

HERITAGE IMPACT STATEMENT



34-72 Tallawong Road, Rouse Hill

May 2019 | J3537

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Front cover: View south west from Rouse Hill House and Estate towards the subject site.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Preamble

This Heritage Impact Statement (HIS) has been prepared to accompany a Planning Proposal to amended *State Environmental Planning Policy (Sydney Region Growth Centres) 2006 (Sydney Region Growth Centre SEPP)* by increasing the maximum building height from 16m to 26m where it applies to land at No. 34-72 Tallawong Road, Rouse Hill, New South Wales.

This statement has been commissioned following a request from the Director, Sydney Region West, at the Department of Planning to:

- (b) address any potential impact of the additional height on the view corridors from Rouse Hill House and Estate.
- (c) assess the proposals consistency with Section 9.1 Direction 2.3 Heritage Conservation.¹

This statement has been prepared at the request of CDMA Australia and should be read in conjunction with the Visual Impact Assessment prepared by Ethos Urban.

1.2 Authorship and Acknowledgements

This HIS was prepared by Alice Fuller, M.Herit.Cons.(Hons.), and James Phillips, B.Sc. (Arch.), B.Arch., M.Herit.Cons. (Hons.), of Weir Phillips Heritage and Planning.

The authors wish to thank Dr. Scott Hill, Sydney Living Museums, for providing access to Rouse Hill House and his assistance in identifying the key views from the Estate potentially impacted upon by the proposed works.

1.3 Limitations

A history and assessment of Rouse Hill House and Estate from first principles was not provided for. The existing Conservation Management Plan for the Estate, the heritage listing sheets from the State Heritage Inventory and recent visual studies, were relied upon.

This HIS is limited to the potential impacts on Rouse Hill House and Estate. No other heritage items in the vicinity of the site were considered.

1.4 Methodology

This assessment has been prepared with reference to the *NSW Heritage Manual* update *Statements of Heritage Impact* (2002) and with reference to the planning controls listed under Section 1.6.

1.5 Physical Evidence

A site visit and visit to Rouse Hill House and Estate were carried out in April 2019. Unless otherwise stated, the photographs contained in this statement were taken by the authors on this occasion.

¹ Letter to Kerry Robinson, General Manager, Blacktown City Council from Anne-Maree Carruthers, Director, Sydney Region West Planning Services, Department of Planning and Environment dated 23 January, 2019.

1.6 Documentary Evidence

1.6.1 General References

- Broadbent, James and Bogle, Michael, *Rouse Hill House: Conservation Management Plan*, 1990. Caroline Simpson Library, Sydney Living Museums.
- Conybeare Morrison and Partners, *Rouse Hill Estate Curtilage Study for Historic Houses Trust of New South Wales, Volumes 1 and 2*, October 2003. Caroline Simpson Library, Sydney Living Museums.
- LFA (Pacific) Pty Ltd, *Area 20 Precinct: Public Domain and Landscape Strategy*, August 2011. Copy provided by the client.
- PLACE Design Group, *Landscape and Visual Assessment for Riverstone Estate*, September 2014. Copy provided by the client.
- Wingate, Thomas, *View from the upper floor of Rouse Hill House looking towards Second Ponds Creek*, c.1859. Sydney Living Museums.

1.6.2 Listing Sheets

- *Rouse Hill House Estate*, 980 Windsor Road, Rouse Hill. State Heritage Inventory Database No.: 1140122.
- *Rouse Hill House and Farm*, Windsor Road, Rouse Hill. State Heritage Inventory Database No.: 5044989.

1.6.3 Planning Documents

- *State Environmental Planning Policy (Sydney Region Growth Centres) 2006*.

1.6.4 Proposal Documents

- Ethos Urban, *34-72 Tallawong Road, Rouse Hill: Visual Impact Assessment*, May 2019.

2.0 IDENTIFYING THE SITE

2.1 Site Location and Identification

The site is located within the Riverstone East Precinct of the North West Growth Area (NWGA) and within the City of Blacktown Local Government Area. The site is located on the eastern side of Tallawong Road, close to Schofields Road, and comprises the following addresses and lots:

- No. 34 Tallawong Road, Rouse Hill is identified as Lot 69, D.P. 30186.
- No. 42 Tallawong Road, Rouse Hill is identified as Lot 68, D.P. 30186.
- No. 50 Tallawong Road, Rouse Hill is identified as Lot 67, D.P. 30186.
- No. 58 Tallawong Road, Rouse Hill is identified as part of Lot 66, D.P. 30186.
- No. 72 Tallawong Road, Rouse Hill is identified as part of Lot 65, D.P. 30186.

It is noted that the proposed works primarily affect Nos. 34-58 Tallawong Road. No. 72 Tallawong Road is only included as a consequence of the alignment of the future extension of Rouse Road.

Figure 1 identifies the site within the wider area. Figure 2 identifies the lots comprising the site.

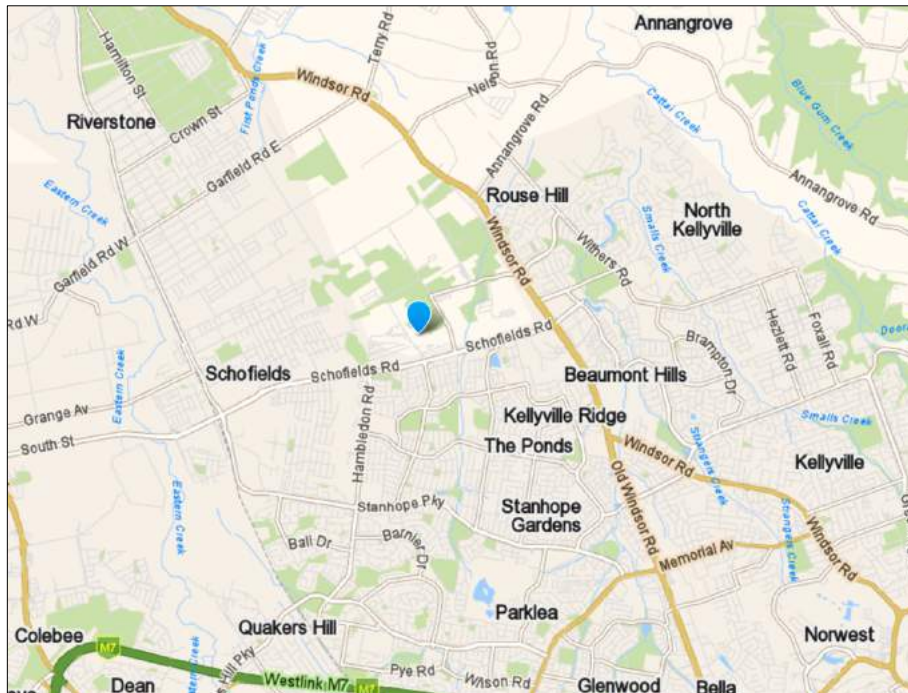


Figure 1: Location of the site within the wider area.
Whereis.com.au.

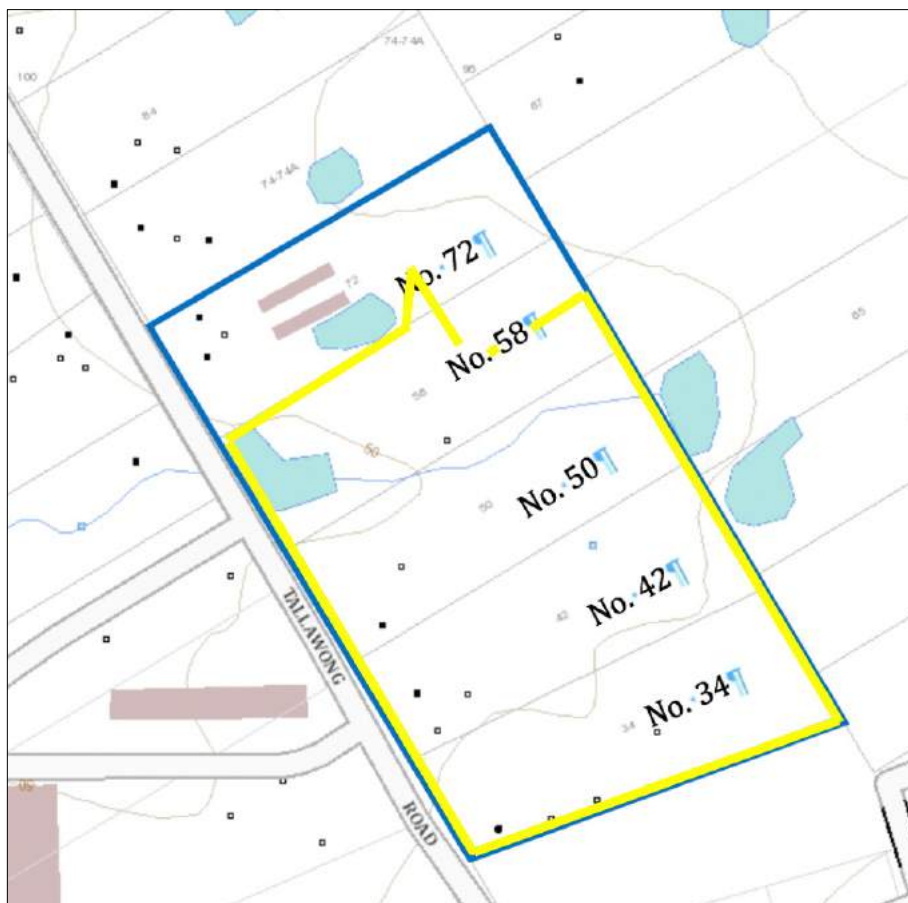


Figure 2: Lots affected by the proposal (blue) and the approximate site boundaries (yellow).

