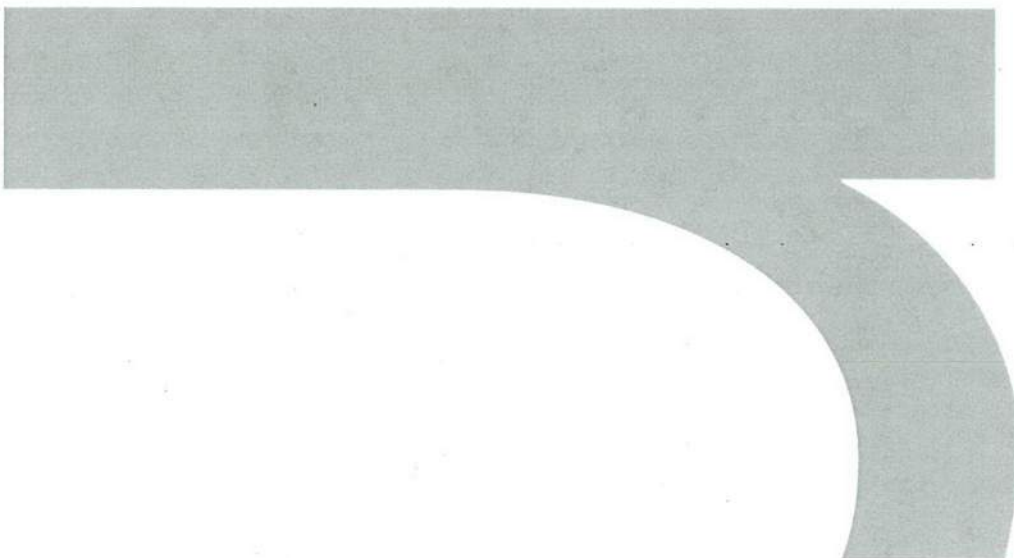




Architectural Projects[®]

1480– Strathfield Synagogue
Heritage Assessment
10 March 2014



ATTACHMENT 1

Architectural Projects *

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0. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The site of Strathfield Synagogue, 19 Florence Street, Strathfield is currently the subject of a Heritage Assessment. In June 2013, Architectural Projects were commissioned by Strathfield Council to undertake a Heritage Assessment Report including a recommendation as to whether or not the Strathfield Synagogue at 19 Florence Street, Strathfield is worthy of being proposed as a local heritage item. This report relates to Council's 9 April 2013 resolution *"to conduct a heritage review of Strathfield Synagogue at 19 Florence Street, Strathfield to determine if this structure is of local heritage significance."* The report was updated in February 2014 in response to submissions including a report by Graham Brooks and Associates.

The Strathfield Synagogue Jewish Congregation, which was formed in 1942, has been involved in the site since 1949. It was always a smaller congregation than the Easter Suburbs or North Shore. Since 1978, the congregation has reviewed its viability. The Strathfield Synagogue closed in March 2012.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE SITE

Established on the site in 1949, the Strathfield Synagogue Complex has historical significance for its ability to evidence the dramatic increase in Jewish population in the post war period, and the expansion into the Sydney Suburbs in this period. The Complex has historical significance for its ability to illustrate the development of Strathfield as a centre for the Jewish Community in Western Sydney and to evidence the development of the Strathfield and District Hebrew Community since 1950's. The Complex also has important associations with the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany, and illustrates the importance of education in the developing Jewish Community in Strathfield in the mid 20th Century. The Strathfield Synagogue Complex has significance because of its association with the Congregation, including Holocaust survivors, who came to live in the Strathfield District in the mid 20th Century.

The 1959 building has aesthetic significance as a good example of the work of prominent modernist émigré architect HP Oser. The main form of the 1959 building and Synagogue Hall interior remain substantially intact. It exemplifies the post war International Style, despite additions to the entry and to the west.

The Synagogue has been the focus of Jewish communal worship and culture in western Sydney since its construction in 1959 and has social significance for its ongoing associations with the Strathfield and District Hebrew Community, now greatly diminished in number. The 1959 building has social significance because of its importance to the local Congregation in the Postwar period. Memorial plaques and plantings commemorate holocaust victims as well as individuals associated with the Strathfield Congregation. The petition to save the Synagogue and the extended legal battle over the use of the building evidence ongoing community esteem for the building within the broader Jewish community.

The 1959 building has rarity significance as the only surviving purpose built synagogue from the post war period in the western suburbs of Sydney, and as a rare surviving example of Post war International Style in Strathfield.

The 1959 building has representative significance as part of a small group of fine International Style Synagogues, designed by emigrant architects in the post war period (1958-63) that collectively illustrates a type.

The significance of a building can be appreciated even though the use has ceased to exist. This is typical of churches and also other building types such as cinemas, theatres and school of arts.

The significance of the site is best represented in the fabric of the 1959 Synagogue building designed by HP Oser. The significance of the site of Strathfield Synagogue does not require retention of any other buildings on the site. The significance of the site does not restrict future subdivision of the site, nor does it limit the number of potential lots permissible.

Listing the site on the LEP should consider the following:

IN SUPPORT OF INTERPRETING THE HISTORIC JEWISH PRESENCE ON THE SITE

Evidence of broader patterns of settlement of Jewish communities in post war period which included an expansion into the Western Suburbs which is an important historic phase.

Ability to evidence the boom of migration of Holocaust Survivors to Sydney after WWII.

Historic evidence of development of the Jewish community in Strathfield.

Historic evidence of importance of education, association with NSW Board of Jewish Education.

Historic evidence of funding of Jewish Cultural facilities by Jewish Material Claims Against Germany Fund Conference.

IN SUPPORT OF RETENTION OF THE SYNAGOGUE AS THE PREFERRED INTERPRETATION STRATEGY

The community esteem for the Synagogue evidenced by the 12,000 signature petition.

Good but altered example of the work of important emigrant architect H.P. Oser.

Good example of Post War International Style.

One of a number of Synagogues designed by emigrant Jewish architects in the post war period bringing modernism to Sydney.

The Synagogue dates from the key period of expansion of the Jewish Community into the western suburbs.

One of a small number of synagogues built in Sydney after 1958 and funded by the Jewish Material Claims Against Germany fund Conference.

One of a small number of synagogues in Sydney built as a Memorial to holocaust victims.

The Synagogue incorporates memorials to individuals in the community.

Only surviving purpose built Postwar Synagogue in the western suburbs.

Rare 'modernist' style building in Strathfield.

OPPORTUNITIES

The 1959 Oser building including memorials, has the potential to interpret the historic significance of the site, the boom of migration of Jews to Sydney after WWII, and broader patterns of settlement of Jewish communities in post war period.

The 1959 Oser building as a purpose built Synagogue for the Jewish community by a prominent architect and of quality design and with associated memorials has greater potential for interpretation than any other building on the site.

It has the potential to retain its social values to the Jewish Community, and to recover its aesthetic significance by the reinterpretation of the original entry.

It is therefore the most appropriate building to retain on the site even if this involves adaptive reuse.

The research has not indicated that the kindergarten, minister's residence, Sunday school and additions reach a threshold for significance.

There are no restrictions to their demolition or modifications.

IN OPPOSITION TO THE RETENTION OF THE SYNAGOGUE

a) The community has relocated and the purpose of the building needs to change.

-The purpose of the building needs to change.

b) The building has been modified.

-The site has a complex history that is reflected in a number of additions to the 1959 Synagogue. Despite this, the main form of the 1959 Oser building remains substantially intact as does the Synagogue hall interior.

c) The importance of its use as a war memorial has been questioned.

-The documentary evidence supports an understanding of the building and site as providing memorial files. No evidence to the contrary has been provided, however the primary historical aspect of the site to evidence important historical trends in Jewish communities and settlement in post war period.

d) Ongoing maintenance problems.

-Maintenance problems are typical of building of this age, that have suffered some years of neglect.

e) Perception that retention of the Synagogue will prevent development of the site.

-Future development of the site can occur with retention of the 1959 building. Adaptive reuse options, which retain the 1959 Oser building are considered below.

OPTIONS FOR FUTURE USE OF THE SITE

1. Adaptive Reuse rationalises the existing non-denominational kindergarten into the Synagogue building allowing subdivision of the site into 5 lots (see Appendix K)
 - Retention of Heritage Values
2. Develop site for other uses such as aged care of residential/commercial, and adaptively re-use Synagogue to provide communal space for the development. Use of heritage incentives may allow a broader range of uses otherwise permissible under the zoning
 - Retention of Heritage Values.
3. Demolish the synagogue building allowing subdivision of the site into 5 lots (see Appendix K)
 - Loss of Heritage Values

RECOMMENDATION

It is therefore recommended that the site be included in the LEP as a Heritage Item.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. BACKGROUND

The site of Strathfield Synagogue, 19 Florence Street, Strathfield is currently the subject of a Heritage Assessment. In June 2013, Architectural Projects were commissioned by Strathfield Council to undertake a Heritage Assessment Report including a recommendation as to whether or not the Strathfield Synagogue at 19 Florence Street, Strathfield is worthy of being proposed as a local heritage item. This report relates to Council's 9 April 2013 resolution "to conduct a heritage review of Strathfield Synagogue at 19 Florence Street, Strathfield to determine if this structure is of local heritage significance." The report was updated in February 2014 in response to submissions including a report by Graham Brooks and Associates (see Appendix).

1.2. SITE LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

The Assessment relates to a study area defined by 19 Florence Street, Strathfield with specific focus on the Synagogue building. The site is located on the corner of Florence and Albyn Streets Strathfield, adjacent to Florence Reserve.

1.3. AUTHORSHIP

The report has been prepared by a team consisting of the following key members:

Jennifer Hill – Architectural Projects Pty Ltd – Heritage Architect

Elizabeth Gibson – Architectural Projects Pty Ltd – Heritage Architect

1.4. LIMITATIONS

A time frame of 6 weeks was established for the preparation of the Report. Access was given to the site and records held by the applicant and Council. No physical intervention was undertaken to prepare this report. No historical archaeological work other than the site surveys provided herein was commissioned for the report.

1.5. METHODOLOGY

The Assessment has been prepared in accordance with the methodology outlined in, *The Conservation Management Plan* by Dr James Semple Kerr (6th Edition 2004). The report complies with the principles of the Australian ICOMOS Charter for the Conservation of Places of Cultural Significance (the Burra Charter) and its Guidelines. The methodology used in the evaluation of the place is that recommended by the Heritage Branch of the Office of Environment and Heritage.

It seeks to identify from documentary and physical evidence any historic aesthetic social and technological values of each component building and to determine their level of representatives or rarity by comparison with other identified examples. The analysis also looks at the overall character of the adjoining area to determine if the buildings and the site development pattern contribute to a characteristic grouping or cohesive streetscape that is unique or of sufficient importance to require protection.

1.6. TERMINOLOGY AND DEFINITIONS

The terms fabric, place, preservation, reconstruction, restoration, adaptation and conservation used throughout this report have the meaning given them in Australia ICOMOS Charter for the Conservation of Places of Cultural Significance (Burra Charter).

