

GRAYTHWAITE
UNION STREET, NORTH SYDNEY

CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT PLAN



prepared for
SYDNEY CHURCH OF ENGLAND GRAMMAR SCHOOL

tanner Architects

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PREFACE

A new conservation management plan (CMP) for Graythwaite has been prepared as the endorsed earlier CMP, prepared in 2000, is now due for re-consideration and re-endorsement. It has also been prepared to address the changed circumstances relating to the place and to acknowledge that other options for its future management and use may have a more preferable heritage outcome.

The Shore School purchased Graythwaite House and Lands from the State government on the understanding that it would, amongst other things, retain and conserve the heritage significance of the place. It is also Shore's understanding that it is entitled, as owner, to reasonable use of the place.

The Shore School purchased the property with the earlier (revised) CMP issued by the State government as a guiding document for potential purchasers. The earlier CMP allowed for new construction on Union Street. The School, in view of the recommendations contained in this updated CMP, has decided not to pursue this option in the public interest. The Shore School, however, needs to relocate the development potential to elsewhere on the Graythwaite lands—with the northwest corner identified as the area with the least potential for impacts.

The earlier CMP also advocated the removal/replacement of the Ward Building and this approach has been retained. A more recent study has established that the new support facilities for the site could be located in a similar location with minimal impacts on the heritage significance of the place. A carefully designed new building(s) could in fact enhance the setting of the exceptionally significant Graythwaite House complex. Currently the School and its buildings turn their back on Graythwaite; they must now front Graythwaite and achieve an integrated outcome.

The Shore School is a place with heritage significance in its own right and is identified as a heritage item on Schedule 3 of the North Sydney Council Local Environmental Plan 2001, including a number of significant buildings and structures and the houses constructed by the last owner of Graythwaite, Sir Thomas Dibbs. The School is aiming to enhance the relationship that its buildings have with the Graythwaite lands as well as to link Graythwaite House with the houses on the Shore School site and Kailoa on Union Street, all of which were constructed by Dibbs for his family members. The School is also aiming to provide a better physical and visual connection with Upton Grange, which was occupied by Volunteer Aides who worked at the Graythwaite convalescent home.

Graythwaite House and its grounds are currently in poor condition and require major expenditure and on-going maintenance to ensure their well-being into the future. This expenditure is linked to an interface with and use by the Shore School, both in retained buildings and some new structures. Both the House and its primary landscape setting are proposed to remain as familiar heritage items in the North Sydney townscape.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Graythwaite is a place of exceptional heritage significance. Located at Union Street, North Sydney, and originally known as Euroka, the site comprises expansive parkland that provides a landscaped setting for the nineteenth century house and associated outbuildings. The two-storey sandstone house is a distinctive and imposing example of a nineteenth century residence, while the c1830s Stables Building may be the oldest remaining building of its type in the area and provides the earliest remaining fabric from the early settlement of North Sydney. The grand scale of the House Complex, the mature landscaping and size of the property demonstrate the wealth and aspirations of its owners, particularly the Dibbs family, during the boom period of the later nineteenth century.

Graythwaite is also of social and historical significance for its use as a convalescent hospital for returned soldiers from 1916 and then as a long-term hostel for permanently disabled soldiers. Key buildings from this phase of the site's history include the Ward Building (1918) and Recreation Building (1919)—now known as the Tom O'Neill Centre. More recently the site was used as a nursing home and continued to operate as a dementia care facility until its sale in 2009, when it was purchased by the adjoining Sydney Church of England Grammar School (Shore).

This conservation management plan (CMP) for the Graythwaite site (Graythwaite) has been prepared by Tanner Architects on behalf of the Sydney Church of England Grammar School (Shore). The purpose of the report is to guide the management of the heritage significance of Graythwaite and to provide policies for the maintenance and repair of significant buildings and landscape, and for the consideration of future uses and development. The report builds on an earlier conservation management plan prepared by Graham Edds in 1993 and subsequently revised in 2000.

Shore's long term vision for the Graythwaite site is to recognise the cultural heritage significance of the property, including its significant buildings and landscape, while complementing and enhancing its existing school facilities.

The main objectives for the conservation and re-use of Graythwaite are to:

- retain and conserve the exceptional heritage significance of Graythwaite as a large nineteenth century house within a parkland setting;
- retain and conserve those qualities, features and elements that make a significant contribution to the heritage significance of the site;
- facilitate the adaptive re-use of the significant buildings, including the house/stables/kitchen complex and coach house, to ensure their ongoing use into the longer term; and
- allow for sensitive new development in discrete areas which would not adversely impact on the heritage significance of Graythwaite or its key elements.