SIXMaps; annotations by WP Heritage.

2.2 Description of the Site and its Setting

The site is approximately 7.5ha in size. The lots are partially cleared with scattered vegetation. Lot 67 is more heavily vegetated than the other lots comprising the site. There are a number of free standing dwellings (and their outbuildings) on the site. Refer to Figure 3.

To the north, east and north west of the site lie similarly large lots with semi-rural uses. To the south lies the newly opened Tallawong Station on the Sydney Metro Northwest line and large parking areas. Further south lies Schofields Road, a four lane divided carriageway. To the south west lies the Sydney Metro Trains stabling and maintenance facility. Refer to Figure 4.



Figure 3: Aerial Photograph over the site.

SIXMaps; annotations by WP Heritage.



Figure 4: Aerial Photograph over the site and the surrounding area.

SIXMaps; annotations by WP Heritage.

2.3 Desired Future Character

Major changes are planned for the area immediately surrounding and including the site, which lies adjacent to a local centre and within the 400m walking catchment of Tallawong Station.

The site is currently zoned R3 medium density residential under *Sydney Region Growth Centre SEPP*. This provides a maximum building height of 16m. The site has a minimum residential density control of 45 dwellings per hectare. It is noted that the proposed building height of 26m is the same height that applies to land to the east of the site which is also zoned R3, adjacent to the local centre and the same distance from Tallawong Station. The minimum residential density control of 45 dwellings per hectare is consistent across the subject site, which as a 16m height limit and the adjoining land, which has a 26m height limit. There are no Floor Space Ratio Controls applicable to the site under the SEPP. Refer to Figures 5 and 6.



Figure 5: Detail of the Zoning Plan from *Sydney Region Grown Centre SEPP*.
Cited in the Gateway Determination Report.

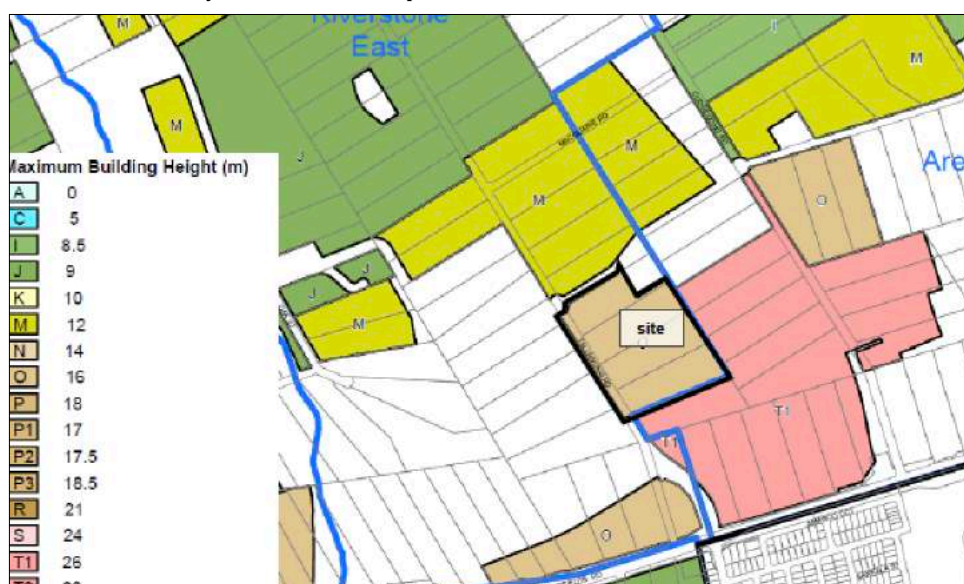


Figure 6: Detail of the Height Plan from the *Sydney Region Grown Centre SEPP*.
Cited in the Gateway Determination Report.

2.4 Heritage Listings

Nos. 34-72 Tallawong Road, Rouse Hill is not subject to any statutory or non-statutory heritage listings.

3.0 ROUSE HILL HOUSE AND ESTATE

3.1 Preamble

As set out in Section 2.1, the purpose of this statement is to assess the likely impacts of the proposal on Rouse Hill House and Estate.

3.2 Location of the Item

Rouse Hill House and Estate is located at No. 356 Annangrove Road, Rouse Hill, also known as No. 980 Windsor Road, Rouse Hill. The site comprises Lot 1 D.P.815213.

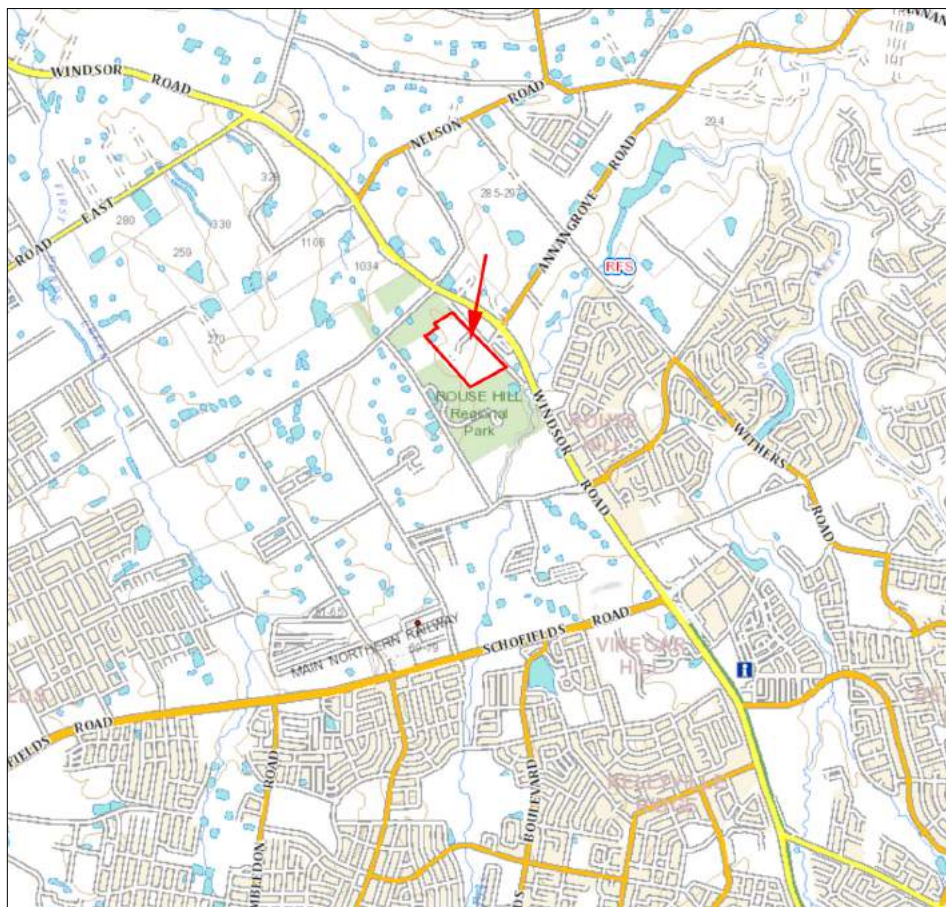


Figure 7: Site Location; annotation by WP Heritage.
SIX Maps.

3.3 Heritage Listings

Rouse Hill House and Estate is subject to the following statutory heritage listings:

- Is listed on the State Heritage Register under the auspices of the *NSW Heritage Act 1977*. The listing reads: Rouse Hill House and Farm, Windsor Road, Rouse Hill (00002).
- Is listed by Schedule 5 Part 1 of the *Blacktown LEP2015*. The listing reads 'Rouse Hill House Estate', No. 980 Windsor Road, Rouse Hill. State significance (I107).

Note: Sydney Living Museums are in the process of compiling a s170 Register.

The site is subject to the following non-statutory listings:

- Is classified by the National Trust of Australia (NSW). The listing reads 'Rouse Hill House etc.,' Windsor Road, Rouse Hill.
- Is registered by the Register of the National Estate. The listing reads 'Rouse Hill House and Garden,' Windsor Road, Rouse Hill (Place ID 2986). There is a second, separate, listing that reads 'Rouse Hill House including Stables and Outbuildings,' Windsor Road, Rouse Hill, NSW are registered on the Register of the National Estate (Place ID 22985).

