated over the last period of occupation. A dense undergrowth of weed species occurs across the areas that have not been maintained as grassed lawn. This has resulted in a site that is vegetatively unstable as the weed species have become a dominant vegetation community. Further, the site will have a seed bank that will continue to negatively impact the surrounding native and cultural planting of the area by providing a seed bank to disseminate across the local area by avian or wind blown methods.

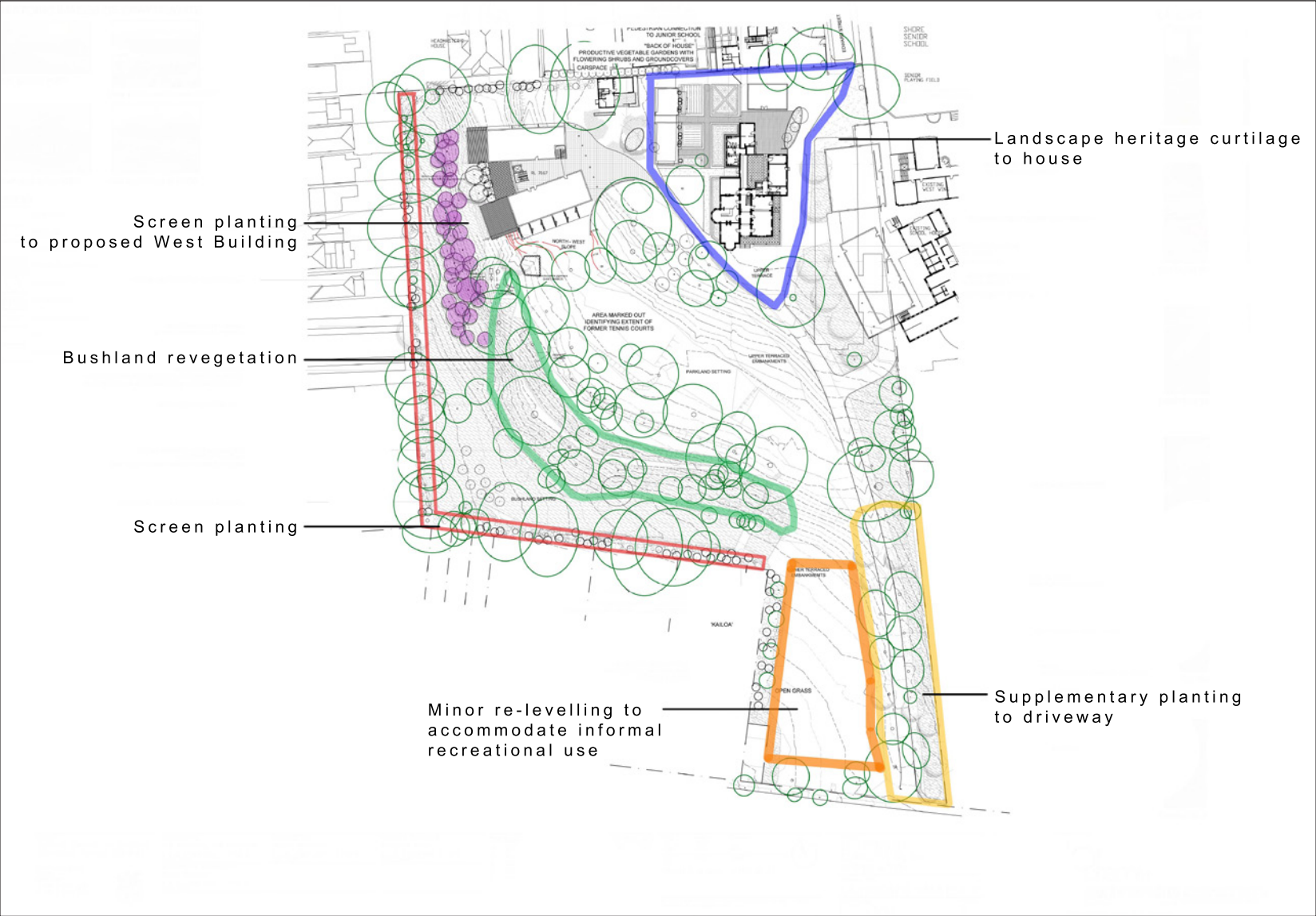
These substantial groups of mature weeds across the site are the result of minimal maintenance from the former operators of the site. Supplementary planting has occurred over the last decades where concerned residents have instigated a number of informal plantings to the periphery of the site. The plantings have consisted of both native and cultural plantings.

