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*Hilsyde, 56 Hilder Street, Elderslie
Heritage Curtilage Study*



FOR DBL PROPERTY

February 2006



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*B Cubed Sustainability Pty Ltd
Level 6, 432 Kent Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000
T: 02 9267 8900 F: 02 9267 4265*

www.bcsaustralia.com.au

Table of Contents

1 INTRODUCTION	2
1.1 BACKGROUND	2
1.2 THIS REPORT	2
1.3 LOCATION OF SITE	2
1.4 ZONING	3
1.5 EXISTING HERITAGE LISTINGS.....	4
1.6 STUDY METHODOLOGY AND LIMITATIONS.....	4
1.7 AUTHOR IDENTIFICATION	4
2 HISTORICAL OVERVIEW	5
2.1 THE CAMDEN DISTRICT AND ELDERSLIE	5
3 SITE DESCRIPTION	8
4 DISCUSSION OF HERITAGE CURTILAGE	10
4.1 HISTORICAL ALLOTMENTS.....	10
4.2 VIEWS AND VISTAS.....	10
4.3 SETTING, CONTEXT AND SITING	11
4.4 RELATIONSHIPS.....	11
4.5 HERITAGE CURTILAGE	11
5 REDEVELOPMENT CONSIDERATIONS	12
5.1 REDEVELOPMENT CONSIDERATIONS.....	12
5.2 CURTILAGE MANAGEMENT	12
6 RECOMMENDATIONS	14
7 REFERENCES	15

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

B Cubed Sustainability Pty Ltd (BCS) has been engaged by DBL Property, for The Anglican Deaconess Institution, Sydney Ltd (ADI) to undertake a curtilage study to recommend a heritage curtilage for *Hilsyde*, a residential property at 56 Hilder Street, Elderslie, in the Local Government Area of Camden.

The ADI is investigating options for the redevelopment of the site and Camden Council have requested that a curtilage study be undertaken to determine the extent of land adjoining the house that would be required to maintain the house in its appropriate setting befitting its character¹.

1.2 This report

This purpose of this report is to recommend a curtilage boundary for the property on Hilder Street. In doing this it provides an historical overview of the area and description of the property, as well as a discussion of the factors contributing to its curtilage. From this, and taking into consideration the residential zoning and proposed redevelopment of part of the site, management of the site with regard to curtilage is discussed and recommendation and mitigation measures suggested.

1.3 Location of Site

Hilsyde is a residential property which is located at 56 Hilder Street, Elderslie. Direct access to the property is from the south western side of Hilder Street. The property is within the Local Government Area of Camden, Parish of Narellan and County of Cumberland. Its location is shown in Figure 1 below.

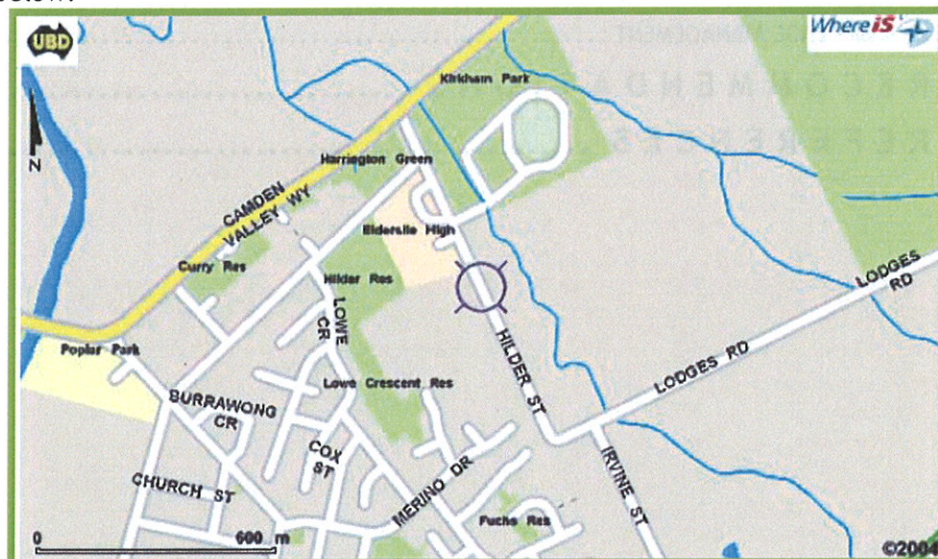


Figure 1: Location map²

¹ DBL Property. October 2005. The Anglican Deaconess Institution Hilsyde Property, Elderslie: Review of Development Options (draft). P12.