The terminology used to described building styles follows the nomenclature set out in Apperly, R., Irving, R. and Reynolds, P. *A Pictorial Guide to Identifying Australian Architecture*, 1989.

In order to achieve a consistency in approach and understanding of the meaning of conservation by all those involved a standardised terminology for conservation processes and related actions should be adopted. The terminology in the *Burra Charter* is a suitable basis for this. Article 1 of the *Burra Charter* gives the following definitions:

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

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

Fabric means all the physical material of the place.

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.

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

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

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

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 the *Burra Charter*.

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 that are substantially reversible, or changes which require a minimal impact.

1.7. ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Strathfield Council – Roger Brook, David Hazeldine

Strathfield Local Studies Library – Cathy Jones

RAIA – Noni Boyd

Strathfield and District Hebrew Congregation – Alf Schneider, Eddy Neumann

Sydney Jewish Museum Library – Tinny Lenthén

Emeritus Professor Konrad Kwiet- Resident Historian Sydney Jewish Museum

Australian Jewish Historical Society – Gary Luke

University of Sydney – Professor Suzanne Rutland, Dr Avril Alba Roth Lecturer in Jewish and Holocaust Studies

1.8. EXTENT OF SEARCHES

Information searches have occurred with the following organisations:

National Library of Australia, Trove: Digital Newspapers

State Library of NSW

The NSW Land Titles Office: Specific subdivision/title information.

Strathfield Local Studies Library

Strathfield Council Archives

Strathfield Heritage: General subdivision information, Sands Directories

Australian Heritage Council

National Trust of Australia (NSW)

Heritage Council of NSW

NSW State Heritage Inventory

RAIA Twentieth Century Heritage Inventory

Sydney Jewish Museum

1.9. COPYRIGHT

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2. HISTORICAL DOCUMENTARY ANALYSIS

2.1. TIMELINE OF THE AREA

DATE	TEXT	SOURCE
1808	570 acres granted to James Wilshire	ADB
1824	Wilshire's grant acquired by Samuel Terry and named the 'Redmire Estate'	History of Strathfield Local Government Area
1867	Subdivision of Redmire Estate by FH Reuss	State Library NSW M Z/M2 811.183/1867/1
1875	'Florence Ville' subdivision was auctioned by Bowden, Mille & Gordon	Sydney Morning Herald
1880	Subdivision of Bushy Hill Estate	Subdivision Sale Map

2.2. HISTORICAL CONTEXT OF THE AREA

The Echo Newspaper, 1890 noted:

"Adjoining the Burwood Estate and Faithfull's farm on the west was the grant made to Mr. James Wilshire by Governor Macquarie in January 1810. It consisted of 570 acres and, from the nature of the soil (a stiff reddish clay), was called the Redmire estate. Redmire was the birthplace of Samuel Terry, owner of the Redmire Estate."

"In 1803 Wilshire established a tannery at Brickfield Hill and also established himself as a farmer and grazier. In 1808, Wilshire received a land grant of 570 acres (about 230 hectares) in present day Strathfield. According to Sydney Morning Herald (10 August 1912): 'Granted to James Wilshire, his heirs and assigns in consequence of strong letter of recommendations from the late illustrious and lamented Admiral Lord Viscount Nelson to Governor King'.

James Wilshire's land was named Wilshire's Farm and ran to the Cook's River from the current boundary of Redmyre Road, bordered by The Boulevarde and Coronation Parade at the eastern boundary. The land was eventually sold to Samuel Terry in 1824 and renamed Redmire Estate. The estate was subdivided in 1867 and forms a large part of the current district of Strathfield." (Reference: "James Wilshire", Strathfield Heritage)

"(Wilshire's grant) was later acquired by Samuel Terry in 1824 and named the 'Redmire Estate' after Terry's birthplace in Yorkshire. After the death of his widow, Rosetta, in 1858, the land was sold to WW Billyard. The Estate was further subdivided in 1867 into blocks from 3 – 13 acres with frontages from 4 – 8 chains to Station Road, Railway Road, Homebush Road, Liverpool Road, Water and Dean Streets and Redmire Boulevarde (former name of The Boulevarde). The Redmire locality became incorporated under the name of 'Strathfield' (the residence of John Hardy, a City jeweller) on June 2, 1885, when local government was formed. The original areas of the new Strathfield Municipality included Redmire, Druitt Town (now Strathfield South) and Homebush." (Reference: The Redmire Estate www.strathfield.nsw.gov.au History of Strathfield Local Government Area)

Florence Street was also known as Florenceville Road in the early 1880s. The Florence Ville Estate, a subdivision of a block of 14 acres 1 rood 20 perches into 33 allotments of land, was auctioned by Bowden, Mills & Gordon on 25 September and 21 October 1875. The subdivision formed Lot 1 of the Redmire Estate. Villa sites of 1½ – ½ acre, were offered for the erection of 'Commodious Country residences for families! Seventeen lots fronting to Redmire Road, eight to Arthur Street and eight to Homebush Road' (Sydney Morning Herald 22 September 1875, page 9 and 12 October 1875, page 9). 'Florenceville' is a residence at 44 Abbotsford Road, listed in Sands Directory 1886, occupied by John J

Shipley and listed as a Heritage Item. Strathfield Council's "Village of Homebush Walking Tour" states Florenceville was built by Shipley in the early 1880s.

Jones in 'Oasis in the West' (1985:p118) provides a summary of Strathfield's population in 1891 with comparisons to the results of the 1981 Census:

"The 1891 Census affirms that Strathfield was an exciting young area in its golden age. Seventeen percent of the total population of 1820 were five years or under, the same as the average for the metropolis. In 1981, only 7 per cent of the Strathfield population was aged five or under. Many families apparently moved to Strathfield for more space for their growing families. The birth rate averaged about six children per family and declined only around the turn of the century. A very high 41 percent of the Strathfield population in 1891 were eighteen years or under, far higher than the 32 per cent in 1981. Another 26 per cent in 1891 were aged between nineteen and thirty, making a total of 67 per cent of the population aged thirty or under. There were a few aged in 1891 in Strathfield: 7 per cent were fifty-five and over and 3 per cent sixty-five and over."¹

Jones also contrasts religious affiliations in Strathfield between 1891 and 1947. "48 per cent of the Strathfield population were members of the Church of England, about 2 per cent more than the average for Sydney and 13.7 per cent were Roman Catholic, well below the 23.7 per cent average for Sydney; 8.2 per cent were Presbyterians, 8.3 per cent Methodists, both average for Sydney. Strathfield, however, was a haven for Congregationalists, who accounted for 13.2 per cent of those in Strathfield, far above the 4.2 per cent Sydney average."²

Strathfield in 1947 was very much a centre for Protestants; 44 per cent of the population described themselves as Church of England and 23 per cent Congregationalists, Methodists, Presbyterians or Baptists. The 67 percent of Protestants greatly outnumbered the 20 per cent of Catholics."

Changes in religious affiliation in the Census years of 1966, 1976 and 1986 note the declining Jewish population in Strathfield: 1966 343 (1.28%), 1976 247 (0.9%), and by 1986 the Hebrew community is included in "Other".

2.3. SITE AND BUILDING TIMELINE

DATE	TEXT	SOURCE
1810	570 acres granted to James Wilshire	Parish Map
1880	Subdivision of Bushy Hill Estate	Subdivision Sale Map
1881	William Clarke of the City of Sydney Warehouseman purchased lots 12, 13 Section 2 of the Bushy Hill Estate.	Certificate of Title Vol 694 Fol 18
	George Anderson, seedsman of the City of Sydney purchased lots 14, 15 Section 2 of the Bushy Hill Estate.	Vol 710 Fol 46
1883-1884	William Hugh Lloyd of the City of Sydney, Foreman purchased Lots 14 and 15 from Anderson in October 1883, and purchased Lots 12 and 13 from Clarke in September 1884.	Certificate of Title Vol 694 Fol 18 Vol 710 Fol 46
1887	Two houses occupied in Florence St	Sands Directory

¹ 'Strathfield Historic Population'

² Jones in 'Oasis in the West' (1985:p118)

1889, January	The four lots were transmitted to widow Kitty Sullivan Lloyd of Forest Lodge in January 1889	Certificate of Title Vol 694 Fol 18 Vol 710 Fol 46
1889, March	Kitty Lloyd sold the 4 lots to accountant Frederick Percy Ford of Sydney.	Certificate of Title Vol 694 Fol 18 Vol 710 Fol 46
1890 March	Ford residence 'Goomerabong' at Florence Street Strathfield extant	SMH 27.03.1890
1923	Death of Frederick Percy Ford	SMH
1940, April	Death of Annie Ford Property sold to Ruth Parker and Gwenda Crocker as tenants in common	Certificate of Title Vol 5127 Fol 110, 111
1943	Historic Aerial photographs show a large house set in extensive gardens	LPI SIX Maps
1948	Property transferred to Louis Alexander Aboud	Certificate of Title Vol 5127 Fol 110, 111
1949, 7 February	Transfer from Louis Alexander Aboud to NSW Board of Jewish Education Lots 13-15 and pt Lot 12 and pt lots 32-35 Sec 2 DP 581	Certificate of Title VOI 5875 Fol 144
1958, 23 May	Plans prepared by H.P. Oser and Associates for new Synagogue for Strathfield Hebrew Congregation, Albyn Road and Florence Street Strathfield	Strathfield Council File
1959, 17 March 1959	BA 73/59 Synagogue	Strathfield Council File
1959, 14 June	Foundation Stone laid by Max Freilich, life president Zionist federation of Australia and New Zealand	Strathfield Synagogue Plaque
1959, 27 September	The War Memorial Synagogue consecrated by Rabbi Dr Israel Porush, and opened by Leo Meyer.	Strathfield Synagogue Plaque
1964, 20 October	BA 317/64 Sunday School	Strathfield Council File
1968, 28 February	BA 43/68 Hall	Strathfield Council File
1972, 9 May	Council approved alterations and additions to school for use as child care centre	Strathfield Council File
1972, 3 September	Foundation stone for Yolanda Kindergarten laid	Plaque on site
1973, 31 July	BA 244/73 Kindergarten Extension	Strathfield Council File
1977, 30 August	BA 268/77 Additions	Strathfield Council File
1993, March	Meeting to consider future of Strathfield Congregation	
2012, 3 March	Last service held at Synagogue	

2.4. HISTORY OF THE SITE AND BUILDING

The site is part of 570 acres granted to James Wilshire in 1808.³ The grant was bound by Cooks River to the south, The Boulevard and Coronation Parade to the west, Redmyre Road to the north (Thomas Rose's Grant) and Chalmers Road to the east.

³ Parish Map, 1915: 14069901

The land was subdivided into residential lots by PH Reuss Jnr., and advertised for auction sale The Bushy Hill Estate Homebush, on 20 November 1880. At that time Mr Elwin, resident on Redmyre Road, is recorded. New residences are noted as existing on Florence Street.