3.4 Location Relative to the Subject Site

The subject site is located approximately 1.6m south west of Rouse Hill House and Estate. Refer to Figure 8, in which Rouse Hill House and Estate is shaded orange and the site is outlined in black.

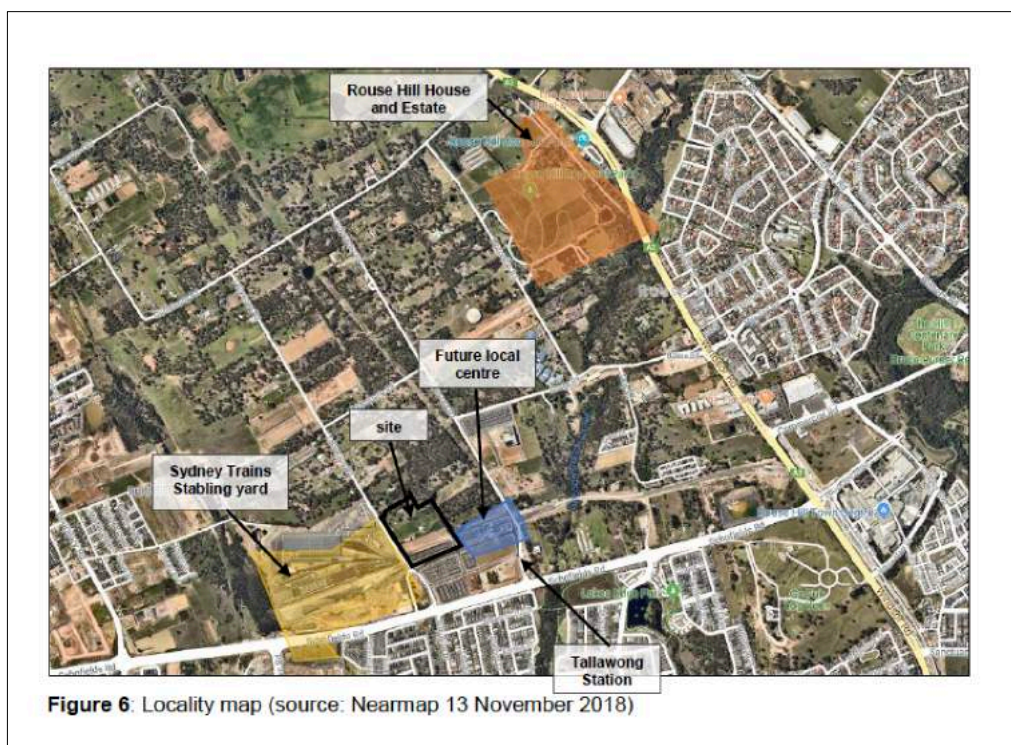


Figure 8: Location of Rouse Hill House and Estate relative to the subject site.
Gateway Determination Report.

3.5 Brief History of the Item

The State Heritage Inventory listing sheet (SHR) provides the following brief history for this item which is adopted for the purposes of this statement:

'Richard Rouse (1774-1852) appears to have begun building at Rouse Hill in 1813 although the grant of 450 acres (182 hectares) was not made until October 1816 (Broadbent & Bogle 1990:7) . Sometime between 1818 and 1825 Rouse, his wife Elizabeth (1772-1849) and family moved from Parramatta to the new house. The son of an Oxfordshire cabinet maker and shop-keeper, Rouse came to the colony, free, in 1801. Prospering quickly, by 1805 he was Superintendent of Public Works and Convicts at Parramatta.

In this role he supervised the building of Governor and Mrs Macquarie's additions to Government House, Parramatta in the mid 1810s. It is possible that

these works influenced Rouse to build a bigger house than he first intended, adding larger, longer rooms behind the front range. He chose the site of his new house while building toll houses for Macquarie's upgraded road to the Hawkesbury. Rouse sited the new house prominently, possibly with an eye to its possible use as an inn, on a hilltop adjacent to the toll house (also built by him) on the Parramatta to Windsor Turnpike.

He acquired other properties, more fertile than the Rouse Hill farm, but Rouse Hill had the advantage of strategic siting. While other early colonial homesteads overlooked their crops or pastures, Rouse Hill has always overlooked the busy Windsor Road. It was from here that Rouse and his descendants oversaw their distant pastoral and agricultural interests, rather than the estate itself being the focus of those interests.

Rouse was not bred to the land, but was shrewd and capable, careful of money and acquisitive of property. He left, on his death in 1852, extensive holdings throughout the colony (www.hht.net.au/museums/rouse_hill, accessed 15/10/10).

The Rouse Hill estate grew to 1200 acres (486 hectares) by Rouse's death, by purchase of an adjacent grant (Historic Houses Trust 1997:2).

Rouse consolidated his land holdings at North Richmond from around 1806 and increased his pastoral holdings in the north west of New South Wales, using his sons to colonise further west while he continued to acquire land in Parramatta and Western Sydney.

A number of the property's outbuildings finished construction following the completion of the house, including the laundry wing, cottage, barn and woolshed. The garden layout reflects the construction of the house between 1813 and 1818. Some trees remain from the plantings in the mid 19th century. With the exception of outbuildings, Rouse seems to have made no other alterations to the property's buildings. This was left to later generations (Broadbent & Bogle 1990:7).

Rouse died in 1852 leaving the property to his son Edwin Rouse. The property went to Edwin's son Edwin Stephen Rouse on his death in 1862.

A summerhouse, woolshed and a two storey service wing was added in the 1860s, the stables built in 1876 and 1877 and the house redecorated and partly furnished in 1885. (Historic Houses Trust 1997:2) The service wing made no direct connection with the house. A verandah, weighted sash windows, a modified front door and sidelights and other late 19th century innovations were also installed. These too have been done in such a way as to preserve the integrity of the house. (Broadbent & Bogle 1990:7)

1888 Rouse Hill public school opened to the east of Rouse Hill House and farm.

Edwin Stephen Rouse's eldest daughter Nina who had left the house in 1895 to marry George Terry returned with her husband to live at Rouse Hill in 1924. This was a result of their bankruptcy.

Following the death of Edwin Stephen Rouse in 1931 his estate was administered by Trustees, mainly family members and later a family company, until 1969.

In 1932 the studio converted into a breakfast room.

Estate subdivision had begun in 1951 and the property had been reduced to 106 acres by 1963. Nina Terry died at Rouse Hill House in 1968 and the following year the remaining 106 acres were subdivided. The homestead block of 29 acres went to her two sons Gerald and Roderick Terry as tenants in common (Historic Houses Trust, 1997, 2).

When a family dispute occurred following the death of Edwin Rouse's granddaughter Nina Terry in 1968, architect John Fisher (early member of the Institute of Architects, member of the Cumberland County Historic Buildings Committee and National Trust of Australia (NSW) Board member after its reformation in 1960) chaired the Rouse Hill Preservation Committee, which brought together the family and representatives of the National Trust of Australia (NSW). This led to the State Government resuming the property, which later became a property under the care of the Historic Houses Trust of NSW (Lucas & McGinness, 2012).

A further subdivision in 1974 reduced the homestead block to 8.15 hectares (ibid, 1997, 2)

In March 1978 the NSW government purchased the property which also contained 24 outbuildings (and half its contents (Mackaness, 2010, 5)). It was administered by the Planning and Environment Commission, later the Department of Planning, which commissioned restoration works from the Public Works Department (Broadbent & Bogle, 1990, 7).

The Heritage Council's Restoration Steering (HC RS) Committee resolved to have a conservation statement prepared for the buildings and their site. Urgent repair works to the outbuildings were identified and undertaken under the supervision of the Government Architect's Branch, Public Works Department and the main entrance driveway was regraded and re-gravelled. Urgent repair and stabilisation on the homestead and outbuildings continued and a fire control service was installed in the garden. A gardener was contracted to carry out urgent garden maintenance. The HC RS Committee considered the need for accurate documentation of interior finishes and contents of the buildings and for curatorial and materials conservation work to be carried out. The initial conservation programme was endorsed and circulated to various interested conservation bodies for comment. The Royal Australian Historical Society was requested to undertake an historical research programme on the property. An archaeologist was contracted to be present during any excavation works associated with the repairs programme (HC, 1982).

There has been a continuity of family ownership at Rouse Hill until 1978. Particular forces in the family's history and those of wealth in the 19th century, followed by financial hardship, longevity and resistance to change in the 20th century have left the property in a poignantly fragile condition. This fragility is inherent in much of the property's historic fabric and is integral to the archival significance of the place (Historic Houses Trust, 1997, 2).