4.0 LANDSCAPE COMPONENTS

The concept for the grounds is to re-establish a suitable curtilage to the immediate grounds around Graythwaite House that is consistent with its dominant architectural presence. This involves the re interpretation of the formal gardens to the immediate periphery of the House, the relocation and/or removal of plant material in this area that is inconsistent with the period of the House, the reinstatement of the detailing to the garden that is consistent with the overall conservation guidelines for the place. Further, the location of the former tennis courts will be noted on the middle terrace.

The characteristic of the site is broad flowing grassed terraces interposed with steeply vegetated banks. This will be continued. The substantial existing key planting of the site identified by the mature figs (*Ficus macrophylla*) will be maintained. Bushland revegetation will occur on the lower terraced embankments with existing weeds progressively removed and replaced with naturally occurring species of the site. The lower terrace will remain and existing open grassed area with minor adjustments to the contours to allow for informal recreation. Screen planting will occur on the western and southern boundaries adjacent to residential properties. Supplementary tree planting will occur to the existing drive consisting of Brushbox trees.

The landscape proposal will respect the heritage values of the place.



5.1 IMPLEMENTATION: BUSHLAND

The landscape approach will involve the undertaking of a measured maintenance regime across the site where the weed species will be progressively removed across the site using a combination of recognised accepted commercial horticultural methods and bush regeneration to the appropriate locations of the site. The current grassed areas will be maintained and where necessary seepage that occurs on site will be redirected across and away from broad grassed areas so that these areas may be used for recreation. All water on site will be redirected so the total amount seeping through the site will be maintained. Areas of middle storey planting will be encouraged to portions of the site to encourage birdlife to the site. Species that may be used to supplement the existing species on site and that can occur in the wider area that are noted as vulnerable by Cumberland Ecology are;