The subject site is Lot 12-15 Section 2 of the Bushy Hill Estate 1880.

The advantages of Bushy Hill Homebush Estate were attained in pre auction advertisement in the Sydney Morning Herald on 4 November 1880:

"Bushy Hill is bounded on one side by the Redmyre Boulevard, leading direct to the village. It is splendidly elevated land, with fine slopes and is lightly timbered with turpentine trees, surrounded by green fields and home parks, and is close to many palatial residences.

Bushy Hill is liberally subdivided into large allotments and in such a way that any purchaser can secure a block of nearly 400 feet deep, having a frontage to two wide roads. There are no small allotments and only a few less than 300 feet deep – there is no low land on the estate, which is on a hillside. The surroundings are most rural and picturesque, and glimpses of fine woodland scenery are obtainable from any part of Bushy Hill. There are no back lanes or narrow roads on the property, and the drainage is perfect.

Bushy Hill is quite in the country, though only 8 minutes walk from Homebush Station and within a few minutes ride of the city. The suburb is not affected by the strong sea breeze, which is so injurious to many.

*Residents of the overcrowded suburbs are already moving further out, and Homebush is rapidly improving. What is required can be found at Bushy Hill – open country, pure air, cheap land and long terms. To these advantages can be added, land eight minutes walk from a station, frequent and speedy communication with the city, a suburb rapidly rising in public favour – such can be found at Bushy Hill."*⁴

Property sales following the auction were reported in the Sydney Morning Herald on 27 November 1880 (page 3) as follows:

Section 1, Lots 1 – 11, 18, 24 – 36, 42 – 43 and Section 2 Lots 1, 12 – 13, 24 – 29, 35. The subject lot (Section 2 Lots 12-15) was therefore partially sold.

In 1881, William Clarke of the City of Sydney Warehouseman purchased lots 12, 13 and 34 sec 2 of the Bushy Hill Estate. George Anderson, seedsman of the City of Sydney purchased the neighbouring lots 14, 15 and 31-33 of Section 2.

William Hugh Lloyd, foreman of the City of Sydney, purchased Lots 14 and 15 from Anderson in October 1883, and the following year in September purchased Lots 12 and 13 from Clarke. Thus the lot was consolidated in 1884.

In 1886, one resident, Alfred Gibbs, solicitor, is listed for Florence Road (off Homebush Road) in the Sands Directory.⁵ The following year, Gibbs is listed at 'Alcot' and another listing appears for Florence Road between Redmyre Road and Elwin Street, being 'Parsons, FW, land agent'. FW Parsons lived at 'Wooroonook' Florence Street Homebush (Sydney Morning Herald 30 March 1888, page 1).

⁴ The Sydney Morning Herald (NSW: 1842 – 1954), Thursday 4 November 1880, Page 4

⁵ Sydney Sands Directories

The four lots were transmitted to widow Kitty Sullivan Lloyd of Forest Lodge in January 1889. In March of 1889, Kitty Lloyd sold the 4 lots to accountant Frederick Percy Ford of Sydney.

Frederick Percy Ford (1853-1923) later a director of David Jones, was the son of Clarissa Jones and Frederick Ford, grandson of David Jones. Frederick married Annie Ross, daughter of Robert Ross and Eliza Jones. They lived at 'Goomerabong' Florence Street Strathfield.⁶ A birth notice appearing in the Sydney Morning Herald of 27 March 1890, indicates that the house 'Goomerabong' was constructed by this date.

Following the death of Frederick Ford in May 1923, the property was transmitted to Annie Eliza Ford, Philip Raymond Ford, Bank Manager (brother) and solicitor John Edward Vetch Nott⁷ in 1924.⁸ The subsequent death of Annie Ford in 1940 prompted the sale of the property. Ruth Everard Parker of Sydney and Gwenda Beresford Crocker of Manly purchased half shares of the property in April 1940. Historic aerial photographs from 1943 show a large house set in extensive gardens, suggesting the four lots remained amalgamated at this time.

Congregation member Lesley Goldberg describes the early history of the Strathfield congregation: "The congregation at Strathfield had its foundations in the 1930's when my father, Samuel Henry Kolts asked the Board of Jewish Education to provide a teacher and offered our home at Strathfield as a venue for classes on Sunday mornings. My parents had moved from Bellevue Hill to Strathfield when my father established a business at Parramatta. After some years, the venue changed to the home of the Pearlman's who lived in an apartment above their fruit and vegetable business near the station. ... Later still as the post war community included an increasing number of Jewish refugee families, my father became the moving force for a synagogue and was involved in finding a site, discussing funding and is listed among the founders"⁹

The Strathfield Jewish Parents and Citizens Association as an auxiliary to the NSW Board of Jewish Education was formed c 1942, with the idea of establishing at Strathfield a centre for the religious instruction and education of Jewish children in the western suburbs. By 1946, there were over 45 children educated by the Board at Strathfield,¹⁰ and the Hebrew Standard reported a proposal to build a Jewish Communal Centre for Strathfield, to contain schoolrooms and recreation rooms. The P&C was described as the driving force behind the scheme, raising funds to buy a site near the station for the centre.¹¹ In March of 1946, the Hebrew Standard reported that a block of land was purchased at Strathfield on which school rooms and a hall would be built for the 50 pupils now attending.¹² It is not clear that this purchase relates to the Florence Street site, as the land titles do not record the sale until 1948. Kellerman notes that the purchase occurred in 1947, when Strathfield P&C 'a most active body,' purchased a block of land, 'with the aim of drawing children, parents and teaching staff closer to each other and the Synagogue, as well as to foster active participation on the social life of the Community'.¹³

⁶ David Jones Family in Strathfield, <http://strathfieldheritage.org/people/biographies/david-jones-family-in-strathfield/>

⁷ Nott's brother Randolph Herbert Nott was married to Annie Ford's sister Edith Ross.

⁸ Obituary. The Late Mr F.P. Ford, The Sydney Morning Herald (NSW: 1842 - 1954), Wednesday 30 May 1923, p16

⁹ Email from Lesley Goldberg to Helen Bersten, 01 December 2008, Strathfield and District Hebrew Society Vertical File, AJHS

¹⁰ "Education at Strathfield", The Hebrew Standard, Thursday January 10, 1946

¹¹ "Communal Centre for Strathfield", The Hebrew Standard, Thursday October 17, 1946, p7

¹² "Education News", The Hebrew Standard, Thursday March 7, 1946

¹³ Maurice Kellerman, NSW Board of Jewish Education History 1909-1979, p176

Ruth Everard Parker of Sydney and Gwenda Beresford Crocker sold the land to Louis Alexander Aboud in 1948. In September 1948, the transfer of Lots 13-15 and pt Lot 12 and pt lots 32-35 Sec 2 DP 58, comprising 3 roods and 4 ¼ perches from Louis Alexander Aboud to NSW Board of Jewish Education was effected. The Board's 'Foundation Fund' financed the purchase of property at Strathfield.¹⁴ As with many communities set up following Jewish migration from countries in which Jewish people lived in unfavourable conditions, in Strathfield, the school preceded the Synagogue.¹⁵

Correspondence on Council file notes that No 17 Florence St was used by the Sub Normal Children's Welfare Association as a school prior to 1958.¹⁶ The original house is evident in the 1958 plans, where the Synagogue was proposed to be located in the grounds and the house retained. The house is also still evident in plans for the construction of the Minister's Residence.

The Strathfield and District Hebrew Congregation was founded in 1956¹⁷. A survey of the congregation from 1958 gives a picture of the growth of the Jewish community from 1946-1958.¹⁸ At that time 4 teachers taught 57 children, a Strathfield Youth Club operated and 280 attendees were recorded at statutory services. 152 male and 98 female financial members are recorded. The Reverend Goran reported that the Strathfield and District Hebrew Congregation has developed from the original P and C Association which consisted of parents of children attending classes on Sunday mornings supplied by the Board of Jewish Education. The name of the organisation was changed into the Strathfield Jewish Centre. One of the first activities entered into by the service was the provision of a place of worship, and a room in a building owned by the NSW Board of Jewish Education was furnished as a small synagogue. Saturday morning services were started followed by festival services. At a general meeting of members in 1957 it was decided that the time had come to form into a proper Hebrew Congregation and build a synagogue and communal hall. An outcome of this was the Strathfield and District Hebrew Congregation was formed, registered as a non-profit making company with a constitution and memorandum of association proper to the new status.¹⁹

The Strathfield and District Hebrew Congregation approached Strathfield Council in February 1958, with a proposal to build a synagogue at their site in Florence Street. Correspondence of 24 February 1958 noted that the site has been used for Religious Worship, Classes for Hebrew Education and Scripture for children, and to a lesser degree social functions for some years. Subsequent correspondence from the Strathfield and District Hebrew Congregation on Council file, detailed the reasons for application in response to notification that the Council would not support their application.

The Congregation outlined the following proposed uses:

1. Religious Worship
2. As a Jewish War Memorial
3. As class rooms for Jewish Education and Instruction
4. As a social hall for film nights, lectures, cultural evenings, youth centre and occasional dances.

¹⁴ Maurice Kellerman, NSW Board of Jewish Education History 1909-1979, p138-9

¹⁵ Maurice Kellerman, NSW Board of Jewish Education History 1909-1979, p2

¹⁶ Correspondence on Council file dated 14.8.1991

¹⁷ Survey of Strathfield and District Hebrew Congregation, 1958, AJHS vertical file

¹⁸ Survey of Strathfield and District Hebrew Congregation, 1958, AJHS vertical file

¹⁹ Survey of Strathfield and District Hebrew Congregation, 1958, AJHS vertical file

On the 15th May 1958, the Strathfield and District Hebrew Congregation were advised that there would be no objection to proposal to build a synagogue subject to the approval of Plans and Specifications. Plans were prepared by H.P. Oser and Associates in May 1958, for a new Synagogue for Strathfield Hebrew Congregation at Albyn Road and Florence Street Strathfield.²⁰ In December 1958, the site was transferred to The Strathfield and District Hebrew Congregation.²¹ The application was approved by Strathfield Council on 17 March 1959, and the Foundation Stone was laid by Max Freilich, life president of the Zionist Federation of Australia and New Zealand, on 14 June 1959.²² The builder was JS Cordukes of Concord.²³ The Honorary Minister was Rev Goran, Executive officers P Goran, L Hyam, E Fitchman, J Cohen and Board of Management L Brem, A Goldman, H Lippey, S Sekal, M Weiss, W Flachs, E Hiller, L Penn, A Sonnenschein and M Zamel. The War Memorial Synagogue was consecrated by Rabbi Dr Israel Porush, and opened by Leo Meyer on 27 September 1959. The Consecration Document indicates the purpose of the building as a War Memorial. The Message from the Chief Rabbi Israel Brodie at the opening of the War Memorial Synagogue outlines the intentions at the time and reveals the grief of the community in the establishment of the memorial synagogue:

"...I was particularly touched to learn that the Synagogue is intended as a memorial to the gallant men of our faith who fell in the Great War as well as to the six million of our co-religionists who fell victims to Nazi tyranny. It is not only the exterior of the building which will indicate our consciousness of those whom we commemorate...the manner in which those who worship... the martyrs whom we mourn were steadfast in their lives and at their death. I trust therefore that the new synagogue which is associated with memories stirring our deepest emotions will become the focus of the religious cultural and social life of its members..."