1984 the summer house was repaired/reconstructed and the property was transferred to the Historic Houses Trust in 1987. Family association with the property continued through the occupancy of Gerald Terry from 1968, Roderick Terry, 1968-80, and the latter's daughter and son in law, Miriam and Ian Hamilton and the Hamilton's' ownership of a significant portion of the collection. The collection was subsequently transferred to the Hamilton Rouse Hill Trust.

Since 1978 descendants have returned many significant family items and the collection now comprises over 20,000 objects as diverse as costume, furniture,

tools and automobiles (Mackaness, 2010, 5).

1993 - 25 acres (10 hectares) of land left (in HHT management)(Bogle, 1993).

When the HHT opened Rouse Hill House and Farm to the public in 1999 it was in a limited capacity and a very different context. In 2007, anticipating the extraordinary residential growth in the area, the HHT sought funding of \$19m from Treasury to provide new visitor and cultural facilities (interpretation, programs, research and access to the collection) along with commercial activities (cafe, retail, auditorium and flexible public spaces to be used as venues). The project aimed to improve the property's sustainability and allowed it to be opened up to thousands of visitors a year (Mackaness, 2010, 5).

2008: HHT got first stage funding for the education component of its vision for the site. To protect the heritage precinct the State Government established the Rouse Hill Regional Park, transferred the 1888 Rouse Hill Public School (former) and adjacent lands to the HHT and diverted the upgraded Windsor Road (to the east away from the house and school)(ibid, 5). Advocacy by the Friends of the Historic Houses Trust was in large part responsible for moving the road to create this bypass, protecting the site's setting from encroachment (Watts, 2014).

10/3/2009 Remnant RTA lands were transferred to the HHT (from the Windsor Road bypass which is open further to the east than the old road alignment (in a cutting). The Hills Shire Council approved stage one development application for works.

2009-10: Construction program almost complete on former RTA land and Rouse Hill Public School (former) adjoining re-aligned Windsor Road: School house conserved, repainted in Victorian colour scheme and interpreted as 19th century school; cafe, retail, education centre and outdoor auditorium (for 60); parking; security; flexible public spaces to be used as venues and landscaping works completed. Property's capacity and visitation rate increased, including increasing numbers of local schools (capacity now for 20,000 children a year to visit). Transfer of the remnant RTA lands created a new opportunity for research and interpretation. HHT historians Joy Hughes, Jane Kelso and curator Fergus Clunie began gathering historic maps of the region. Searching for the location of the original Toll House at Rouse Hill, he unearthed new evidence about the line of the old Hawkesbury Road (1794-1813) on which the pursuit and 'battle of Vinegar Hill', an armed conflagration between convicts and troops, took place in 1804. Although the road has long since disappeared, it defined the boundary of the first land grant in the area, the 1000 acre 'Copenhagen' given to Captain William Bligh. It also ran close to the surviving kilometre stretch of the old Windsor Road built by convicts in 1812-13 as the first turnpike in the colony between Sydney and the Hawkesbury. The exact location of the battle of Vinegar Hill has long been debated, but the map evidence and line of the old Hawkesbury Road indicate that it most likely took place between Second Ponds Creek and the crest of Rouse Hill, formerly known as Vinegar Hill. A line of very early trees at the edge of the road is believed to date back to the time of the battle. Rouse Hill House dating from 1813, is remarkable as one of the longest continuously occupied houses in Australia, set in the oldest surviving garden in Australia and with original outbuildings, interiors and collections intact. As the likely site of the battle of Vinegar Hill, it now has a new level of significance, with exciting interpretive possibilities, and this has encouraged HHT to rethink its approach to the property (ibid, 4-5).

2004 Energy Australia National Trust Heritage Award received.

6/2016 increased visitation has been achieved by introducing a series of limited-number tours of the house's interiors. Works to conserve the farm's dairy precinct are now complete. Two main posts whose subsoil bases had decayed were re-footed, with new spliced material and a pad footing. Guttering was replaced, along with some roof sheeting where discrete patching was no longer sufficient and decayed timber trimming on the milk house has been replaced (Hill, 2016)

9/2017

Bathroom conserved and repaired (Long, 2017).²

It is noted that Rouse Hill House and Estate is one of a number of large pastoral holdings in the area, some of which have historic associations with the Rouse-Terry families, notably Box Hill, which was located north of Rouse Hill House on the opposite side of Windsor Road.

Figure 9 provides a historic photograph of a view from Rouse Hill House in the mid nineteenth century, showing its rural setting. As set out below, preserving the understanding of this setting is critical to understanding the significance of Rouse Hill House.



Figure 9: Thomas Wingate, *View from the upper floor of Rouse Hill House looking towards Second Ponds Creek*, c.1859. Note: This view is to the south east. The subject site is located to the south west.

Sydney Living Museums.

² *Rouse Hill House and Farm*, Windsor Road, Rouse Hill. State Heritage Inventory Database No.: 5044989.

3.6 Description of the Item

Figure 10 provides a recent aerial photograph over Rouse Hill House and Estate. Figure 11 provides a diagram identifying the principal structures on the site. These images should be read in conjunction with the following site description.



Figure 10: Recent Aerial Photograph Over the Site. Some of the larger structures labelled in Figure 10 below are labelled above for orientation purposes. Refer to Figure 10 below for the key.

SIX Maps.

The State Heritage Inventory listing sheet (SHR) provides the following description of this item which is adopted for the purposes of this statement:

Farm:

The property is perhaps unique for its survival as a largely intact estate with an unbroken chain of occupancy, allowing the survival of major garden and interior elements of every period of its history to the present. This layering of artefacts and fashions is especially prevalent in the gardens where designs and physical details such as edging, fencing, planting containers, bed designs and paths provide a case history for the study of the development of garden practices in Australia.

Outbuildings:

Several, including:

Stables:

Bath House (1858):

Picturesque building in the garden thought to have been built by Scottish-born Parramatta builder and architect, James Houison, it originally featured an arched timber trellises on the two verandahs and porches on each side. This treillage supported climbing plants and gave some privacy to users of the bathroom and lavatory. Morewood & Rogers roofing (tin) tiles, stone flagging. Restored in 2017

(<https://sydneylivingmuseums.com.au/stories/what-lies-beneath-conservation-works>).

Caretaker's House:

Dairy:

The dairy design is essentially the same as one for a model dairy promoted in 1947 by the NSW Department of Agriculture as suitable for smaller farmers. 'Model dairies' (a term dating to the 1800s) were structures that exemplified the most up-to-date hygiene and production principles and materials, and could serve as a model to other farmers to copy. The Rouse dairy contains a linear row of bails, with a gabled, fibre-cement-clad 'milk house' at the western end that held the pumping machinery and generator. As per 1947 plan specifications, the floor was laid with easily washed concrete to maintain strict hygiene. A much earlier timber structure, containing two cow bails for hand-milking, also survives at Rouse Hill House and features in tours of its outbuildings (Hill, 2016).

Garden:

The garden is perhaps Australia's oldest surviving colonial garden in relatively intact form. The surviving physical evidence in the gardens includes borders in a variety of materials, fence and gate remnants, fragments of trellis and arbours, paving and numerous soil displacements that become evident with the location's annual dry spells. These physical remains, matched with pictorial evidence from photographs, drawings and engravings of the property, and writings, have resulted in the identification of four stages of the garden's development: c.1825, c.1865, c.1885 and c.1968.

This continuity and evidence of evolution of a very early intact garden from the first quarter of the 19th century to the Edwardian era and 20th century is extremely rare in Australia. The effects of new technologies in Australian estate gardening with replacement of palings with wire fences, displacement of stone and brick garden or path edgings with terracotta tile edgings etc are quite evident (Bogle, 1993 adapted by Read, S., 2004).

Dominating the garden and seen from afar are tall, mature *Araucaria pines* (Bunya pine - *A.bidwillii* (2) and hoop pine (*A.cunninghamii* (5)(Stuart Read, 6/2014 visit).

A large crepe myrtle (*Lagerstroemia indica*) on the gravel front path dominates the garden in summer when blooming. the lilac-coloured crepe myrtles in Rouse Hill's front garden were probably planted in the 1950s or 1960s when crepe myrtles were at the peak of their post-war popularity. At the old Caretaker's Cottage at the back of the property is a spectacular carmine-pink form (Innes, 2018).

House:

Rouse Hill House is a large two storey Georgian House set on top of a ridge which falls away gradually to all cardinal points. The house is oriented to the northeast, midway between Parramatta & Windsor. The house has a separate two storey brick service wing, offices forming an arcaded courtyard, 22 rooms, staircase hall, service stair and two cellar rooms. The house has a fine stone-flagged stair hall with cantilevered timber stair. The doors are all six panelled with some architraves and panelled jamb linings. The main house is built of sandstone with a slate roof, timber floors(kitchen, scullery, staircase, hall, arcade and verandah are flagged) and oakgrained hardwood joinery.