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Cover illustration: Graythwaite c1875, with the Dibbs family.

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose of the Report

This conservation management plan (CMP) for the Graythwaite site (Graythwaite) has been prepared by Tanner Architects on behalf of the Sydney Church of England Grammar School (Shore). Graythwaite was purchased by Shore in 2009 with a view to conserving the significant buildings and landscape and adapting the site for administrative and other school purposes.

The purpose of the report is to guide the management of the heritage significance of Graythwaite and to provide policies for the maintenance and repair of significant buildings and landscape, and for the consideration of future uses and development. The report builds on an earlier conservation plan prepared by Graham Edds in 1993 and subsequently revised in 2000.

1.2 Background

Graythwaite is a place of State heritage significance. The main building (the House) is an example of a prominent nineteenth century sandstone residence. The c1833 former Stables Building is likely to be the oldest remaining building of its type in the area and provides the earliest known remaining fabric from the early settlement of North Sydney. The site is also significant to the local and wider community for its use as a convalescent hospital for returned soldiers from 1916 and then as a long-term hostel for permanently disabled soldiers.

The heritage significance of Graythwaite is recognised by its inclusion on the State Heritage Register (SHR), which is maintained by the Heritage Council of NSW. As such, Graythwaite comes under the provisions of the *Heritage Act 1977* (NSW). It is also included on Schedule 3 of the *North Sydney Local Environmental Plan 2001* and forms part of the Graythwaite Character Area. Approval to undertake works at Graythwaite will therefore also be subject to the heritage provisions of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*.

A copy of this CMP is to be submitted to the Heritage Council of NSW for endorsement. Endorsement by the Heritage Council will establish an agreed approach to the appropriate management of the heritage significance of the site as well as assist with the establishment of site-specific exemptions from approval requirements under the Heritage Act. A number of gazetted standard exemptions already apply. A copy of this CMP will also be submitted to North Sydney Council prior to or as part of any future development application(s) and/or to facilitate undertaking of appropriate maintenance and repair works without requiring further approval under the EP&A Act.

1.3 Study Area

Located at Union Street, North Sydney, Graythwaite comprises an expansive land holding of 2.678 hectares (Figure 1.1) within the local government area of North Sydney. The property is bounded on the east and north by Shore School, on the south by Union Street and private residential properties fronting Union Street, and on the west by private residential properties fronting Bank Street. The current street address is 20 Edward Street, although a Union Street address was used throughout the nineteenth century and greater part of the twentieth century.

The principal entry gate is at the south-east corner, fronting Union Street. The site slopes steeply upwards to the north-east and features a number of open grassed areas and landscaped embankments. The principal buildings on the site are located on the upper terrace to the north-east, accessed via a curved driveway from the main gate (Figure 1.2). The main buildings include the House Complex including Graythwaite House, a two-storey Kitchen Wing and single storey Stables Building at the rear (north), the Ward Building to the north-east, the Tom O'Neill Centre to the west of the House, and the Coach House abutting the north boundary.



Figure 1.1 Aerial photograph of the immediate context of Graythwaite, showing the site's relationship with Shore and surrounding residential areas, not to scale.
Source: www.nearmap.com with Tanner Architects overlay 2010