The Message from Minister Rev L Goran at the Consecration also underlined the conception of the Synagogue as a memorial and the emotions of the time, *"As for our own building, it is to my mind a fitting memorial to an unsurpassed tragedy..."*

The congregation in their application to Council identified four uses for the Synagogue, including use as a Jewish War Memorial. The extent of commemorative plaques suggest this was an important aspect of the building. Current President Eddy Neumann noted that the War Memorial status was applied to attract a tax deduction for the new building. No document has been located to substantiate this, however anecdotal evidence supports this view. A plaque records the office bearers of the Foundation Board of Management "1959-5719 President Phillip Goran, Vice President Lewis Hyman, Hon Treasurer Judah Cohen, Hon Secretary Mrs AB Goldman".

The Congregation contributed funds to the memory of those relatives and friends who perished during the Holocaust and the two World Wars, through commemorative plaques in the Synagogue. The two lights above the memorial plaques of the victims' names were perpetually lit in the Synagogue in their memory.²⁴ Six trees were planted in the garden of the Synagogue, each representing one Holocaust million victims. A plaque on site notes "These six trees have been planted by Strathfield and District War Memorial Synagogue in holy memory of our six million martyred brethren who were brutally slaughtered by the Nazi murderers during the years 1933-1943". The trees were removed and replaced with six new plants following storm damage.²⁵

²⁰ Original Plans on Council File

²¹ Certificate of Title, Vol.5875 Fol. 144

²² Order of Service for Laying of the Foundation Stone of the new Strathfield War Memorial Synagogue and Communal Hall, Strathfield and District Hebrew Society Vertical File, AJHS

²³ Strathfield War Memorial Synagogue, Booklet, Strathfield and District Hebrew Society Vertical File, AJHS

²⁴ Joseph de Varda, "To save the Holocaust and War Memorial Synagogue in Strathfield" correspondence with author, 6 August 2013

²⁵ Joseph de Varda, correspondence with author, 19 August 2013

Rabbi, Dr Samuel Tov-Lev, states that the Strathfield Synagogue was funded by the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany and has a memorial to the victims of the Holocaust attached to the building.²⁶ Funds for Education were allocated from 1957-1964, with 1,200 pounds allocated to Strathfield Synagogue in 1964.²⁷ A plaque on the kindergarten dating from 1966 records the contribution of the Claims Conference: "This building was erected with the help of a grant from the Conference of Jewish Material Claims against Germany Inc".

Suzanne Rutland, acknowledged as the primary Jewish historian of post-war NSW Jewry, and who has researched original material related to the Claims Conference funds, advised that documents in the Archive of Australian Jewry provide details about the use of these funds and for the veracity of other historical items referred to in the submissions.

The Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany, or Claims Conference, was founded in 1951 as a body to engage the German government in negotiations for material compensation for Jewish victims of Nazi persecution. The Claims Conference provides payments directly to individual survivors and also grants to social welfare organizations serving survivors, and funding for Shoah Research, Education, and Documentation projects.²⁸ The leaders of Australian Jewry argued that since Australia had accepted such a high proportion of Holocaust survivors on a pro rata population basis they should receive funding for their communal institutions being built to meet the needs of the survivors. This included the grant of £1200 to Strathfield Synagogue, which went towards the cost of building the classrooms opened in 1966.

The NSW Jewish Board of Deputies was a participant in the Claims Conference allocations. The Jewish Welfare Society received funds from the Claims Conference from 1954-1964. The Society to the Executive Council of Australian Jewry presented its claims to the Conference of Material Claims against Germany, held in Rome January 1958.²⁹

Mortgages were taken out in July 1959, October 1965 and February 1967.³⁰

A series of applications to Council followed the construction of the Synagogue, including:

1964, 20 October	BA 317/64 Sunday School
1968, 28 February	BA 43/68 Hall
1972, 9 May	Alterations and additions to school for use as child care centre
1973, 31 July	BA 244/73 Kindergarten Extension
1977, 30 August	BA 268/77 Additions

In its prime, about 200 families attended weekly services at the Strathfield Synagogue.³¹ The NSW Jewish Board of Deputies collated membership lists of Sydney congregations in the 1960's, when the Strathfield Congregation recorded 269 financial members.³² The same year South Head District Synagogue recorded 369 members, while North Shore financial members numbered 619. The names of the Strathfield congregation members at this time indicate a mix of members of Anglo, Hungarian, German, Austrian, and Czech origin, with few from Poland and Russia.

²⁶ Chua, Bernadette, "Strathfield rabbi signs 12,000 to save Holocaust names" Our Strathfield, 120413

²⁷ Rutland, Suzanne, "Edge of the Diaspora" p 405

²⁸ Claims Conference, <http://www.claimskon.org> accessed 01/07/13

²⁹ Twenty First Annual Report of the Australian Jewish Welfare Society (NSW Branch), AJHS

³⁰ Certificate of Title, Vol.5875 Fol. 144

³¹ Chua, Bernadette, "Strathfield rabbi signs 12,000 to save Holocaust names" Our Strathfield, 120413

³² The NSW Jewish Board of Deputies Membership Lists, AJHS Box AB72

In 1962, the Board of Jewish Education subsidised construction of classrooms at Strathfield, at the same time subsidising suburban congregations at Maroubra, Cremorne, Coogee, Allawah and Bankstown. The demand for Jewish Education was concentrated in the suburbs where Jewish population had increased including Sutherland, Manly Warringah, Campsie, Katoomba, Rose Bay, Parramatta, Strathfield, Cremorne and Bankstown.³³ The Ministers House was built subsequent to the Synagogue, and the plans indicate that the original house was still extant, a small section demolished to accommodate the new residence. The house was demolished to make way for the Kindergarten. Thomas Kramer laid the foundation stone for the Kindergarten in memory of his mother Yolanda Kramer in September 1972. The NSW Board of Jewish Education operated the Yolanda Kramer Yeshiva Kindergarten on the site.³⁴ The Kindergarten was officially opened in November 1974.

Concerns over the financial situation of the Strathfield Synagogue were expressed at the 1977 Annual General Meeting.³⁵ In 1978, The Australian Jewish Times reported a shift in the Jewish population from Strathfield to the Eastern Suburbs.³⁶ The same paper outlined financial difficulties faced by the Strathfield Synagogue kindergarten under control of the Yeshiva, which allowed only Jewish children to enroll. Sixteen children were enrolled in 1978. In March 1993, Sydney Beth Din called a meeting of members of Strathfield and District Hebrew Congregation to consider the future of the congregation.³⁷

By 2011, The Australian Jewish News reported dwindling numbers of the congregation:

*"President Eddy Newman told The AJN the board is desperate to find a solution because only five people attend services on Shabbat, but it is running out of options. 'We can't get a minyan and it is no longer viable as an ordinary functioning synagogue,' Newman said. He explained the synagogue will organise a meeting in coming months, to which it will invite all members, past and present. The idea is to develop a consultation so the generations of people who have participated in Jewish life in Strathfield can have their say. 'We want to explore every option we can think of, and that is why we want to have this meeting to see what ideas people can come up with.'"*³⁸

Newman said around 30 individuals remain on the books, with only 3 or 4 males over the age of 13 attending services, and no Jewish children currently attend the kindergarten. With the changing demographics of the area, the congregation, which once comprised 200 families and was fairly active until the 1990's, has moved on. The children of the original congregation members have tended to move away from Strathfield, to the North Shore or Eastern Suburbs where the Jewish community was larger and better served with schools etc. Recurrent flooding and building maintenance issues contributed to the demise of the Synagogue.³⁹

In late 2010, the Board of Directors of the Congregation advised Rabbi Tov-Lev of the termination of his role as Rabbi of the Synagogue at Strathfield and, in October 2011, Rabbi Tov-Lev was served with a notice of termination of tenancy in

³³ Maurice Kellerman, NSW Board of Jewish Education History 1909-1979, p19-21

³⁴ NSW Board of Jewish Education, Our History (<http://www.bje.org.au>)

³⁵ Australian Jewish Times, 180877 "Synagogue finance worries at Strathfield"

³⁶ Australian Jewish Times, 191078 "Strathfield Synagogue members are 'drifting away'"

³⁷ Correspondence from Sydney Beth Din to members of the SDHC 10 March 1993.

³⁸ Joshua Levi, "Strathfield running out of options", 2011 The Australian Jewish News (<http://www.jewishnews.net.au>)

³⁹ Conversation with Eddy Neumann, 12 August 2012

respect of the occupancy of a house associated with the Synagogue. This led to proceedings being commenced by Rabbi Tov-Lev and several members of the Congregation in June 2011. The plaintiffs sought a wide range of relief in the proceedings, including a mandatory order that the Synagogue at Strathfield be preserved against sale and/or destruction and remain open for religious services. On 4 November 2011, Hallen AsJ ordered that the amended Statement of Claim be struck out. On 1 December 2011, the plaintiffs filed a Notice of Motion seeking to set aside the orders of Hallen AsJ, and on 15 February 2012, Nicholas J dismissed the Notice of Motion.⁴⁰

The last service was held at the Synagogue on 3 March 2012. A Petition to "Save the Holocaust and War Memorial Synagogue in Strathfield" to the Honourable Speaker and Members of the Legislative Assembly of NSW organised by Rabbi Dr. Samuel Tov-Lev in conjunction with members of the congregation⁴¹ collected over 12,000 signatures in support of retention of the Synagogue in March and April 2013.⁴²

At its meeting of 9th April 2013, Council resolved "That Strathfield Council conduct a heritage review of Strathfield Synagogue at 19 Florence Street, Strathfield to determine if this structure is of local heritage significance."