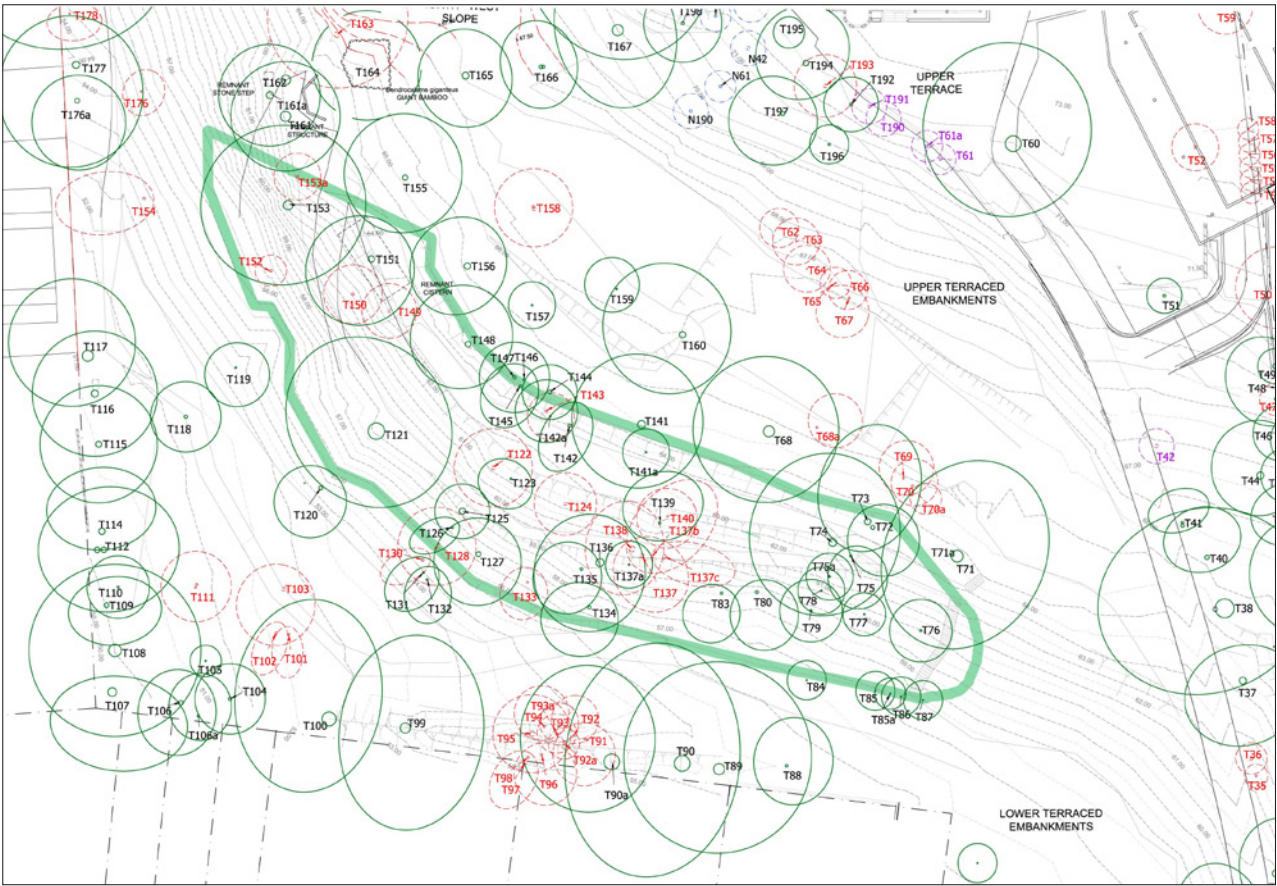
Acacia bynoeana, Bynoe’s Wattle
Acacia terminalis, Sunshine wattle
Caladenia tessellata, Thick lipped Spider Orchid
Cryptostylis hunteriana, Leafless Tongue orchid
Eucalyptus camfieldii, Camfields Stringybark
Melaleuca biconvexa, Biconvex Paperbark
Tetratheca glandulosa, Glandular Pink Bell

Native species occurring on site that may be used as further native planting to the periphery of the site include:

Dichrondra repens
Cotula australis
Microlaena stipoides
Pittosperum undulatum
Geranium homeanum
Commelina cyanea
Glochodian ferdinandi
Hypolepis muelleri
Cotula australis
Rumex brownie

Native species that may have occurred naturally on site and may be used as part of the on going native species planting on site include:

Angophora costata
Ficus rubiginosa
Eleocarpus reticulatus
Tream aspera
Melaleuca linarifolia
Acacia linifolia
Acacia longifolia
Banksia ericfolia
Grevillea linearis
Dodonaea triquetra
Hakea sericea
Hakea teretifolia
Lambertia Formosa
Pittosperum revolutum
Correa reflexa
Lomandra longifolia
Dianella caerulea var producta
Themeda australis



Extent of bushland

5.2 IMPLEMENTATION: GRAYTHWAITE HOUSE & ENVIRONS

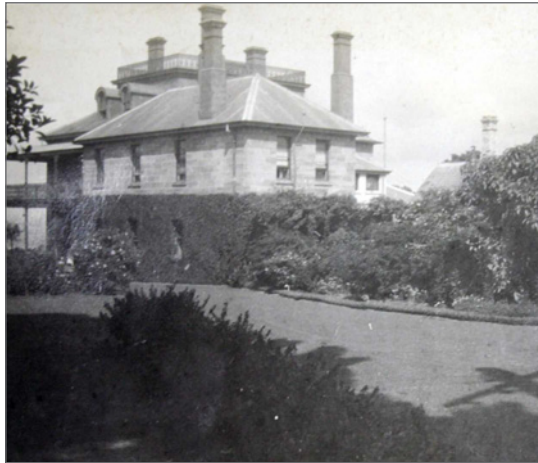
The current state of the immediate environs to Graythwaite reflects the functional requirements for Graythwaite as a hospital. To the northern side of Graythwaite are extensive areas of bitumen used as the service zone for deliveries. To the garden areas there are grassed areas interspersed with concrete paths and selected trees and palms.