² www.whereis.com.au

The site is shown on the aerial photograph in Figure 2 below, with the existing property boundary indicated by the red line.



Figure 2: Site boundary³

1.4 Zoning

The site is controlled by the Camden Local Environmental Plan No. 46. As shown in Figure 3, there are currently four zones within the subject site, as follows:

- Zone 1(a) Rural (40 hectares);
- Zone 2(a) Residential;
- Zone 6(a1) Existing Open Space; and
- Zone Special Uses School.

³ DBL Property. October 2005. The Anglican Deaconess Institution Hilsyde Property, Elderslie: Review of Development Options (Draft). P7.

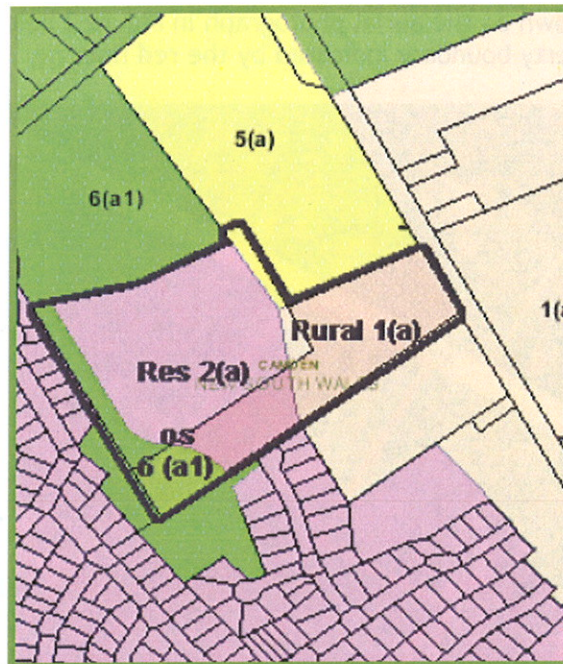


Figure 3: Map showing site zoning⁴

1.5 Existing Heritage Listings

Hilsyde (on Lot 2, DP560048) is identified as heritage item number 46 on the Council of Camden Local Environmental Plan (No. 46).

1.6 Study Methodology and Limitations

In addition to a site inspection undertaken on 23 January 2006, during the preparation of this report research was undertaken at the Council of Camden Local Studies Library.

This report makes use of the *Anglican Deaconess Institution Hilsyde Property, Elderslie: Review of Development Options* prepared by DBL Property in October 2005.

1.7 Author Identification

This report was prepared by Ruth Berendt, Heritage Consultant and Jenna Tuite, Research Assistant and reviewed by Sophie Butler, Principal Heritage Consultant from BCS.

⁴ Council of Camden, Camden Local Environmental Plan No. 46.

2 HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

This section provides a brief historical overview of the area as well as the property and house.

2.1 The Camden District and Elderslie

Before 1805, land in Camden district belonged to the government as Crown Land. Throughout the next 20 years the land became privately owned through land grants or land purchases.⁵

East of the Nepean River was the Parish of Narellan. Many grants of varying sizes were made in this Parish by Governor Macquarie between 1810 and 1818. One group of thirteen grants fronted the Nepean River at Elderslie and a second group of five grants was in the vicinity of the present day Narellan.