2.5. BACKGROUND TO THE JEWISH COMMUNITY IN SYDNEY

By 1833, a community known as the Sydney Hebrew Congregation was flourishing. The building at 4 Bridge Street, Sydney, was the first building in Australia to be specially set aside for use as a synagogue. The Sydney Hebrew Congregation used it from about 1837 until the construction and consecration of the York Street Synagogue in 1844.⁴³

The Jewish Synagogue and Schools Act of 1872 gave the Sydney Synagogue permission to sell land it had previously been granted. This included land adjoining the York Street premises and a portion on Church Hill that had been designated for use as a school. The sales of these properties aided in the building of new, enlarged premises that would become known as the Great Synagogue. Thomas Rowe, a notable architect of Victorian-era Sydney, designed the iconic Great Synagogue building which was situated on an impressive block fronting both Castlereagh Street and Elizabeth Street, opposite Hyde Park. On 26 January 1875, Sydney's Jewish community gathered to celebrate the laying of the foundation stone by the Hon. (later Sir) Saul Samuel.⁴⁴

Jews tend to live in close proximity to synagogues. As all forms of work are prohibited on Saturday, the Jewish Sabbath, most observant Jews see driving as a form of work and tend to live within walking distance of their local synagogue. Changes to Sydney's demography throughout the 20th century saw Jewish communities established across Sydney's spreading suburbs. Yet the Great Synagogue remains a centre of Jewish religious life in Sydney, and a leading force among the synagogues of New South Wales to this day.⁴⁵

⁴⁰ De Varda and Tov-Lev v The Board of Directors of The Strathfield and District Hebrew Congregation Ltd [2012] NSWSC 1377 (Supreme Court of New South Wales, Black J, 15 November 2012)

⁴¹ Joseph de Varda, correspondence with author, 19 August 2013

⁴² Joseph de Varda, "To save the Holocaust and War Memorial Synagogue in Strathfield" correspondence with author, 6 August 2013 (Petition was sighted by author).

⁴³ State Library NSW, 'Australian Jewish community and culture'

⁴⁴ State Library NSW, 'Australian Jewish community and culture'

⁴⁵ State Library NSW, 'Australian Jewish community and culture'

In Sydney in the 1870s, 89 per cent of the Jewish population was concentrated in the Town Hall area. By 1901, 77.6 per cent had moved to Surry Hills, Darlinghurst, Paddington, Glebe and Newtown, 5.4 per cent to the working-class and lower-middle-class suburbs of the south-west, 11 per cent to the residential suburbs of Woollahra, Waverley and Randwick, and 6 per cent had scattered in other areas. By 1921, 33.9 per cent of Sydney Jewry was living in the eastern suburbs, and this trend continued in the 1930s.⁴⁶

Nazi persecution led to the arrival of 8,000 Jewish refugees before World War II, and the beginning of a period of transformation for the Australian Jewish community, with around 5,000 settling in Sydney. Mainly from the professional and business classes of central Europe, prewar refugees quickly moved up the economic and social ladder. They sought to strengthen and diversify religious and communal life. They revitalised the newly established and more orthodox synagogue Bondi Mizrahi, but also introduced Reform (Progressive) Judaism with the foundation of the Temple Emanuel in Woollahra in 1938. The Executive Council of Australian Jewry and the New South Wales Board of Deputies were formed, and sports such as soccer were popularised through social networks at Bondi's Hakoah Club. Together with other European migrant groups, prewar Jewish migrants brought a continental flavour to Sydney's art, music and theatre scenes and to its cuisine.⁴⁷

The Australian government was initially hesitant about accepting so many of them, but in 1938, it allotted 15,000 visas for "victims of oppression". Some 7,000 Jews took advantage of the visas before the outbreak of World War II in 1939. The influx of immigrants led to a split among the urban Jewish centers. Most of the Jews who lived in Sydney were from Western and Central Europe. These Jews tended to be more secular than their Eastern European counterparts, who, by and large, settled in Melbourne.⁴⁸

The Australian Jewish community was radically changed in the post war period due to the arrival and contribution of the largest number of Holocaust survivors per capita outside Israel.⁴⁹ In the period from 1945-1961 around 25,000 Holocaust survivors migrated to Australia. About 40% settled in Sydney, radically changing every aspect of Sydney Jewry, including the creation of new and expanded congregations both in the centre of Jewish life in Bondi, as well as in the suburban areas, including Strathfield and Parramatta in the West. Normally named 'War Memorial' for tax reasons, these synagogues were a tribute to the resilience of the Jewish survivors who saw the rebuilding of Jewish life as a memorial to their families who were martyred in the Holocaust.⁵⁰ In this period, communal power was increasingly wrested away from the 'Establishment' via the various Boards of Deputies and Zionist organisations. World War II, the Holocaust and the birth of Israel set the seal on a redefined Australian Jewish identity.⁵¹

The Australian Jewish community almost doubled as a result of postwar migration, and by the 1950s, over 60 per cent of Sydney's Jewry was foreign-born. Most who came were Holocaust survivors. Increased migration stimulated the Jewish consciousness of the established community. Again this resulted in changes to the community's organisational structure and religious life. Jewish education was further developed, as were Jewish cultural organisations along the lines of European and American models. The period between 1938 and 1961 saw Sydney's Jewish population more than double

⁴⁶ Charles Price, 'Jewish Settlers in Australia', Australian Jewish Historical Society Journal, vol 5, part 8, 1964, pp 392-94

⁴⁷ <http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/source/vjw/australia.html>

⁴⁸ <http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/source/vjw/australia.html>

⁴⁹ Professor Avril Alba, Correspondence with Architectural Projects, 06.01.14

⁵⁰ Professor Suzanne Rutland, Correspondence to Architectural Projects, 23.12.13

⁵¹ The Jews in Australia - Safe Haven: Records of the Jewish Experience in Australia

as a result of European Jewish migration.⁵² At least 17,600 Jewish survivors reached Australia between 1945 and 1954 – the largest single increase in Australian Jewish numbers in the country's history.⁵³

Australia differs from other countries of Jewish immigration because most of the Jews who arrived before 1955, with the exception of those born in the United Kingdom, are Nazi victims. Additional migrations of Jewish Nazi victims occurred in the late 1950s, first from Hungary in 1956 after the Soviet invasion and then from Poland between 1957 and 1960, when the Gomulka government allowed Jews to emigrate. A fourth wave of Nazi victim immigration to Australia began in the 1980s from the Soviet Union and its successor states. Australia has the highest number of Holocaust survivors per capita outside Israel.⁵⁴

Gary Luke of the Australian Jewish Historical Society has mapped Jewish burials in Sydney by postcode and decade from the 1950's to 2000's (see Appendix). This provides an interesting comparison, which reveals the pattern of expansion and contraction of Jewish community from the suburbs, and Strathfield as a centre for the west. The diminishing numbers in the west are revealed in these maps.

2.6. HISTORY OF THE ARCHITECT

HP Oser was an Austrian architect, born in 1913 who studied architecture in Vienna and Paris and worked on the continent before emigrating to Australia.⁵⁵ Oser registered as an architect in NSW in 1945. He later formed a partnership with another emigre Jean Fombertaux in 1960, having begun an associateship with him in 1956.⁵⁶

Rebecca Hawcroft described the difficulties faced by Jewish architects in Sydney in early Postwar period in her ICOMOS "Unloved Modern" paper "Migrant Architects Practicing Modern Architecture in Sydney, 1930-1960":

"Connections with the Jewish community also appear to have been important for this group. In an interview late in his life Samuel Lipson noted that although he did not know members of the Jewish community in Sydney before his arrival he was taken up as a member of "the same village (and) shown around to get to know other people".⁵⁷ Lipson had a valuable connection in Abraham Landa, the State Government Minister for Housing who gave him work during the difficult years of World War II. Lipson also notes that like minded architects and artists would gather to discuss modern architecture in the cafes that were beginning to emerge in Sydney, frequently operated by migrants. One café he recalled was Repin's, run by an expatriate Russian."

Hawcroft describes HP Oser as an important architectural firm on the Sydney scene in the 1950's and 1960's:

"Austrian émigré architect Hans Peter Oser appears to have been a charismatic man who used the network of support provided by the migrant community to move rapidly up the Sydney social ladder. Oser clearly established important networks early as his 1945 application for registration contained an impressive list of referees including J.D. Moore, Walter Bunning and Sydney University's Professor Alfred Hook. Similarly, later in his career, Oser was known for taking on young Jewish architects who were having difficulty finding work.⁵⁸ Oser formed a partnership with French émigré

⁵² Suzanne D Rutland, 'Jews', Dictionary of Sydney, 2008, <http://www.dictionaryofsydney.org/entry/entry/jews>, viewed 21 June 2013

⁵³ W.D. Rubinstein, The Jews of Australia: an Introduction, p.4.

⁵⁴ <http://www.claimscon.org>

⁵⁵ The Sunday Herald, Sunday 9 July 1950, p2

⁵⁶ AIA, Hans Peter Oser Biography

⁵⁷ Teddy Quinton 'Post-War Modernism in Sydney: George Reves and Hans Peter Oser', unpublished thesis University NSW, 1997 p.87

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architect Jean Fombertaux in the 1960s that was highly successful; at its peak Oser & Fombertaux employed twelve draftsmen. Despite their sustained success and continual presence in the press the firm Oser and Fombertaux are not mentioned in any history of modernist architecture in Australia.”⁵⁹

Oser worked across a broad range of projects. While much of his work was residential, several important commercial projects have been documented. In 1953, Oser won an international competition to design the interior of the new Singapore Odeon Theatre. The press described his use of Australian materials including textiles, acoustic plywood, etched glass and plastic wall coverings.⁶⁰ Oser was very active in interior design creating showrooms (Gibb and Beeman), theatre interiors, suburban hotel interiors (Brookvale Hotel) and other works.⁶¹

Oser’s commercial work including Mena House & William Bland Centre, Macquarie St, Sydney, and Colman House, Walker & Barry Streets, North Sydney was published in Cross Section in 1963. In 1963, Max Dupain photographed Oser Fombertaux & Associates BOAC (British Overseas Airways Corporation) Booking Office, Sydney and the Harrogate Office Building at 155 Castlereagh St Sydney. The former Toohey’s Offices including Interior at 72-84 Mary St Surry Hills and the William Bland Centre at 229 Macquarie Street Sydney, also designed in 1958, are listed on the RAIA Register of Significant Architecture in NSW. The former Tooheys Offices, is described as an outstanding and highly intact example of a post war international style office building. The Rex Hotel Braddon, Canberra was designed by Oser in 1955 and the completed project published in 1961.⁶²

Oser was extensively published and outspoken on issues of design and construction. Interviewed by Del Cartwright on 2CH in 1954 Oser gave his views on the differences which should be made in the design of Australian city and country homes – to fit in with surroundings, climatic conditions, as well as concentrating on modern designs for kitchens.⁶³ He was an advocate for the use of timber in construction, at a time when brick was still considered the only worthy material and timber associated with poor construction and shabby workmanship. Oser commented on Council policy, suggesting Councils abandon the requirement to build in brick, and allow timber buildings following post war materials shortages which were causing difficulties in meeting housing boom. His timber house at Blackheath was put forward as showing the “charm and fitness” of a timber home in a woodland setting.⁶⁴

Three 1950 Oser houses in Prince Edward Street, Blackheath are listed on the RAIA Register of Significant Architecture in NSW. These are Betteridge House, The Cabin, formerly La Cabana for Mary Fairfax, and Lilly Pilli (formerly Sunbretta). HP Oser Fombertaux & Associates, House (Stroud), Clareville, 1956 is also listed.⁶⁵

Oser’s domestic work featured in a publication entitled “Sixty Beach and Holiday Homes” by Phyllis Shillito, Head, School of Design East Sydney, Technical College, 1954. Oser’s ‘Aeroplane House’ at Beauty Point, was described and illustrated in the Sydney Morning Herald in 1953.⁶⁶ Sife House at Castlecrag, was also published in 1953. Other residential projects

⁵⁹ Rebecca Hawcroft “Migrant Architects Practicing Modern Architecture in Sydney, 1930-1960” AICOMOS “Unloved Modern”

⁶⁰ Townsville Daily Bulletin Saturday 20 June 1953, p1

⁶¹ Hans Peter Oser biography at Design and Art Australia Online, <http://www.daao.org.au/bio/osser-hp/biography/>, viewed 02 July 2013

⁶² Cross-Section, no. 107, Sept 1961.