Outbuildings:

Other buildings on the site include a slab built cow shed, brick bath house, a reconstructed timber summer house, brick stables (Chivell 1978).³

Note: Of the outbuildings, the most notable is the brick stables, not described above. The stables were designed by John Horbury Hunt. They are a large detached single storey face brick building with gabled roof (with vented cupola) forms clad in corrugated iron.

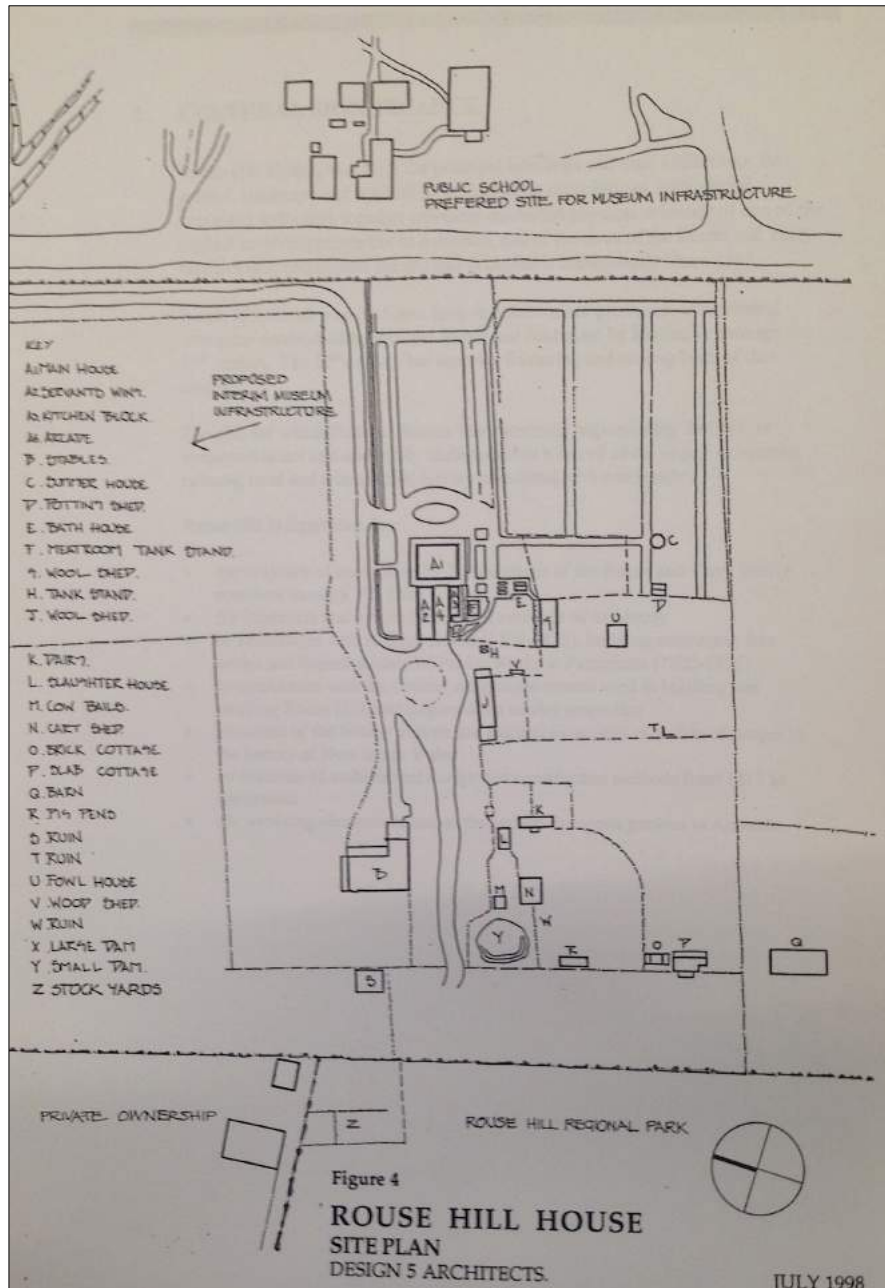


Figure 11: Site Plan.

Prepared by Design 5 and cited in the *CMP 1990*.

³ *Rouse Hill House and Farm*, Windsor Road, Rouse Hill. State Heritage Inventory Database No.: 5044989.

It is not the purpose of this statement to illustrate each of the items identified above. Figures 12 to 15 illustrate the house and the rear wings that comprise its south western corner, the stables and the area to the south west of the house, being the general line of site towards the subject site on Tallawong Road.



Figure 12:
The front of
Rouse Hill House.
The house
primarily looks
to the north east.
Google Images.



Figure 13:
Kitchen block and the servants
wing, comprising the south
western corner of Rouse Hill
House.



Figure 14:
Stables.



Figure 15:
View north
towards the rear
of the house,
showing
outbuildings and
water tank in the
foreground.

3.7 Rouse Hill House and Estate within its Setting

Rouse Hill House and Estate is located upon the highest point within the immediate area. The existing property boundaries lie at contour level 71m above sea level. The site forms a watershed on a ridge of land aligned in a north-east/south-west direction. The surrounding landform is undulating with slopes generally not greater than 1 in 3.⁴

Rouse Hill House borders the original line of Windsor Road to the north. The road cuts through the ridgeline in a north east/north west direction. The house is orientated in this direction. Further north, lies the new line of Windsor Road, with mixed land uses on the opposite site, including rural to the north and small lot residential subdivision to the south east. To the immediate north, west and south lie Rouse Hill Regional Park, work on which began in 1998-9. The park includes extensive tree planting, wetlands

⁴ Conybeare Morrison and Partners, *Rouse Hill Estate Curtilage Study for Historic Houses Trust of New South Wales, Volumes 1 and 2*, October 2003, p.1.

and native grass lands. Within this area lies the Second Ponds Creek (to the south east) and Killarney Chain of Ponds (to the west). Refer to Figure 16.



Figure 16: Aerial photograph over Rouse Hill House and Estate and the surrounding area.
SIX Maps; annotation by WP Heritage and Planning.

As illustrated by the VIA that accompanies this application, views from the Estate to the south west and the subject site are defined by a tree lined ridge in the middle distance. There is one structure visible in this view corridor, being the Sydney Water Reservoir. Refer to Figure 17.



Figure 17: View towards the south west from the first floor of Rouse Hill House.

3.8 Significance

The State Heritage Inventory listing sheets for the site (SHR listing and LEP listing) provides the following statement of significance for this site:

‘Rouse Hill House is one of the most significant and substantial houses of the Macquarie period which dates from 1810 to 1822. Rouse Hill House Estate is the largest and most complete public ally owned physical

record - in the form of buildings, furnishings, artefacts and landscape relationship - of the occupancy and culture of a European-Australian family, encompassing the tastes, fortunes, and endeavours of seven generations from the early 19th century to the late 20th century (Historic Houses Trust 1997:8).

The property is perhaps unique for its survival as a largely intact estate with an unbroken chain of occupancy, allowing the survival of major garden and interior elements of every period of its history to the present. This layering of artefacts and fashions is especially prevalent in the gardens where designs and physical details such as edging, fencing, planting containers, bed designs and paths provide a case history for the study of the development of garden practices in Australia.

The garden is perhaps Australia's oldest surviving colonial garden in relatively intact form. The surviving physical evidence in the gardens includes borders in a variety of materials, fence and gate remnants, fragments of trellis and arbours, paving and numerous soil displacements that become evident with the location's annual dry spells. These physical remains, matched with pictorial evidence from photographs, drawings and engravings of the property, and writings, have resulted in the identification of four stages of the garden's development: c.1825, c.1865, c.1885 and c.1968. This continuity and evidence of evolution of a very early intact garden from the first quarter of the 19th century to the Edwardian era and 20th century is extremely rare in Australia. (Bogle, 1993 adapted by Read, S., 2004).⁵

This statement is adopted for the purposes of this statement.

3.9 Curtilage and View Corridors

3.9.1 Different Types of Curtilage

The heritage division publication *Heritage Curtilages* (1996) defines several different types of curtilage including:

- Lot boundary curtilage: comprising the boundary of the property containing the heritage item.
- Reduced lot boundary curtilage: when the heritage curtilage is less than the property boundary.
- Expanded heritage curtilage: when the heritage curtilage is greater than the property boundary. An expanded curtilage may apply to protect the setting or visual catchment of an item.

3.9.2 Understanding Historic Boundaries (Curtilages)

The boundaries associated with Rouse Hill House have changed over time. These changes are set out in a graphic form in a visual curtilage study prepared by Conybeare Morrison and Partners in 2003. Refer to Figure 18. The existing site boundaries are substantially less than the original Estate boundaries.

⁵ *Rouse Hill House and Farm*, Windsor Road, Rouse Hill. State Heritage Inventory Database No.: 5044989.