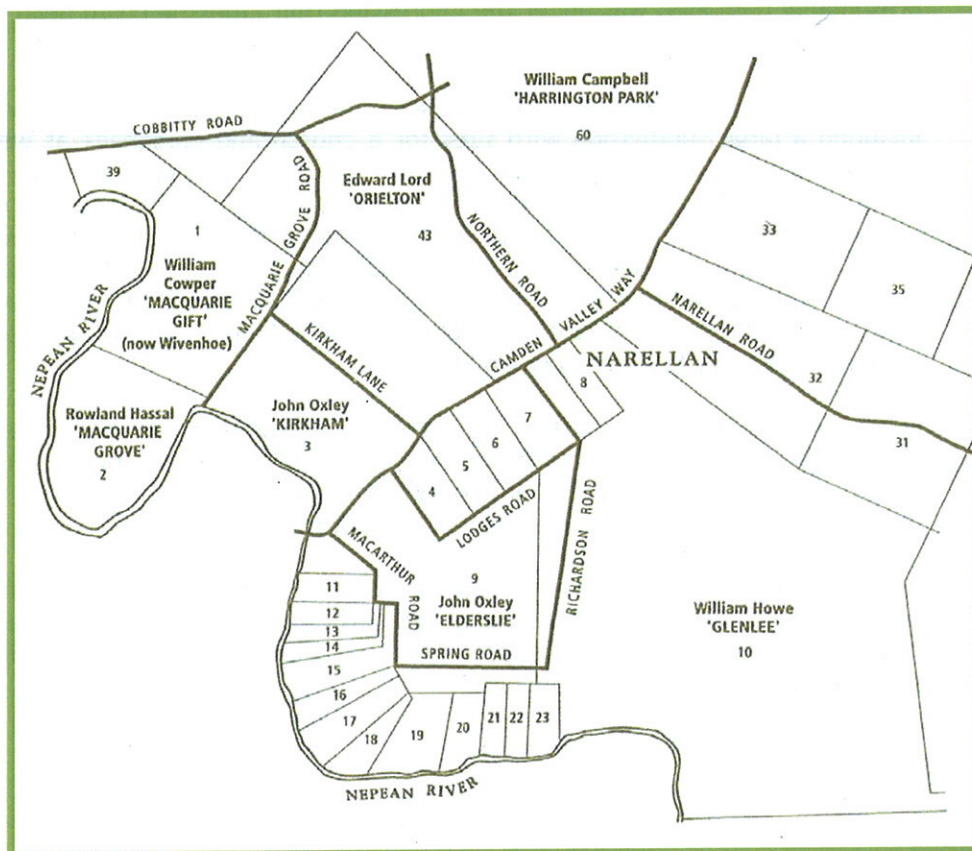


Figure 4: Grants at Elderslie⁶

Governor Macquarie also made larger grants of 150 to 3000 acres, often to prominent citizens in the colony or in acknowledgement of services to the colony.

⁵ PJ Mylrea, *Camden District: A History to the 1840s* (2002) Camden Historical Society Inc Camden NSW, p 1

⁶ Ibid, p13.

In Elderslie, the land between Macarthur Road, River Road, Luker Street and the Nepean River was a grant of 50 acres made to William Wells in 1812. The part of Elderslie, south of River Road, was a grant given to Michael Geary in 1812. The remainder of Elderslie is on the land granted to John Oxley in 1816 which he called Elerslie.

By c.1827, Francis Irvine, an absentee landowner, accumulated 675 hectares of land around the Elderslie area, which was a little more than double the original grant to Oxley of 330 hectares. This land also included a number of the thirteen smaller grants fronting the Nepean River between 1810 and 1818. The significant accumulation of land at this time was noteworthy as it presented the opportunity for further subdivision of the area.

Irvine, after numerous failed attempts to lease and sell portions of the property, sold his entire sizeable property in 1840 to Charles Campbell for £3000⁷. At this time the village of Camden was being planned, and presumably Campbell was under the impression that Elderslie could become a similar planned village.

Campbell planned on paper the village he envisaged at Elderslie, which included a large subdivision with sites for a church and parsonage as well a market place⁸. This plan can be seen in Figure 2. Of significance to this study is that Hilder Street, as shown on this plan, is remaining to this day. Only land between the Great South Road and Harrington Street, and between Macarthur Road and the Nepean River was sold, the rest of the proposed village layout shown in Figure 2 never eventuated⁹. Elderslie did not develop into a village at this time as envisioned by Campbell, as Camden had become a dominant village over the Nepean River.

In the following years there was some development in Elderslie by tradesmen; however the majority of this was by the highway and not in the detail outlined in Campbell's initial plans. By the 1850's Elderslie had virtually reached the point where it would grow no more¹⁰.

Eventually, Elderslie did become established as a small town and was settled by emigrants from Germany, who worked as labourers in the areas surrounding vineyards¹¹. A proportion of the town was also settled with a small number of convicts as labourers.