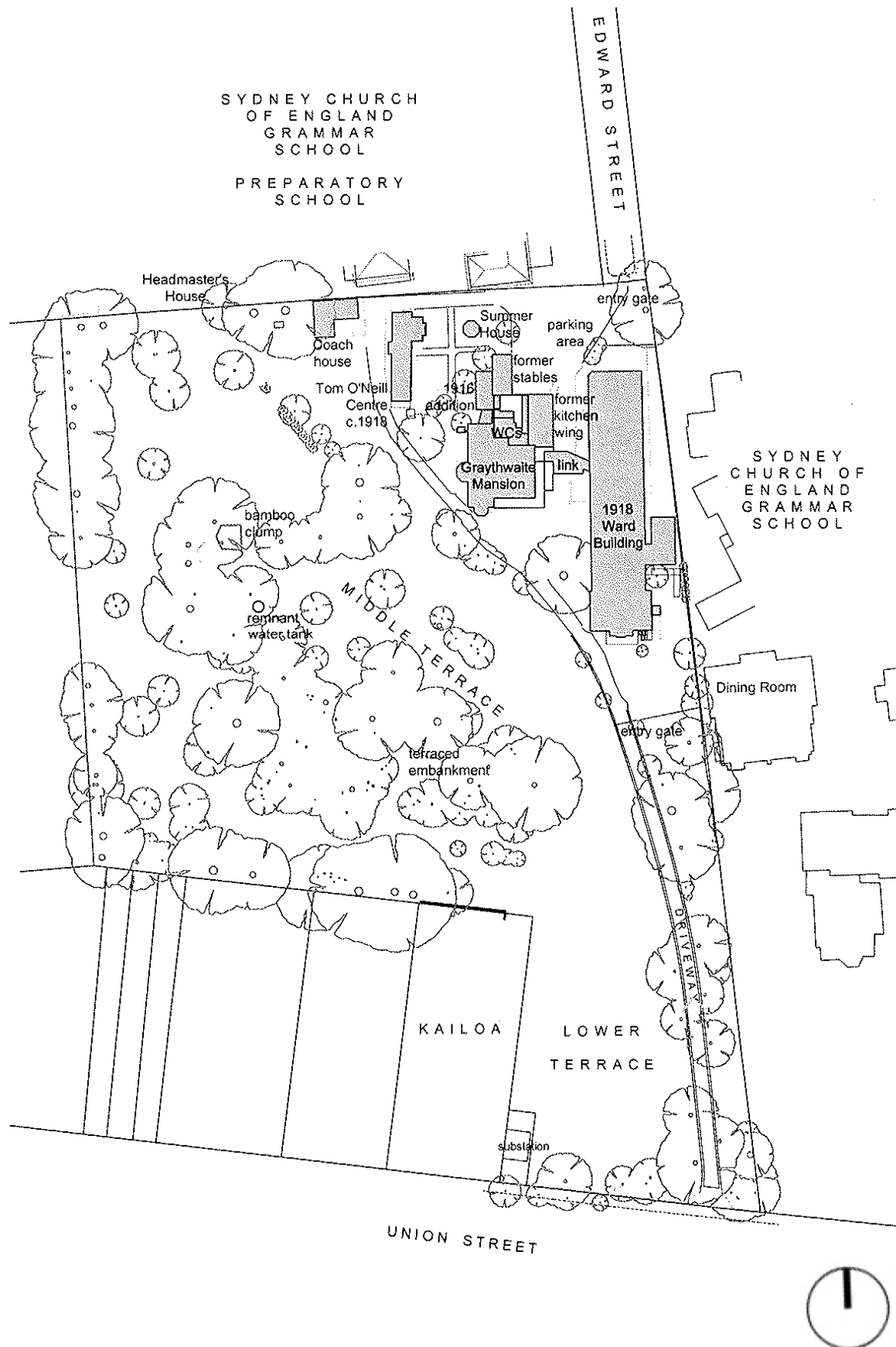


Figure 1.2 Site plan for Graythwaite, not to scale.
Source: Tanner Architects, 2010

The cultural landscape is also characterised by informal avenue planting along the Union Street Entry Driveway and prominent stands of mature trees including large Moreton Bay figs along the terraced embankments, west and south boundaries, interspersed with more recent tropical plantings. Areas to the front (south) and rear (north) of the House Complex are asphalted.

1.4 Report Methodology and Structure

This CMP has been prepared in accordance with the guidelines outlined in *The Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance 1999 (The Burra Charter)*. *The Burra Charter* is widely acknowledged as the principal guiding document to conservation work and practices of places of cultural significance. *The Burra Charter* has been adopted widely as the standard for best practice in the conservation of heritage places in Australia.

The content and format of the CMP also follows the guidelines for the preparation of significance assessments and conservation policy provided by the Heritage Branch, NSW Department of Planning. It is also consistent with the methodology set out in *The Conservation Plan* (sixth edition, 2004), prepared by JS Kerr and published by the National Trust of Australia (NSW).

The CMP draws on the material within the conservation plan for the Graythwaite site prepared by Graham Edds & Associates in 1993 and revised in 2000.