3.9.3 Understanding the Curtilages Associated with the Statutory Heritage Listings

The following curtilages are defined by the listing boundaries for Rouse Hill House and Estate:

The State Heritage Register provides a reduced lot curtilage for Rouse Hill House and Estate as follows:

- Part of Lot 1 D.P. 815213.

The *Blacktown LEP 2015* provides a lot boundary curtilage for Rouse Hill House and Estate as follows:

- Lot 1, DP 815213

Figure 19 identifies these curtilages.

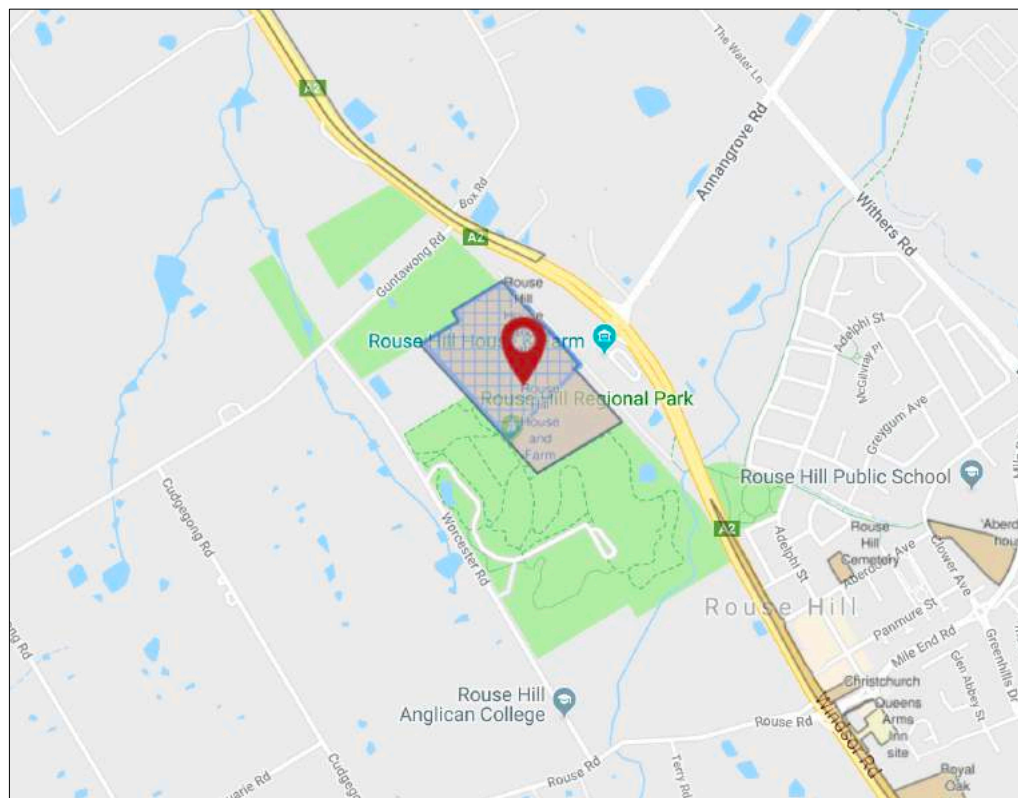


Figure 19: Curtilages for Rouse Hill House and Estate. The brown area relates to curtilage for the listing under the LEP 2015. The blue hatched area is curtilage for the listing under the SHR.

NSW Planning Portal.

3.9.4 Understanding the Visual Curtilage

Three studies carried out since 2000 have considered the visual curtilage of Rouse Hill House and Estate. The findings of each are briefly outlined below.

3.9.4.1 Conybeare Morrison and Partners 2003

The most recent detailed curtilage assessment carried out at Rouse Hill House and Estate (and which is publicly available) was carried out by Conybeare Morrison and Partners in 2003. This study provides an expanded visual curtilage for the site:

‘In defining the curtilage it is necessary therefore to identify the prominent observation points from which the significant item can be viewed, interpretation and appreciated. Other factors to be considered are:

- Views to and from the heritage item (visual curtilage);
- The possible need for a buffer zone between the curtilage and the adjoining land.
- The visual and historic relationship between the item and its environs.⁶

With regard to the first, this study concluded that:

- Rouse Hill House requires a rural context as its curtilage, which comprises a combination of the natural and cultural environment. The traditional prospect was the view over the toll road to the pastoral landscape of the Cumberland Plain; the visual and social links of Rouse Hill House and Box Hill House; and the visual juxtaposition of the wooded land and the cleared grazing land.
- Historic and scenic views and vistas as intimately connected with the house, garden, outbuildings, objects and possible archaeological artefacts and sites.
- Vistas to important geographical features include: to Second Ponds Creek to the south and south east; surrounding wooded ridge lines to the west and north east; distant background views of the Blue Mountains escarpment.

With regard to the second, this study concluded that:

- The traditional character of the rural setting of Rouse Hill House has been diminished by a number of contemporary changes to the cultural landscaping including changes to Windsor Road; the subdivision of the formerly large pastoral properties that surround the site; the construction of more dense residential development, particularly to the east and south east in the new residential suburbs of Kellyville and Rouse Hill; and the introduction of intrusive contemporary structures, such as power lines and support stanchions.
- The role of the adjoining parklands in providing additional curtilage and protection of vistas towards the mountains is recognised.

With regard to the third, this study concluded that:

- The legal lot boundary currently represents only a portion of the original land ownership and that interpretation of the significance of the item thus depends on an expanded curtilage.

Figure 20 reproduces the recommended vistas from this study. The yellow asterix (*) marks Rouse Hill House. The blue asterix (*) has been added by Weir Phillips Heritage and Planning to identify the approximate location of the subject site. The key is as follows:

1. Retain broad expanses of pastoral landscape of remnant Cumberland Plains.
2. Remove visual encroachments of unsympathetic buildings and inappropriate planting.
3. Retain a natural landscape ridgeline canopy and vista to the north, north west and to the Blue Mountains. Built form must not be visible. Tree canopies must be visible beyond the range.
4. Retain historic Box Hill vista.
5. Intense housing development visible to the south and south east. Ensure zoning of surrounding areas remain rural in land use with avoidance of intensification of urban development.

⁶ Conybeare Morrison and Partners, *op.cit.*, 2003, p. 14.

6. Second Ponds Creek vista- Preserve landscape vista to creek lines of Second Ponds Creek with lateral planting along its tributaries to reduce visual impact of future urban development.
7. Land between Windsor Road and new highway. No new built form. Remove intrusive built form where possible.
8. The boundaries of the proposed regional park are to be maintained.

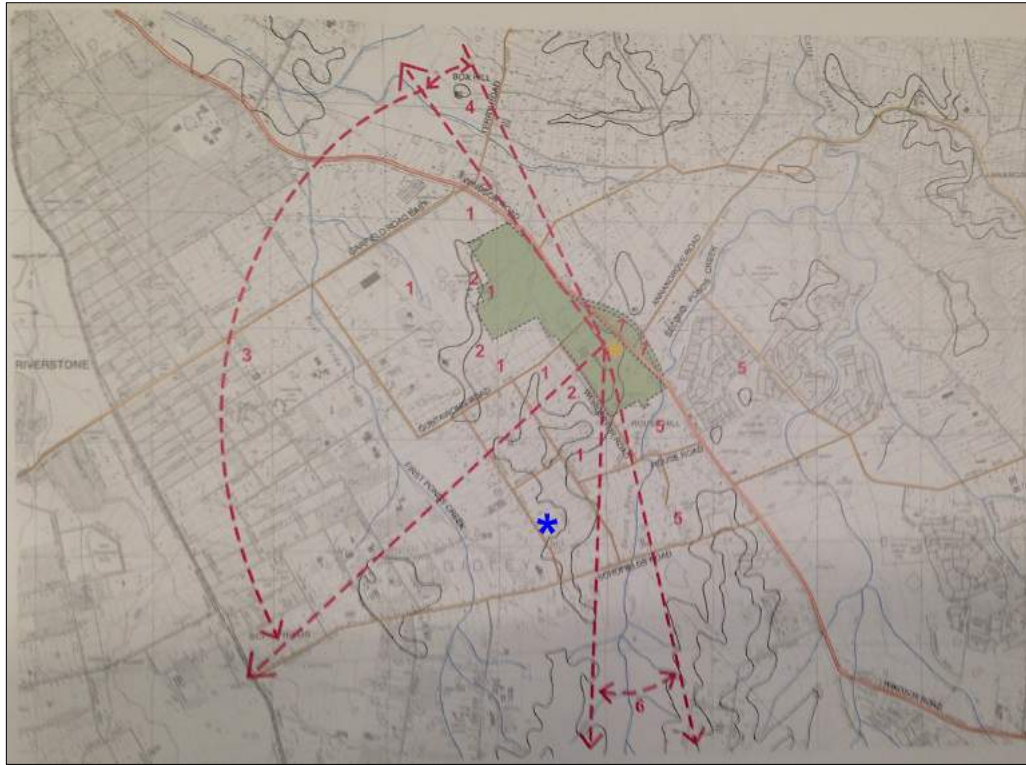


Figure 20: Recommended Vistas from the Rouse Hill House Estate.