The landscape approach is to re establish a suitable curtilage to the immediate grounds around Graythwaite consistent with the dominant architectural style of the House. This involves the re interpretation of the formal gardens to the immediate periphery of the House, the relocation and/or removal of plant material in this area that is inconsistent with the period of House and the reinstatement of the detailing to the garden that is consistent with the overall conservation guidelines for the place as nominated in the heritage impact statement prepared as part of this application.

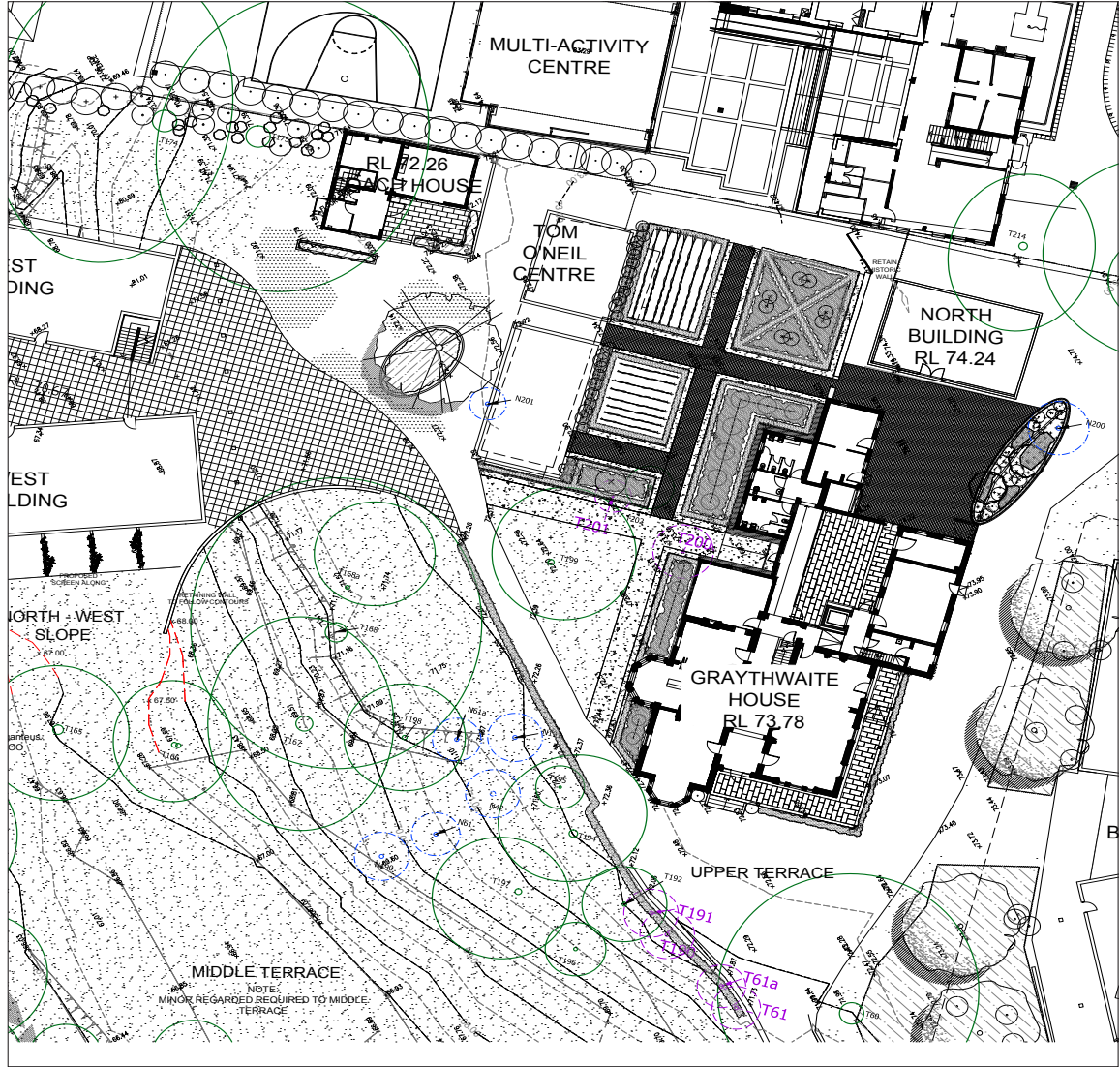
Planting typical of the turn of the century will be introduced along with vegetable beds, this approach consistent with the heritage values of the place. To the north-eastern side, a lattice fence will be reinterpreted from photographic evidence and set in a garden bed. A bonded gravel drive will replace the current bitumen access drive. The driveway will be edged with a traditional brick detail allowing for drainage. Paving to the courtyard will be selected brick common or equal. The substantial established palm to the west of Graythwaite will be retained in the garden layout. Arbors will be re constructed using historical evidence. The overall character will be of a period Edwardian garden.