⁶³ SMH Thursday 18 March 1954

⁶⁴ “Our Brick Fetish Slows Down Home Construction”, The Sunday Herald, Sunday 9 July 1950, p2

⁶⁵ RAIA Register of Significant Architecture in NSW

⁶⁶ SMH Tuesday 31 August 1954, p15

designed by Oser include the Frank Theeman House in Rose Bay, with furniture designed by Viennese born craftsman Paul Kafka. A house in Middle Cove that was the subject of an illustrated article "House on Hilltop" in the The Australian Women's Weekly, Wednesday 9 December 1959, page 73, also featured specially designed furniture, and clean modernist detailing. 'Primavera' at Highland Ridge Middle Cove, 1958, was documented in a series of photographs by Max Dupain. Oser designed a block of flats at Park Avenue Mosman which are listed on State Heritage Inventory: noted as "an uncompromisingly modern and dramatically-sited building in the International Style by an interesting Sydney practitioner". Bayswater Road Apartments, 1961 are other examples of his high density residential work.

Strathfield Synagogue is one of two synagogues attributed to Oser. The other being Lindfield Synagogue (or the North Shore Synagogue) in Treatts Road. The Treatts Road Synagogue was designed in 1957 by H.P. Oser with R.F. Mugdan as project associate.⁶⁷

Oser died in 1967 at the age of 53.

2.7. SUMMARY OF HISTORICAL DOCUMENTARY ANALYSIS

In March 1949, Louis Alexander Aboud transferred Lots 13-15 and pt Lot 12 and pt lots 32-35 Sec 2 DP 581 to NSW Board of Jewish Education.

The Strathfield and District Hebrew Congregation approached Strathfield Council in February 1958, with a proposal to build a synagogue at their site in Florence Street. The Congregation outlined the following proposed uses:

1. Religious Worship
2. As a Jewish War Memorial
3. As class rooms for Jewish Education and Instruction
4. As a social hall for film nights, lectures, cultural evenings, youth centre and occasional dances.

Plans were prepared by H.P. Oser and Associates in May 1958. The application was approved by Strathfield Council on 17 March 1959

In June 1959, the Foundation Stone for the Synagogue was laid by Max Freilich, life president Zionist federation of Australia and New Zealand.

The War Memorial Synagogue was consecrated by Rabbi Dr Israel Porush, and opened by Leo Meyer on 27 September 1959. The Consecration Document indicates the purpose of the building as a War Memorial.

"...I was particularly touched to learn that the Synagogue is intended as a memorial to the gallant men of our faith who fell in the Great War as well as to the six million of our co-religionists who fell victims to Nazi tyranny. It is not only the exterior of the building which will indicate our consciousness of those whom we commemorate...the manner in which those who worship... the martyrs whom we mourn were steadfast in their lives and at their death. I trust therefore that the new synagogue which is associated with memories stirring our deepest emotions will become the focus of the religious cultural and social life of its members..."

The Message from Minister Rev L Goran at the Consecration also underlined the conception of the Synagogue as a memorial and the emotions of the time, *"As for our own building, it is to my mind a fitting memorial to an unsurpassed tragedy..."*

⁶⁷ AIA Church File, Lindfield Synagogue

A plaque on site notes "These six trees have been planted by Strathfield and District Was Memorial Synagogue in holy memory of our six million martyred brethren who were brutally slaughtered by the Nazi murderers during the years 1933-1943". The trees were removed and replaced with six new plants following storm damage.⁶⁸

Claims Conference Funds for Education were allocated from 1957-1964, with 1,200 pounds allocated to Strathfield Synagogue in 1964.⁶⁹ In its prime, about 200 families attended weekly services at the Strathfield Synagogue.⁷⁰ In the 1960's the Strathfield Congregation recorded 269 financial members.⁷¹ The same time South Head District Synagogue recorded 369 members, while North Shore financial members numbered 619.

Additions to the site reflect the development of the congregation:

1964 BA for Sunday School, 1968 BA for Hall, 1972 Council approved alterations and additions to school for use as child care centre, 1972 Foundation stone for Yolanda Kindergarten laid, 1973 Kindergarten Extension, and 1977 Additions.

In 1978, The Australian Jewish Times reported a shift in the Jewish population from Strathfield to the Eastern Suburbs. Beth Din called a meeting of members of Strathfield and District Hebrew Congregation to consider the future of the congregation. By 2011, The Australia Jewish News reported dwindling numbers of the congregation. In late 2010, the Board of Directors of the Congregation advised Rabbi Tov-Lev of the termination of his role as Rabbi of the Synagogue at Strathfield. The last service was held at the Synagogue on 3 March 2012.

2.8. RELEVANT HISTORICAL THEMES

NATIONAL	STATE	LOCAL
Educating	Education	Kindergarten
Developing Australia's cultural life	Religion Social institutions	Synagogue Strathfield Jewish Community Social Hall
Marking the phases of life	Birth and Death	Holocaust Memorial

⁶⁸ Joseph de Varda, correspondence with author, 19 August 2013

⁶⁹ Rutland, Suzanne, "Edge of the Diaspora" p 405

⁷⁰ Chua, Bernadette, "Strathfield rabbi signs 12,000 to save Holocaust names" Our Strathfield, 120413

⁷¹ The NSW Jewish Board of Deputies Membership Lists, AJHS Box AB72

3. PHYSICAL ANALYSIS

3.1. DESCRIPTION OF THE AREA

Strathfield was developed in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century as a 'garden suburb' in response to the development of the railway network. The high quality streetscapes feature street plantings and are dominated by federation period housing with established gardens.

3.2. DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE & SETTING

The site includes several allotments fronting Albyn Road. The Synagogue is constructed at the rear of two lots, and fronts Florence Street. There is a driveway off Florence Street just before the road closure at Florence Reserve. The driveway accesses a hardstand area. Mature camphor laurel trees mark the perimeter of the site, which is bound by a low face brick fence at the street.

The building was designed to respond to the original house, which was built along the Albyn Road frontage, and is since demolished. A driveway once separated the house from the Synagogue. There have been many additions to the site since the construction of the Synagogue in 1959, and some of these have impacted upon its architectural integrity. The site now includes the Synagogue, the Yolanda Kramer Kindergarten, and ministers residence, all connected by a series of covered walkways.

3.3. DESCRIPTION OF THE BUILDING

The 1959 building comprises a rectangular two storey volume which is the main hall to the north of the site partially enclosed by an L-shaped single storey volume which encompassed the lobby, vestibule, ministers room, kitchen, amenities and storage. The building is constructed of face brick with a flat roof with simple horizontal eaves. The roof structure is steel and timber, however the original roof (of ply felt and gravel on T&G boarding) was replaced in 1987 and skylights were removed. Original steel frame windows feature the Star of David have been replaced by powder coated aluminium framed windows with louvres on the east and west side of the Ark. The original glazing pattern has been altered, however the Star of David is retained. An original precast concrete block wall screens the kitchen and chair store. The original glass curtain wall and planter box to the Vestibule has been replaced with the brick wall of the Kindergarten. A concrete ramp accesses the hall directly, and a concrete path from Florence Street leads directly to the open covered Lobby area. The original Lobby has been altered and extended to the east. Once open to the east and south, the Lobby is now enclosed by the Kindergarten to the south, by a new concrete block wall to the north, and by a full height decorative metal screen to the east, which detracts from the architecture of the Synagogue. To the rear, the single storey amenity wing has been extended to accommodate the raked ceiling of the Sunday school room attached to the western façade of the synagogue hall.

3.4. INTERIOR

The extended lobby features a polished concrete floor and plywood ceiling (which has been painted). A pair of metal framed glazed doors access the vestibule. The vestibule contains the memorial wall. It is much altered by the construction of the Kindergarten adjacent. The two storey volume of the Synagogue is entered axially, focusing on the Torah ark and perpetual lamp. A timber and coloured glass screen divides the seating. Original steel frame curtain wall glazing which illuminated the ark platform has been replaced with powder coated aluminium frame glazing. The bimah now projects into the hall beyond the originally intended zone and is constructed of timber and wrought iron decorative balustrading. The floor of the synagogue is tongue and groove timber boards, with a central carpeted aisle. The interior walls are cement render on brickwork with a Tyrolean finish. Steel stanchions are encased in brickwork on western wall. The ceiling is lined with diagonal timber boarding and beams are expressed. Pendant lamps appear to be original. Suspended curved plywood panels at the northern end of the synagogue have been replaced with new plywood panels, and the original

design altered. Wrought iron screens frame the Ark. Skylights that once lit the altar and Ministers room have been removed. Fine timber pews survive intact in the hall. Plywood doors feature decorative copper pulls embossed with the Menorah symbol.

In the lesser spaces, finishes are more mundane comprising vinyl floor tiles (which have been removed), plaster ceilings with painted brick or rendered walls.

Commemorative plaques on the walls identify victims of the Holocaust by name and the camp where they perished. Two lights above the memorial plaques were lit in their memory.

3.5. OTHER ASPECTS OF SITE

3.5.1. Evidence of Archaeological Potential

Given the history of site development from 1880's and extensive redevelopment in the late 20th C, the site is unlikely to reveal archaeological remains.

3.5.2. Evidence of Aboriginal Heritage Potential

Given the history of site disturbance from the Victorian period, the site is unlikely to reveal aboriginal remains.

3.5.3. Evidence of Natural Heritage Potential

Given the history of site disturbance from the Victorian period the site is unlikely to have heritage significance for its natural features.

3.5.4. Moveable context

Significant elements that could be relocated exist on the site including memorial wall, plaques and timber pews.