Conybeare Morrison and Partners

The above analysis gave rise to the following recommended expanded curtilage. In Figure 21, Rouse Hill House is marked with the yellow asterisk. The blue asterisk marks the approximate location of the site and has been added by Weir Phillips Heritage and Planning. The black line marks the curtilage.



Figure 21: Recommended Vistas from the Rouse Hill House Estate.

Conybeare Morrison and Partners; annotation in blue by WP Heritage.

The Conybeare Morrison and Partner's study concludes with the following recommendations:

Recommendation	Remarks
Recommendation 1	<p>Retain broad expanses of pastoral landscapes of remnant Cumberland Plains Woodland within the visual curtilage of Rouse Hill House.</p> <p>To retain the historic, aesthetic and scientific/research significance and to maintain the sense of the rural landscape and continuity of its setting, it is essential to preserve the broad expands of pastoral landscape of open cleared grassland with remnant indigenous Cumberland Plain Woodland within the visual catchment of the estate.</p> <p>Preserve indigenous vegetation on elevated ground in accordance with the <i>NSW Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995</i>.</p>
Recommendation 2	<p>Remove visual encroachments of unsympathetic buildings and inappropriate planting within the immediate landscape to the north and north-west with retention of the existing trees and pastoral landscape.</p> <p>Not relevant to this proposal, which concerns the view to the south west.</p>

Recommendation	Remarks
Recommendation 3	<p>Retain a natural landscape ridgeline canopy and vistas to the north, north west and to the Blue Mountains.</p> <p>Not relevant to this proposal, which concerns views to the south west.</p>
Recommendation 4	<p>Retain significant historic Box Hill vistas</p> <p>Not relevant to this proposal, which concerns views to the south west.</p>
Recommendation 5	<p>Ensure that the zoning of surrounding areas within its visual catchment remain rural in land use with avoidance of any intensification of urban development within the Expanded Heritage Curtilage area.</p> <p>Intensive urban housing development present in the suburbs of Rouse Hill and Kellyville to the south and south east, which are within the visual catchment of Rouse Hill House, are to be avoided. Rouse Hill Estate must learn from the mistakes of the significant nearby rural estate of Bella Vista identified in <i>SREP 19</i> to be of heritage significance, where its heritage curtilage has been eroded severely by over development.</p> <p>To ensure that the visual curtilage of Rouse Hill Estate is not compromised by urban development, the zoning of surrounding areas within its view catchment must remain rural in land use, with avoidance of any intensification of urban development within the proposed Expanded Curtilage area.. Built form must be avoided within 10m below the top of the ridge lines surrounding the estate.</p> <p>To ameliorate the impact of smaller subdivisions within the visual curtilage area, ensure that rural allotments retain and plant a determined percentage of land with indigenous trees to preserve its rural setting and reduce the visual impact of dwellings and outbuildings.</p>
Recommendation 6	<p>Preserve the landscape vista to creek lines of Second Ponds Creek with lateral planting along its tributaries to reduce the visual impact of future urban development.</p> <p>From Rouse Hill Estate there are vistas along the Second Ponds Creek line. The broad expanses of indigenous Woodland vegetation along the creek line and its tributaries are to be conserved, with intensive lateral planting of tall riparian trees along the tributaries to screen the impact of future urban development at the Second Ponds Creek Release Area from Rouse Hill Estate. Species should be of a height to ensure that tree canopies screen any future development to a height of 2-3 storeys.</p>

Recommendation	Remarks
Recommendation 7	<p>Landscape land between Windsor Road and the proposed deviation of the Windsor Road Highway</p> <p>Not relevant to this proposal, which concerns land to the south west. Note: the deviation has been carried out.</p>
Recommendation 9	<p>Revision of the Rouse Hill Estate Conservation Management Plan</p> <p>Policies within the Rouse Hill Estate Conservation Management Plan should be revised to include information with the outcomes of the Curtilage Study.</p> <p>Note: No revised CMP is available within the public domain.</p>
Recommendation 10	<p>The 'Urban Vision'</p> <p>Ensure that there is an urban vision for the entire Northwest Sector of Sydney that establishes these sound overall principles for the area.</p>

3.6.9.2 LSA (Pacific) Pty 2011

In 2011, LFA (Pacific) Pty Ltd prepared the following view analysis, Figure 22, for Rouse Hill House and Estate as part of the *Area 20 Precinct: Public Domain and Landscape Strategy* for NSW Planning and Infrastructure. In preparing their view analysis, the authors have taken in consideration the relative distance over which different view corridors travel. In this plan, the subject site is outlined in black.

With regard to view corridors from Rouse Hill House Estate to the south west, this study notes:

'Further south and south west, taller and closer trees on the western ridgeline effectively obscure all the remaining developable portions of the Area 20 Precinct site. It should be noted however that Sydney Water has located one water reservoir (top of tank at RL 90m) with plans to locate additional pressure towers and water reservoirs on this ridgeline, are likely to impact severely on an otherwise treed skyline.'⁷

The subject site is located outside of the ridgelines defining the vistas from Rouse Hill House and Estate.

⁷ LFA (Pacific) Pty Ltd, *Area 20 Precinct: Public Domain and Landscape Strategy*, August 2011, p. 10.

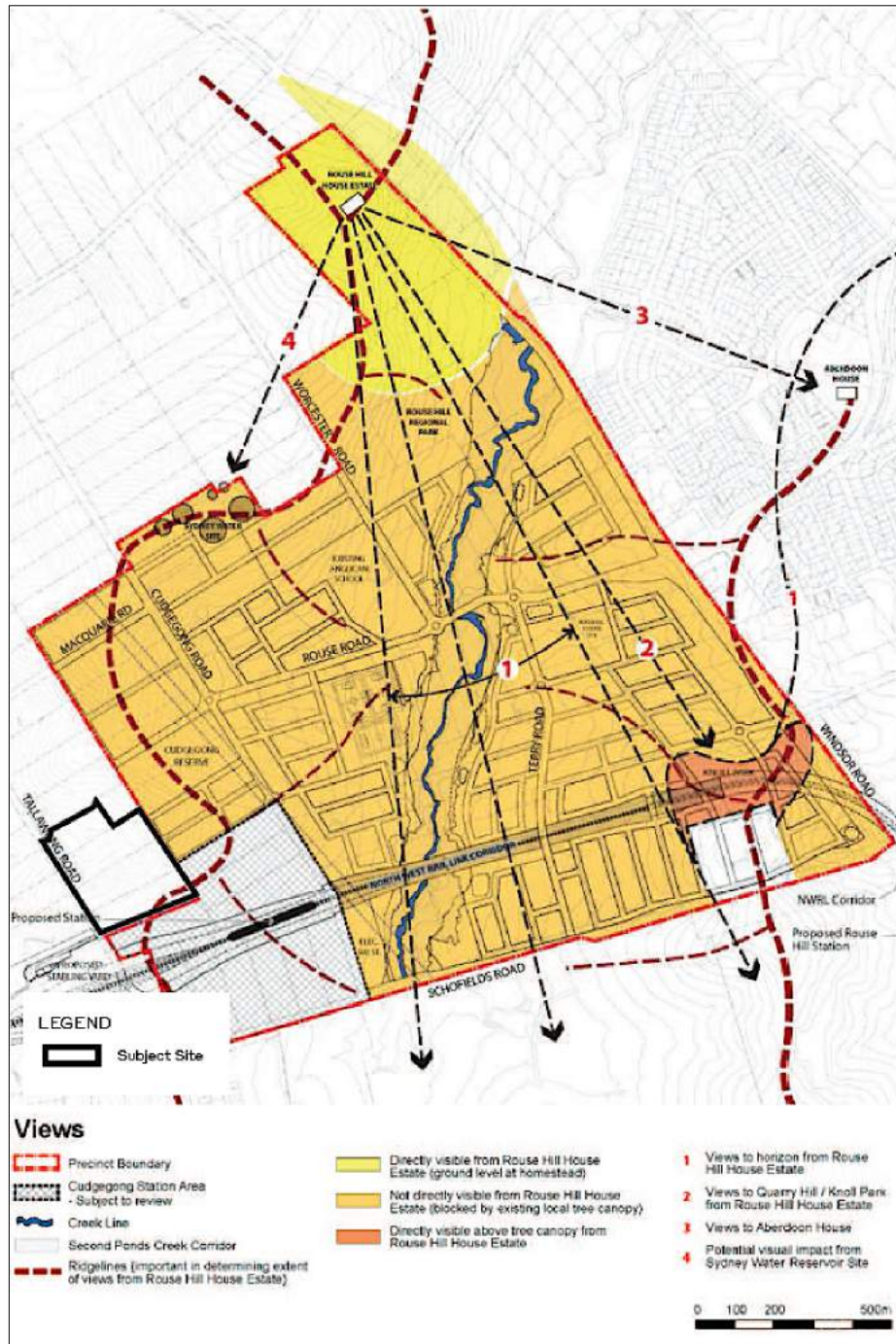


Figure 22: Plan showing views from Rouse Hill House Estate, taking into consideration the relative distance of view corridors.
 LFA (Pacific) Ltd, 2011.