7 PJ Mylrea, *Camden District: A History to the 1840s* (2002) Camden Historical Society Inc Camden NSW, p36.

8 Ibid

9 Ibid. p35.

10 Allan Atkinson. 1988. "Camden - Farm and Village Life in Early new South Wales". Oxford University Press, Melbourne.

11 Macarthur Development Board. "Colonial Buildings: Macarthur Growth Centre - Campbelltown, Camden and Appin"

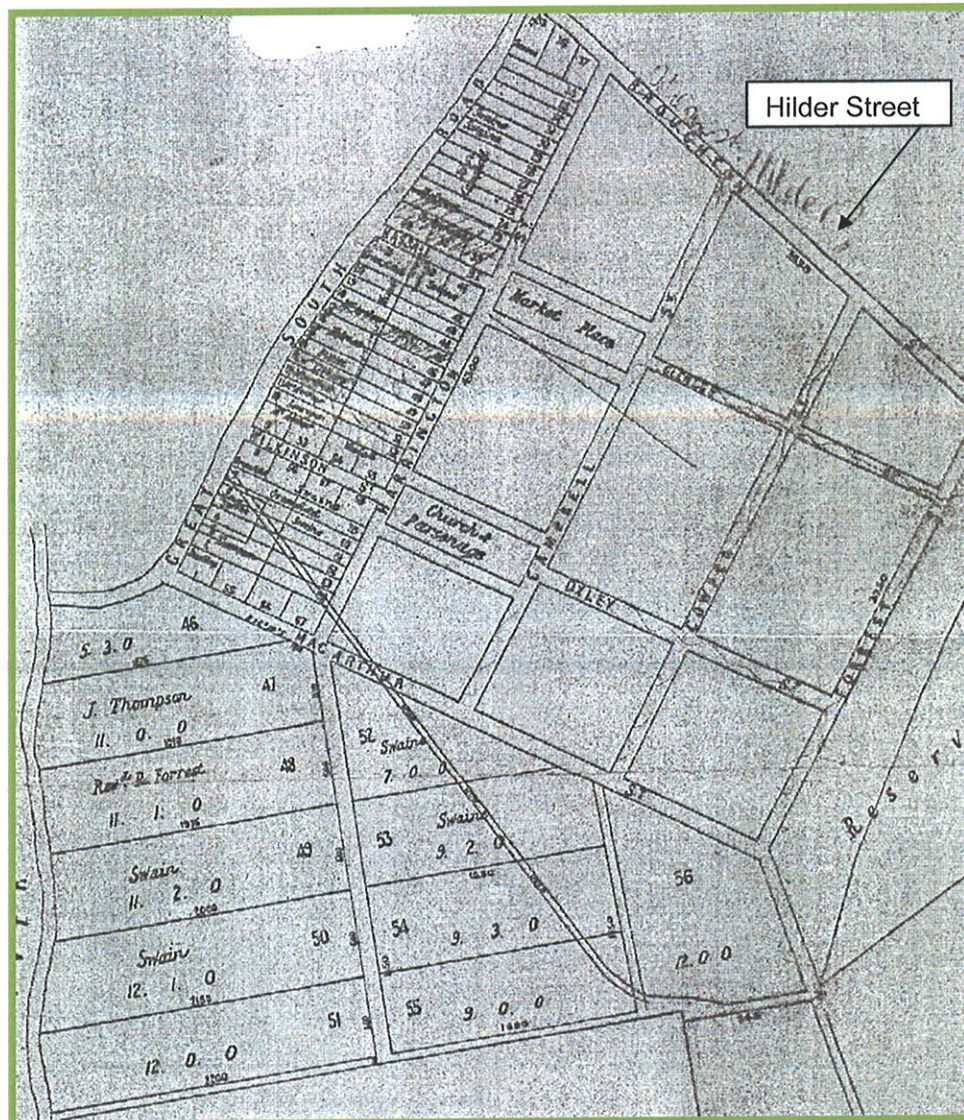


Figure 5: Campbell's 1941's village plan¹²

Hilside was built by Walter Furner in 1888. Furner was a builder and had four daughters. He also filled the position of the mayor of Camden¹³.

The property is currently owned by the Anglican Church, and at present is privately leased as residential space.

¹² P.J. Mylrea (2002) *Camden District: A History to the 1840's*, Camden Historical Society Inc Camden, NSW p35
¹³ State Heritage Inventory, *Hilside*

3 SITE DESCRIPTION

The site of *Hilsyde* consists of two separate lots, together totalling 6.38 hectares:

- Lot 2, DP 560048 (2.628 ha); and
- Lot 2, DP 220432 (3.752 ha).

The main building on the site is a Victorian single story brick residence. The dwelling has a galvanised iron roof, including a bull-nosed verandah with cast iron columns and brackets¹⁴.

It has a rendered brick bay window to the north façade, brick chimneys and a glass and timber entrance door with side and highlight windows. The house is in good condition and has had some brick extensions to the rear and a brick garage.