This CMP comprises the following sections:

- **Section 1 Introduction** (this section) provides the key background information relevant to the preparation of this CMP;
- **Section 2 Historical Overview** provides a summary history of the site and development of the buildings and landscape;
- **Section 3 Analysis of Physical Evidence** provides a summary of the analysis of the remaining physical evidence of the site to determine the extent and integrity of original fabric and the nature of subsequent changes.
- **Section 4 Assessment of Heritage Significance** provides a comparative analysis of the property and provides a statement of heritage significance for the site. This section also identifies the varying levels of significance for individual elements within the site.
- **Section 5 Heritage Management Context** sets out the heritage management context for the site including client requirements and a discussion of any heritage opportunities and constraints that might apply.
- **Section 6 Conservation Policies** sets out the recommended policies and actions for the effective management of the heritage significance of the Graythwaite site into the future, and policies to guide the future development of the property.
- **Appendices** include selective supplementary material referred to in this CMP including existing heritage listings, detailed site history and analysis of fabric, assessment of Aboriginal heritage significance and an assessment of the consistency of the CMP against the Heritage Branch CMP Checklist.

1.5 Author Identification

This CMP has been prepared by a specialist team that includes:

- Sean Williams, Senior Heritage Specialist, who was project manager and compiled the report;
- George Phillips, Associate, who reviewed the report; and
- Mitchell Bath, Laura Ansell and Hiren Sheth, who prepared the graphics.

Nick Jackson prepared the historical overview and analysis of physical evidence. Nick also played a key role in the assessment of heritage significance, the identification of the key heritage constraints and opportunities and the establishment of conservation policy.

The survey and assessment of the natural and cultural landscape heritage significance of Graythwaite was undertaken by Craig Burton of CAB Consulting Pty Ltd. The survey and assessment of potential Aboriginal heritage significance of the site was undertaken by Jenna Weston and Jennie Lindbergh of Australian Museum Business Services (AMBS). The survey and assessment of the potential historical archaeological resource of the site was undertaken by Mary Casey of Casey & Lowe Pty Ltd.

1.6 Acknowledgements

The authors gratefully acknowledge the assistance of the following in the preparation of this CMP:

- Mrs Kathy Dickson, Bursar, Shore;
- Mr Paul Bermingham, Shore;
- Mr Dennis Zines, Environmental Manager, WSP Fitzwalter; and
- Mr Allen Madden, Sites Officer, Metropolitan Aboriginal Land Council (MLALC).

1.7 Definitions

Technical terms used in this CMP are defined in the Burra Charter and are as follows:

Adaptation means modifying a place to suit proposed compatible uses.

Compatible use means a use which involves no change to the culturally significant fabric, changes which are substantially reversible, or changes which require a minimal impact.

Conservation means all the processes of looking after a place so as to retain its cultural significance. It includes maintenance and may according to circumstance include preservation, restoration, reconstruction and adaptation and will be commonly a combination of more than one of these.

Cultural significance means aesthetic, historic, scientific or social value for past, present or future generations.

Fabric means all the physical material of the place.

Heritage Curtilage means the area of land (including land covered by water) surrounding an item or area of heritage significance which is essential for retaining and interpreting its heritage significance—Heritage Branch, NSW Department of Planning.

Interpretation means all the ways of presenting the cultural significance of a place.

Maintenance means the continuous protective care of the fabric, contents and setting of a place, and is to be distinguished from repair. Repair involves restoration or reconstruction and it should be treated accordingly.

Natural significance means *the importance of ecosystems, biological diversity and geodiversity for their existence value, or for present or future generations in terms of their scientific, social, aesthetic and life-support value—Australian Natural Heritage Charter.*

Place means site, area, building or other work, group of buildings or other works together with associated contents and surrounds.

Preservation means maintaining the fabric of a place in its existing state and retarding deterioration.

Reconstruction means returning a place as nearly as possible to a known earlier state and is distinguished by the introduction of materials (new or old) into the fabric. This is not to be confused with either recreation or conjectural reconstruction, which are outside the scope of this Charter.

Restoration means returning the existing fabric of a place to a known earlier state by removing accretions or by re-assembling existing components without the introduction of new material.

Setting means the area around a *place*, which may include the visual catchment.

1.8 Abbreviations

The commonly used abbreviations in the CMP are:

AHC—Australian Heritage Commission

BCA—Building Code of Australia

CMP—Conservation Management Plan

ICOMOS—International Committee on Monuments and Sites

LD—New South Wales Lands Department

LEP—Local Environmental Plan

ML—Mitchell Library, State Library of NSW

NSC—North Sydney Council

NSW—New South Wales

Shore—Sydney Church of England Grammar School

SHR—State Heritage Register

SL—State Library of NSW

SMH—Sydney Morning Herald

SREP—Sydney Regional Environmental Plan