Arbor on the west side of the House in 1919
Source: Repatriation, March 1919

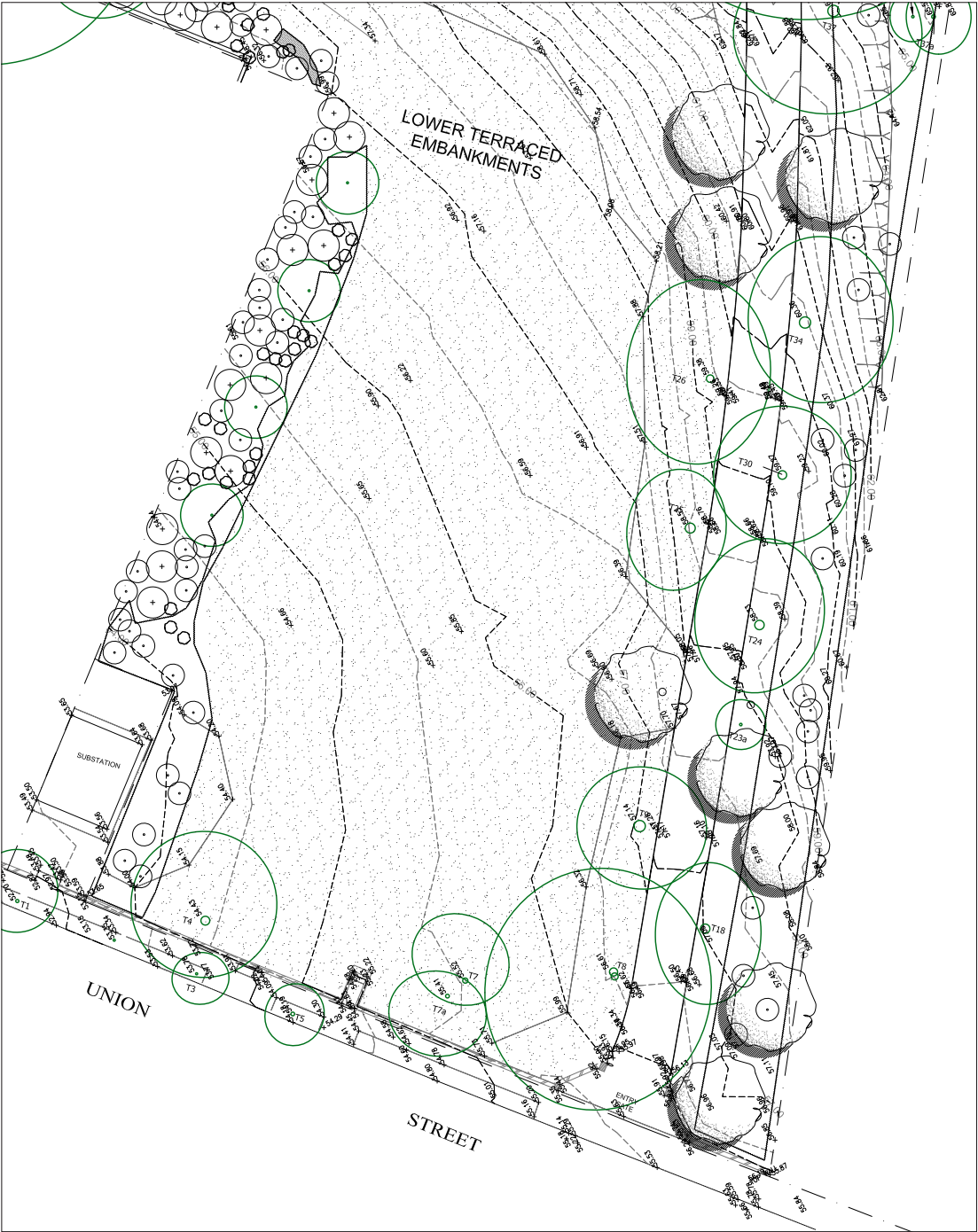


Rear of Graythwaite House, c.1916 Source: Australian Red Cross NSW Division archives



5.3 IMPLEMENTATION: DRIVEWAY

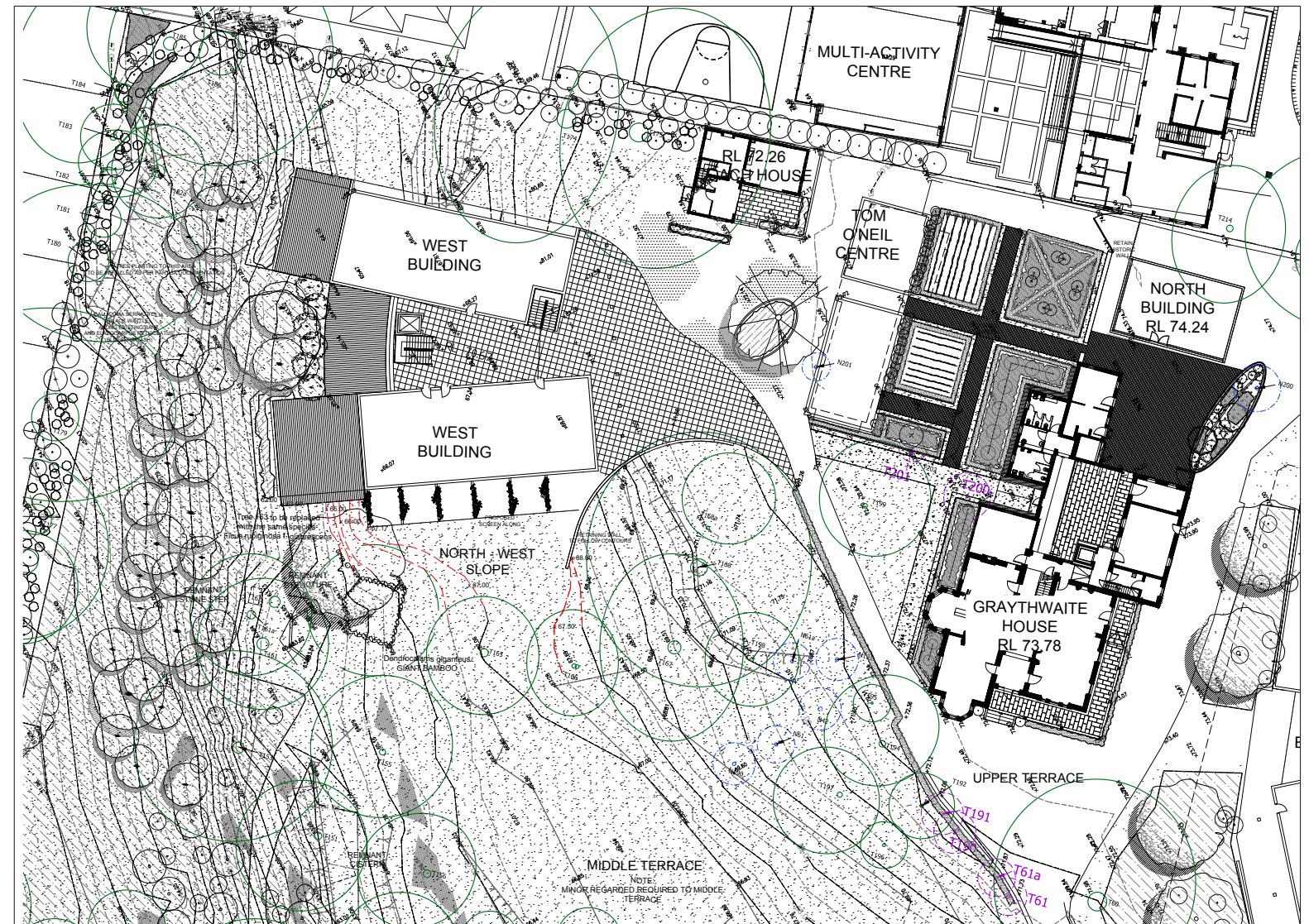
The alignment and width of the driveway will be retained as the present alignment reflects the original width. The bitumen surface will be replaced with a bonded gravel drive that reflects the original surface of the drive. The present concrete kerb will be removed, native underlying vegetation such as the Lomandra species will be removed so as the existing trees to the driveway will be clearly expressed and the historical relationship re affirmed. Self sown planting of Robinia trees will be removed to the eastern side of the drive. Appropriately marked grass reinforced passing bays will be located along the drive to allow for two way traffic.