Figure 6 - Hilsyde homestead

The house is situated at the top of a slight rise in the property and is set back some distance from the access road, as can be seen in Figure 7. The property is entered from a drive way which circles at the front centre of the house and is lined with vegetation. The driveway continues around the north side of the house to the garage.

¹⁴ State Heritage Inventory, *Hilsyde*

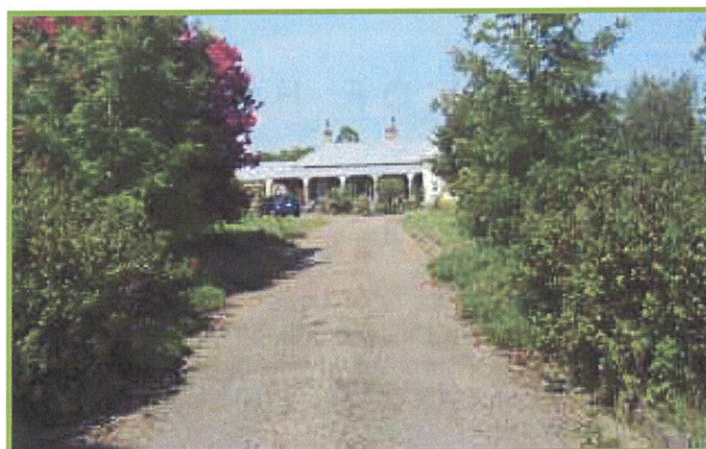


Figure 7 - Hilsyde, front entrance

Lawn areas are located on both sides of the house, with some large shrub plantings and medium and large sized trees.

To the rear of the house are some garden plantings, including a circular garden feature and a number of large trees.



Figure 8 - Rear garden of house, showing circular shrub planting, trees along back fence line and grassed area beyond back fence line

There is a planting of trees along the fence line of all four sides of the house which form a rectangular boundary and provide some screening of the house. This can be seen clearly in the aerial photograph, Figure 2.

The property has rural style fencing on the south and north boundaries, and also enclosing the tree boundary to the back of the house. Beyond the rear boundary is an open grassed area which slopes away from the house.

Adjacent to the boundary on the northern side are some small low timber sheds. Trees on the southern boundary screen the adjacent house and property.

4 DISCUSSION OF HERITAGE CURTILAGE

This section discusses the curtilage of the *Hilsyde* property through consideration of its features, setting, and views to and from the site and its relationship with its surrounds.

Heritage curtilage considers that a building may stand within a larger area of land which subserves the purposes of the building. The area surrounding a building may contribute to its purpose or the enjoyment of the place or the fulfilment of its purpose.

As well as the curtilage of a building on a site, an analysis of heritage curtilage also needs to consider relevant landscape and built features which have a relationship with the building and may contribute to its setting.

4.1 *Historical allotments*

From the historical information available regarding the original settlement of the Elderslie area, it is known that the area was first divided by land grants in the 1800s. Over time this land has been subdivided to form smaller lots to meet increasing demand for housing as population grows. *Hilsyde* is still on a relatively large portion of land, which reflects its time of construction and the historical placement of the house on a large property by today's standards.

Apart from the position of the house on a large block, there were no other obvious physical markers on the site to reflect historical land divisions or which could contribute to an understanding of *Hilsyde's* historical relationship to its original land allotment.

4.2 *Views and vistas*

From the entrance at the road, the house is seen at the end of a tree lined driveway, set back at a distance from the road. This forms a formal entrance, an impressive view looking up the driveway to the house. As the house is set at the top of a slight rise in the land, the property beyond the house cannot be seen from the front.

Views to the house from the sides and the back are largely screened by vegetation.

Views from the house are mostly of the surrounding paddocks. There are some built structures in view of the house. This includes the form of modern housing which can be seen to the back of the house, but which is located at the bottom of a slope and has some vegetation screening. The closest and most intrusive built forms in view of *Hilsyde* are the housing developments to the south west of the house.

4.3 *Setting, context and siting*

Hilsyde is located in a rural setting, surrounded largely by open space. Trees and bushes tend to be clustered around built areas. The topography of the land is characterised by rolling hills and *Hilsyde* is sited at the top of a rise with the land sloping away from the house to the back and to the front. The house is on a large block and there are no built forms within close proximity to the house.