3.6.9.3 PLACE Design Group 2014

The most recent visual assessment to include Rouse Hill House and Estate publicly available is the *Landscape and Visual Assessment for Riverstone Estate* prepared in September 2014 by PLACE Design Group. In analysing the views from Rouse Hill House Estate, this study concludes that:

'The views to the north west provide the most expansive views. These views encapsulate the backdrop of the lower Blue Mountains with the rural pastoral grazing lands forming the

middle foreground. Views to the north and north east, the Hornsby Plateau provides the distant background with the developments of Box Hill and Windsor Road forming the foreground.

To the west, the view to the lower Blue Mountains are fragmented and framed between pockets of native vegetation ***while views to the south west are obscured with ridgeline vegetation blocking the distant views. It should be noted however, it is this line of native woodland vegetation that helps define the middle ground and accentuates the rural landscape character of the RHHE.***⁸

3.6.9.4 Conclusions

The following conclusions can be drawn:

- The legal lot boundary of Rouse Hill House and Estate represents only a portion of the original Estate boundaries and that interpretation of the significance of the item thus depends on an expanded curtilage.
- Rouse Hill House and Estate requires a rural context as its curtilage, which comprises a combination of the natural and cultural environment.
- Views to the south west are contained by ridgeline vegetation. These views define the middle ground and help define the rural character of the Rouse Hill House and Estate.

4.0 HERITAGE IMPACT

4.1 The Proposal

It is proposed to amend the *State Environmental Planning Policy (Sydney Region Growth Centres) 2006 (Sydney Region Growth Centre SEPP)* by increasing the maximum building height from 16m to 26m where it applies to land at No. 34-72 Tallawong Road, Rouse Hill. The planning proposal will facilitate the construction of approximately 376 additional dwellings.

4.2 Methodology

A Visual Impact Assessment (VIA) of the proposal has been prepared by Ethos Urban and should be referred to in conjunction with this statement.

The methodology used to prepare this assessment is clearly set out in Section 1.2 of this document. The photomontages in the VIA have been prepared in accordance with the Land and Environment Court's Policy. A site visit was undertaken on 11 April, 2019.

Viewpoints were determined by Ethos Urban, Weir Phillips Heritage, Sydney Living Museum and SDP Surveyors on the basis of:

- Windows in Rouse Hill House with prominent views or vistas over the landscape looking towards the site.
- Potential places of visual significance in terms of natural, cultural or scenic value within the estate grounds.
- Views facing south west representative of the future character of the area.

⁸ PLACE Design Group, *Landscape and Visual Assessment for Riverstone Estate*. Unpublished study prepared in September 2014, p. 17. Emphasis by WP Heritage.

The following key plan, prepared by Ethos Urban, is relied upon.

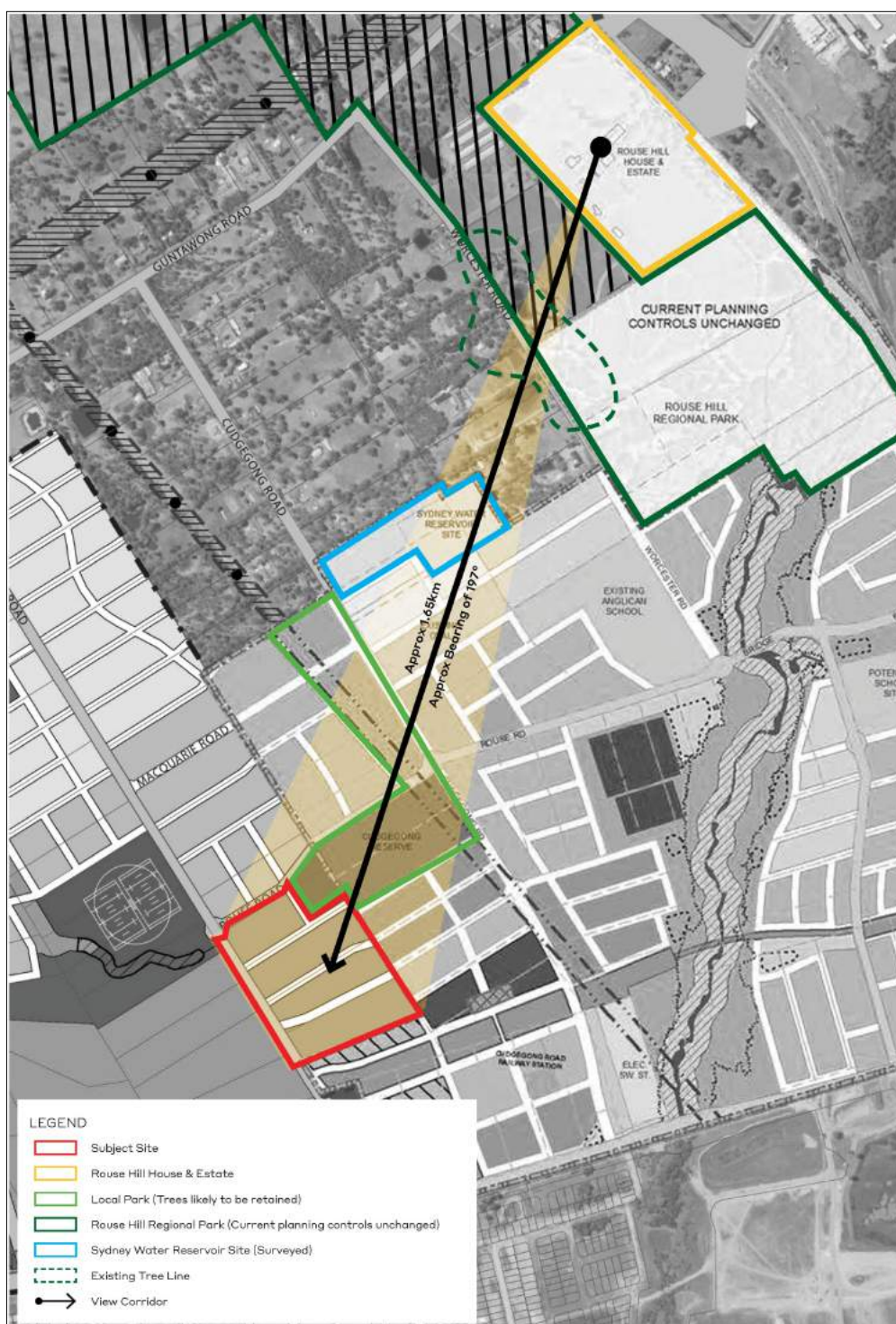


Figure 23: Riverstone East Precinct Map 2016 with overlays by Ethos Urban.
Ethos Urban

4.3 Effect of Work

The VIA prepared by Ethos Urban clearly establishes that the proposed increase in height on the subject site will have no visual impact on Rouse Hill House and Estate. The view corridor south west of the Estate are defined by a tree lined ridge in the middle distance. There is one structure visible within this view corridor, being the Sydney Water Reservoir. In each of the view lines chosen for analysis, it is demonstrated that a building of the proposed height on the subject site will lie below the height of the Reservoir and the existing tree line. It is noted that the subject site is further removed from the Rouse Hill House and Estate than the Reservoir.

The view lines identified in the three visual studies cited above will be preserved provided that the two distinct areas of vegetation that lie within the sight line between Rouse Hill House Estate and the subject site are retained (see Figure 23). These two areas of vegetation are located within the Rouse Hill Regional Park and two proposed local parks, which make it likely that they will be retained. The importance of this vegetation to the setting of Rouse Hill House and Estate is well established.

Weir Phillips Heritage concur with the findings of the VIA that the proposed increase in height will have no impact on Rouse Hill House and Estate provided that the intervening tree line is maintained.

5.0 CONCLUSION

This HIS has established that Rouse Hill House and Estate is an area with very high visual sensitivity because of its level of significance, its location on a high point within the surrounding area and because understanding its significance is dependent on view lines over, and the character of, the surrounding area.

A number of studies have looked extensively at views from Rouse Hill House and Estate towards the surrounding area. Views towards the south west (and the subject site) are defined by ridgeline vegetation, which in turns helps to define the middle ground and provide an understanding of the original rural setting of the Estate. Provided that the tree line is maintained-and it is noted that these areas are located within the Rouse Hill Regional Park and two proposed local parks- buildings of the proposed height on the subject site will not be visible from Rouse Hill House and Estate.