5.4 IMPLEMENTATION: WEST BUILDING

The landscape to the west building will complement the existing Moreton Bay Figs by the introduction of screening layers of native vegetation to the site. The substantial minimum setback of 20.8 metres from the western boundary and a distance of 4.5 -10 metres clear of the canopies of the Moreton Bay Figs facilitates the opportunity for the creation of a dense native grove of planting consisting of Blueberry Ash and other native species for the site. It is proposed that the Blueberry Ash be planted within the next 12 months to provide forward planting to this area of the site. Supplementary planting along the western boundary will provide immediate screen planting, species include Lilly Pilly and other native species suitable for the site. A Smooth Bark Apple is proposed between the two buildings to provide a broad open native canopy that will complement the layered planting of the Blueberry Ash and Lilly Pilly's.

The mature height of the Blueberry Ash of 8-10 metres combined with the other plantings will provide a dense sward of greenery, habitat for native fauna and increase the floristic diversity across the site where in many locations grass and weeds dominate. This is particularly relevant to area immediately adjacent to the western building as this area is dominated by weeds. A new Moreton Bay Fig is proposed south of the western building to replace the Moreton Bay Fig that is unstable and to further protect the Bamboo clump.



5.5 IMPLEMENTATION: SITE DRAINAGE

The dominant underlying geological formation is that of Hawkesbury sandstone with an overlay of on the top of the site of Ashfield Shale. The erosion of this geological formation leads to clay soils and generally at the junction of the two geological formations provides opportunities for freshwater springs.

Due to the occurrence of the natural springs as a result of the underlying geological formation the site has a number of water logged areas. Further the site vegetation has adapted to the moisture levels. In assessing the site, minor drainage works are proposed to redirect the existing ground water away from the Middle Terrace so that these areas may be potentially used for informal recreation.

Water in these areas will be redirected and redistributed to the top of the lower terraced embankments so that the existing ground water supply is maintained, thus ensuring current water levels are maintained across the site.

As per the Acor report, “installation of shallow subsoil drains within open areas identified as waterlogged or springs shall be limited to upper level ground water interception and drainage i.e. <500mm deep, thus ensuring that the deeper ground water flows remain generally unimpeded while facilitating the safe use and maintenance of the grounds”.