4.4 *Relationships*

Hilsyde has connections to its surrounds through its siting on a sizeable block in a rural setting. Originally the house would have been on a larger land area, but more recent developments have encroached on this space, though it is still on a relatively large block.

The house has some separation from its wider surrounds by the perimeter planting which, to an extent, screens the house from view. The house has a direct visual relationship to the front of the property. This is through its location on the top of a rise and the tree lined driveway creating a view up to the front of the house.

4.5 *Heritage curtilage*

It is considered that the property has a lot boundary heritage curtilage, as the immediate surrounding gardens form part of the significant features of the site and the surrounding area contributes to its setting.

Due to subdivision to the rear of the property, the house may have lost some of its original relationship to this rural area, in the context that it was once part of a bigger land parcel which has been encroached upon by more recent development. It is expected that any additional subdivision would further compromise this relationship.

The curtilage of the house should include its associated features, including garage, driveway, gardens and plantings, particularly the perimeter plantings. The rural characteristics of the surrounding area are important in contributing to its setting.

5 REDEVELOPMENT CONSIDERATIONS

This section provides a discussion of redevelopment options for the site in the context of its heritage curtilage.

5.1 *Redevelopment considerations*

Future redevelopment of the site should be undertaken with consideration of the heritage curtilage of the property. Any redevelopment should retain the built and vegetative features of the property and aim to maintain the rural character and setting of the homestead.

Currently the land adjacent to the house has little built form and is mainly open grasslands. There is an obvious tree planting boundary that has been established around the house. It forms a rectangular vegetation boundary around all four sides of the building at the fence line. These plantings assist in screening surrounding buildings from view of the house and should be retained in any consideration of redevelopment.

If redevelopment is to be undertaken, it is possible that a reduced curtilage would be acceptable, if redevelopment were to be sympathetic to the rural nature of the house setting and measures were taken to mitigate the impacts of the work.

5.2 *Curtilage Management*

Redevelopment would require subdivision that would reduce the size of the property and impact on the setting of the house, which has historically been on a large agricultural block. If this were to be done, a buffer zone between the property and the new development would be required. This is necessary to screen the house and yard and protect views from the house and yard from new development, which by nature is likely to be visually incongruent to the rural setting of the property which contributes to its curtilage.

It is considered that this buffer zone should be in the order of 8-10 metres and should include vegetation suitable to screen the new development and maintain the natural surrounds of the house which contribute to its setting.

Beyond the vegetation buffer zone, a fence sympathetic in form and materials to the rural character of the area would provide further screening of the house from any proposed developments.

The development should also be proportional in size to the house and consider Local Environmental Plan and Development Control Plan controls for development adjacent to heritage items.

If the above mitigation measures were implemented, it is considered that a reduced property boundary could be acceptable. This boundary would be at the existing back fence line and incorporate the perimeter plantings.

The plan in Figure 9 indicates the recommended curtilage management.



Figure 9 – Figure showing recommended curtilage management

If re-zoning were to be considered, this boundary would allow some development in the area currently zoned Rural 1(a).

6 RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are made with regard to the management of the heritage curtilage of the property, in the context of proposed redevelopment of the site:

1. The perimeter plantings around the house should be retained and no redevelopment should take place to the front or sides of the house; and
2. At a minimum, the existing back fence line could be acceptable as the new property boundary, subject to appropriate curtilage management, as follows:
 - Any redevelopment should be designed with consideration for retaining the features which contribute to the heritage curtilage of the property (views, setting, rural character etc);
 - A buffer zone of 8-10 metres should be established between the existing back fence line and the new development;
 - This buffer zone should provide a vegetation screening of the development;
 - A fence of form and materials consistent with the rural nature of the area should be constructed where the buffer zone meets the new development; and
 - Height controls should ensure that the new development is proportional to the house.

7 REFERENCES

1. Allan Atkinson. 1988. "Camden - Farm and Village Life in Early new South Wales". Oxford University Press, Melbourne.
2. Council of Camden, Camden Local Environmental Plan No. 46.
3. DBL Property. October 2005. The Anglican Deaconess Institution Hilsyde Property, Elderslie: Review of Development Options (Draft). P7.
4. Macarthur Development Board. "Colonial Buildings: Macarthur Growth Centre - Campbelltown, Camden and Appin"
5. PJ Mylrea, *Camden District: A History to the 1840s* (2002) Camden Historical Society Inc Camden NSW
6. State Heritage Inventory, Hilsyde
7. www.whereis.com.au