3.6. PHASES OF DEVELOPMENT

c.1880-1950	Residential Development and Use of the Site Ford family residence 'Goomerabong' on Florenceville Subdivision and consolidation of site
c1950-1959	Acquisition of site by Strathfield and District Hebrew Congregation 1959 Construction of new Synagogue
1964-1977	Further Development of Site Ministers Residence 1964 Sunday School 1968 Hall 1972-3 Yolanda Kramer Kindergarten establishment and extension 1977 Additions

3.7. A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE POST WAR SYNAGOGUE

During the late 1940's through to the 1960's a number of Synagogues and War Memorials were constructed across the Sydney metropolitan area. These included Kingsford/Maroubra, 1946, Parramatta, 1948, Strathfield, 1949, South Head (South Head and District Synagogue), 12950, NSW Association of Sephardi (The Sephardi Synagogue), 1950, Manly Warringah, 1952, Coogee, 1952, Roscoe Street, 1955, Yeshivah, 1955, Cremorne, 1956, Machzika Hatorah

Congregation Inc, 1957 North Shore Temple Emanuel, 1960.⁷² Several were designed by significant architects including Hugh Buhrich, Neville Gruzman, Lipson and Kaad, and the lesser known HP Oser. This boom in construction of synagogues and other cultural facilities across Sydney appears to be related to two factors, firstly the increase in Jewish migration in the immediate postwar years, and secondly the availability of funds for the Jewish Community from The Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany.

HP Oser was responsible for the North Shore Synagogue at Treats Road Lindfield in 1957, one of the first of this group of Synagogues. The synagogue was published in Cross Section in December 1957 where it was described as follows " Its construction involved unusual and interesting techniques. But the result is in detail, mannered and stiff. Steel portal frames crank up to a monitor light shape, arguing with the aisle roof as they go, and disappearing tantalisingly into the wall. The walls are precast concrete panels, and those at the northern end are prestressed and post tensioned: they have terracotta-chip finish outside, are texture-painted inside." Not surprisingly, this Synagogue has many historical and physical similarities with Strathfield Synagogue built in the following year. The simple cubic form of the Synagogue is similar, and the use of flat roof, concrete breeze block wall, metal framed glazed wall and Jewish symbols as decorative architectural elements. The North Shore Synagogue was dedicated as a War Memorial Centre in 1957 and the foyer was dedicated in 1958 to the memory of the Holocaust victims. A Jewish Kindergarten was established on the site in 1962 which has become Masada College. Unlike Strathfield, the Jewish community on the North Shore has continued to grow since the 1960's.

OE Phillip designed the War Memorial Hall in Castlereagh St in 1957. In 1957-1958, Neville Gruzman designed the South Head Synagogue at 666 Old South Head Road Rose Bay, and a Synagogue at Dover Heights. Gruzman's work also received attention in the architectural press, for the design of both synagogues in collaboration with artist Eric Smith.⁷³ ⁷⁴ The Central Synagogue and War Memorial, Bon Accord Avenue Bondi Junction was designed by Lipson and Kaad in 1959. Lipson also designed the Liberal Synagogue Temple Emanuel at 7 Ocean Street Woollahra. Hugh Buhrich designed a Synagogue at 12A Yeo St Neutral Bay in 1958, the Sephardi Synagogue in Fletcher St Woollahra in 1961 and Kingsford Maroubra Synagogue on Anzac Parade in 1965. Buhrich was also responsible for the "Meeting Hall for the House of Friends" 1966, at 57 Boundary Road Turramurra. Harold H Smith designed the Bankstown Hebrew Synagogue in 1960.⁷⁵

The purpose built Synagogue in Newtown is called the Western Suburbs Synagogue. Newtown was the western suburbs of Sydney in the late 1880s when the congregation first formed, but by 1919 when the Synagogue was built and consecrated suburbs were developing further west, stamped with the new healthy idea of urban cottages set in large 1/4 acre properties with their own gardens. Parramatta congregation had plans prepared by Aaron Bolot for a Synagogue but no evidence of these plans being built has been found.⁷⁶

It has been suggested that the Strathfield Synagogue is unique because "it is one of only a few in the world that has a memorial to the victims of the Holocaust attached to the building."⁷⁷ This research has identified other Synagogues

⁷² Suzanne Rutland, 'The Jews in Australia' Cambridge University Press, 2005

⁷³ Cross Section October 1958 (No. 72)

⁷⁴ Architecture and Arts -October 1962, p57

⁷⁵ '20th Century Churches by Architect' Compiled by Michael Bogle, May 2012

⁷⁶ Hebrew Standard

⁷⁷ Chua, Bernadette, "Strathfield rabbi signs 12,000 to save Holocaust names" Our Strathfield, 120413

constructed as memorials, notably the North Shore Synagogue at Lindfield, the Central Synagogue at Bondi Junction, and North Eastern Jewish War Memorial, Doncaster (1962)

Several Postwar Synagogues were built as War Memorials, some believed to be named as such for tax purposes. In the case of Strathfield, the significance of the Synagogue as a memorial is clear in the words of the minister Rev L Goran, reproduced for the Consecration ceremony " *...as for our new building, it is to my mind a fitting memorial to an unsurpassed national tragedy...* " and the words of the Chief Rabbi Israel Brodie for the same ceremony " *...I was particularly touched to learn that the Synagogue is intended as a Memorial to the gallant men of our faith who fell in the Great War, as well as to the six million of our co-religionists who fell victims to Nazi tyranny. It is not only the exterior of the building which will indicate our consciousness of those whom we commemorate. It is the manner in which those who worship within its walls realise the ideals and fulfil the demands of our faith to which the martyrs whom we mourn were steadfast in their lives and at their death.* " ⁷⁸ Other Memorials were constructed in the form of War Memorial Halls such as at the Great Synagogue in 1957. In 1953, The Jewish Board of Deputies moved to initiate a memorial for Sydney to perpetuate the memory of the six million Jews who perished in the Nazi holocaust. ⁷⁹ In 1972 a Holocaust Memorial was constructed to a Harry Seidler design at Rookwood. Holocaust remembrance was little discussed in the Jewish community until the late 1970's when the Holocaust Committee was established under the education committee of the Board. The achievements of this Committee were many, culminated in the opening of the Sydney Jewish Museum in the Maccabean Hall some twenty years later in 1992. ⁸⁰

3.8. HISTORY OF GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS & A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE POST-WAR INTERNATIONAL STYLE

The International Style is characterised by an interest in a modernist style first occurring in Europe in the 1920's. The culmination of the style can be summarized in the co-ordinated image of the Weissenhof Seidling in Stuttgart in 1929. Black and white images of this complex became internationally known through publications such as 'The International Style'. While modernism was influential on a small group of Australian architects in the 1930's its influence became all pervasive in the late 1950's and 1960's. The influence of 'International Style' resulted in a complete change to the scale and style of buildings in the city and suburbs.

Where this style was used, we see the expression of the structure and steel frame as an aesthetic devise and treatment of the building form as a series of planes with a strong horizontal emphasis. Face brickwork is commonly used and occurs in large planes defined by steelwork. Glazing usually occurs from floor to ceiling. These buildings are derivative on the American concepts of Mies Van de Rohe to dissolve the separation of inside and outside and form a cluster grouping of various building forms representing the different building functions.

The Post-War International Style, is defined in Apperly, Irving, and Reynolds reference text "Identifying Australian Architecture" which classifies buildings into Periods and Styles. Characteristics of the style include sleek, glossy, prismatic forms with uninterrupted surfaces, selective expression of structural system, extensive glazing, cubiform shapes clad with curtain walls, plain smooth wall areas of contrasting texture, corbusian window motifs, non rectangular shapes contrasting with rectangular.

⁷⁸ Consecration of the Strathfield War Memorial Synagogue, 1959 (see Appendix F)

⁷⁹ "Memorial for Sydney", The Hebrew Standard of Australasia, 31 July 1953, p2

⁸⁰ Suzanne Rutland and Sophie Caplan, "With One Voice" Sydney : Australian Jewish Historical Society, 1998.

Prolific and widely published, Oser was a key practitioner of the Post War International Style in Sydney, despite a lack of acknowledgment by Apperly et al. Oser's work displays the key characteristics described above, characteristics that are evident in the 1959 Strathfield Synagogue.

4. ASSESSMENT OF CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

4.1. GENERAL

A statement of cultural significance is a declaration of the value and importance given to a place or item, by the community. It acknowledges the concept of a place or item having an intrinsic value that is separate from its economic value.

There are a number of recognised and pre-tested guidelines for assessing the cultural significance of a place or item established by organisations including among others, the ICOMOS (International Committee on Monuments and Sites, Australia), The National Trust of Australia, The Australian Heritage Council (Australian Government) and in New South Wales by the NSW Heritage Council (The Heritage Branch of the Office of Environment and Heritage).

The Heritage Council's criteria '[NSW Heritage Assessment Criteria](#)' are based on the Australian Heritage Commission criteria and encompass the five values in the Australia ICOMOS Burra Charter; Historical Significance, Historical Association Significance, Aesthetic Significance, Scientific Significance, Social Significance and 'two' grading level Rarity and Representativeness. These criteria were gazetted following amendments to the Heritage Act, which came into force in April 1999 and further amended in 2004.

This report uses the NSW Heritage Assessment Criteria to assess the significance of the study area.

4.2. CRITERION A – HISTORICAL EVOLUTION

An item is important in the course, or pattern, of NSW's cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area.

The Strathfield Synagogue Complex has historical significance for its ability to evidence the expansion of the Jewish population into the Sydney Suburbs in the post war period. The site also evidences contraction of the Jewish population in Sydney to the east and north from the 1970's.

In the period from 1945-1961 around 25,000 Holocaust survivors migrated to Australia. About 40% settled in Sydney. The Strathfield Synagogue Complex has historical significance for its ability to evidence the dramatic increase in Jewish population in the post war period, as a result of migration.

The Strathfield Synagogue Complex has historical significance for its association with the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany.

The Strathfield Synagogue Complex has historical significance because of the continuity of use by the Strathfield and District Hebrew Congregation for over 50 years, and for its ability to illustrate the development of Strathfield as a centre for the Jewish Community in western Sydney.

The Strathfield Synagogue Complex has historic significance for its ability to evidence the importance of education in the developing Jewish Community in Strathfield in the mid 20th Century. Research has found that the NSW Board of Jewish Education funded the purchase of land and construction of Synagogue and educational facilities. The synagogue provided an educational and worship role. Oxford definition of synagogue "the building where a Jewish assembly or congregation meets for religious observance and instruction."

The War Memorial Synagogue is of historical significance to the Strathfield Congregation as recognition of the loss of six million Jews in the Holocaust.

4.3. CRITERION B – HISTORICAL ASSOCIATIONS

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

The Strathfield Synagogue Complex and memorial has significance because of its association with the Congregation including Holocaust survivors who came to live in the Strathfield District in the mid 20th Century.

The Strathfield Synagogue Complex and site has historical associative significance because of its ability to evidence the development of the Strathfield and District Hebrew Community since 1950's.

The site has some significance for its association with the NSW Board of Jewish Education, who funded the purchase of land and construction of Synagogue and educational facilities.

4.4. CRITERION C – AESTHETIC VALUES

An item is important in demonstrating aesthetic characteristics and/or a high degree of creative or technical achievement in NSW (or the local area).

The 1959 building has aesthetic significance as a good example of the work of prominent modernist émigré architect HP Oser.

The 1959 building has aesthetic significance because it exemplifies the post war International Style, despite alteration.

4.5. CRITERION D – SOCIAL VALUE

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

The Synagogue has been the focus of Jewish communal worship and culture in western Sydney since its construction in 1959 and has social significance for its ongoing associations with the Strathfield and District Hebrew Community, now diminished in number.

The 1959 building has social significance because of its importance to the local Holocaust Survivors and their families at the time of construction.

The petition to save the Synagogue and the extended legal battle over the use of the building evidence ongoing community esteem for the building within the broader Jewish community.

The memorial wall provides a local focus for the commemoration of Jews who perished in the Holocaust.

4.6. CRITERION E – TECHNICAL/RESEARCH VALUE

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

The 1959 building is not considered significant under this criterion as it has little archaeological or research potential.

4.7. CRITERION F – RARITY

An item possesses uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of NSW's cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area).

The 1959 building has rarity significance as it provides evidence of the Jewish community in Strathfield in the Post war period.

The building has rarity significance as the only surviving purpose built synagogue from the post war period in the western suburbs of Sydney.

The 1959 building has rarity significance as it is a rare surviving example of Post war International Style in Strathfield.

4.8. CRITERION G - REPRESENTATIVENESS

An item is important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of NSW's

- cultural or natural places; or
- cultural or natural environments

(or a class of the local areas' cultural or natural places; or cultural or natural environments).

The Strathfield Synagogue complex has representative significance as an example of Post War Jewish cultural facilities funded by the Claims Conference, and the NSW Board of Jewish Education.

The 1959 building has representative significance as part of a small group of fine International Style Synagogues, designed by emigrant architects in the post war period (1958-63), that collectively illustrates a type.

4.9. INTACTNESS

The main form of the 1959 building remains substantially intact. The Synagogue Hall interior is also substantially intact. Additions to the entry and west of the Synagogue, impact upon its integrity. The 1959 building has been extended in a number of significant phases but retains its original character.

4.10. LEVELS OF SIGNIFICANCE

BACKGROUND

The terms 'local', and 'state' relate to the geographical and social context of an item's significance. For example, an item of local significance will be of historical, aesthetic, social or technical/research significance in a local geographical context; an item of state social heritage significance will be important to an identifiable, contemporary, statewide community.

4.10.1. Local Heritage

Due to historic, aesthetic and social significance the building does reach the threshold for local significance.

4.10.2. State Heritage

Due to representative level of significance within the Sydney area and the extent of alteration, the building does not reach the threshold for state significance.

4.11. GRADING OF SIGNIFICANCE

	GRADING	JUSTIFICATION	STATUS
A	EXCEPTIONAL	Rare or outstanding element directly contributing to an item's local and State significance.	Fulfils criteria for local or State listing
B	HIGH	High degree of original fabric. Demonstrates a key element of the item's significance. Alterations do not detract from significance.	Fulfils criteria for local or State listing.
C	MODERATE	Elements of typical representative quality. Altered or modified elements. Elements with little heritage value, but which	Fulfils criteria for local or State listing.

GRADING	JUSTIFICATION	STATUS
	contribute to the overall significance of the item.	
D LITTLE	Alterations detract from significance. Difficult to interpret.	Does not fulfil criteria for local or State listing.
E INTRUSIVE	Damaging to the item's heritage significance.	Does not fulfil criteria for local or State listing.

Schedule of significant fabric

The schedule of existing fabric notes the relevant area and its level of significance.

ELEMENT	GRADING
The Site	D
KEY PHASES	
The Synagogue Hall 1959	C
The Vestibule and Memorial Wall	C
Lobby	C/D
Lobby, Kitchen and Store, Vestibule, Hall, WCs	C/D
SUBSEQUENT ADDITIONS	
Kindergarten	D
Ministers Residence	D
Addition	D
Lobby extension	E

4.12. SUMMARY STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Established on the site in 1949, the Strathfield Synagogue Complex has historical significance for its ability to evidence the dramatic increase in Jewish population in the post war period, and the expansion into the Sydney Suburbs in this period. The Complex has historical significance for its ability to illustrate the development of Strathfield as a centre for the Jewish Community in Western Sydney and to evidence the development of the Strathfield and District Hebrew Community since 1950's. The Complex also has important associations with the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany, and illustrates the importance of education in the developing Jewish Community in Strathfield in the mid 20th Century. The Strathfield Synagogue Complex has significance because of its association with the Congregation, including Holocaust survivors, who came to live in the Strathfield District in the mid 20th Century.

The 1959 building has aesthetic significance as a good example of the work of prominent modernist émigré architect HP Oser. The main form of the 1959 building and Synagogue Hall interior remain substantially intact. It exemplifies the post war International Style, despite additions to the entry and to the west.

The Synagogue has been the focus of Jewish communal worship and culture in western Sydney since its construction in 1959 and has social significance for its ongoing associations with the Strathfield and District Hebrew Community, now greatly diminished in number. The 1959 building has social significance because of its importance to the local Congregation in the Postwar period. Memorial plaques and plantings commemorate holocaust victims as well as individuals associated with the Strathfield Congregation. The petition to save the Synagogue and the extended legal battle over the use of the building evidence ongoing community esteem for the building within the broader Jewish community.

The 1959 building has rarity significance as the only surviving purpose built synagogue from the post war period in the western suburbs of Sydney, and as a rare surviving example of Post war International Style in Strathfield.

The 1959 building has representative significance as part of a small group of fine International Style Synagogues, designed by emigrant architects in the post war period (1958-63) that collectively illustrates a type.

5. SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Listing the site on the LEP should consider the following:

IN SUPPORT OF INTERPRETING THE HISTORIC JEWISH PRESENCE ON THE SITE

Evidence of broader patterns of settlement of Jewish communities in post war period which included an expansion into the Western Suburbs which is an important historic phase.

Ability to evidence the boom of migration of Holocaust Survivors to Sydney after WWII.

Historic evidence of development of the Jewish community in Strathfield.

Historic evidence of importance of education, association with NSW Board of Jewish Education.

Historic evidence of funding of Jewish Cultural facilities by Jewish Material Claims Against Germany Fund Conference.

IN SUPPORT OF RETENTION OF THE SYNAGOGUE AS THE PREFERRED INTERPRETATION STRATEGY

The community esteem for the Synagogue evidenced by the 12,000 signature petition.

Good but altered example of the work of important emigrant architect H.P. Oser.

Good example of Post War International Style.

One of a number of Synagogues designed by emigrant Jewish architects in the post war period bringing modernism to Sydney.

The Synagogue dates from the key period of expansion of the Jewish Community into the western suburbs.

One of a small number of synagogues built in Sydney after 1958 and funded by the Jewish Material Claims Against Germany fund Conference.

One of a small number of synagogues in Sydney built as a Memorial to holocaust victims.

The Synagogue incorporates memorials to individuals in the community.

Only surviving purpose built Postwar Synagogue in the western suburbs.

Rare 'modernist' style building in Strathfield.

OPPORTUNITIES

The 1959 Oser building including memorials, has the potential to interpret the historic significance of the site, the boom of migration of Jews to Sydney after WWII, and broader patterns of settlement of Jewish communities in post war period.

The 1959 Oser building as a purpose built Synagogue for the Jewish community by a prominent architect and of quality design and with associated memorials has greater potential for interpretation than any other building on the site.

It has the potential to retain its social values to the Jewish Community, and to recover its aesthetic significance by the reinterpretation of the original entry.

It is therefore the most appropriate building to retain on the site even if this involves adaptive reuse.

The research has not indicated that the kindergarten, minister's residence, Sunday school and additions reach a threshold for significance.

There are no restrictions to their demolition or modifications.

IN OPPOSITION TO THE RETENTION OF THE SYNAGOGUE

f) The community has relocated and the purpose of the building needs to change.

-The purpose of the building needs to change.

g) The building has been modified.

-The site has a complex history that is reflected in a number of additions to the 1959 Synagogue. Despite this, the main form of the 1959 Oser building remains substantially intact as does the Synagogue hall interior.

h) The importance of its use as a war memorial has been questioned.

-The documentary evidence supports an understanding of the building and site as providing memorial files. No evidence to the contrary has been provided, however the primary historical aspect of the site to evidence important historical trends in Jewish communities and settlement in post war period.

i) Ongoing maintenance problems.

-Maintenance problems are typical of building of this age, that have suffered some years of neglect.

j) Perception that retention of the Synagogue will prevent development of the site.

-Future development of the site can occur with retention of the 1959 building. Adaptive reuse options, which retain the 1959 Oser building are considered below.

OPTIONS FOR FUTURE USE OF THE SITE

4. Adaptive Reuse rationalises the existing non-denominational kindergarten into the Synagogue building allowing subdivision of the site into 5 lots (see Appendix K)

-Retention of Heritage Values

5. Develop site for other uses such as aged care of residential/commercial, and adaptively re-use Synagogue to provide communal space for the development. Use of heritage incentives may allow a broader range of uses otherwise permissible under the zoning

- Retention of Heritage Values.

6. Demolish the synagogue building allowing subdivision of the site into 5 lots (see Appendix K)

- Loss of Heritage Values

RECOMMENDATION

It is therefore recommended that the site be included in the LEP as a Heritage Item.

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7. LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

FIGURE NO.	DATE	DESCRIPTION	SOURCE
Figure 1.2	2013	Location Map	SIX Maps
Figure 2.4.1	Undated	Parish of Concord, County of Cumberland, showing 1808 Wilshire Grant, Parish Map Preservation Project	Land and Property Information
Figure 2.4.2	1875	Advertisement for sale of Florence Ville Subdivision	The Sydney Morning Herald, 12.10.1875, page 9
Figure 2.4.3	1880	Bushy Hill Estate Homebush, 1880 The Echo	Strathfield Heritage Organisation
Figure 2.4.4	1880	Bushy Hill Estate Homebush	National Library of Australia, map-lfsp1052-s1-v
Figure 2.4.5	1915	Parish of Concord, County of Cumberland, 1915, Parish Map Preservation Project	Land and Property Information
Figure 2.4.6	1943	Aerial Photograph	SIX maps
Figure 2.4.7	1959	Strathfield War Memorial Synagogue	Conservation Booklet AJHS
Figure 2.4.8	C.1960	The Strathfield Menorah	Gary Luke AJHS
Figure 2.6.0	Undated	Hans Peter Oser	"Unloved Modern" Rebecca Hawcroft, Migrant Architects
Figure 2.6.1	1961	Tooheys Offices	Max Dupain, "Unloved Modern" Rebecca Hawcroft, Migrant Architects
Figure 2.6.2	1960	William Bland Centre	Max Dupain, "Unloved Modern" Rebecca Hawcroft, Migrant Architects
Figure 2.6.3	1960	William Bland Centre	Max Dupain, "Unloved Modern" Rebecca Hawcroft, Migrant Architects
Figure 2.6.4	1963	BOAC Booking Office	Max Dupain, "Unloved Modern", SLNSW
Figure 2.6.5	1963	Harrogate Office Building	Max Dupain, "Unloved Modern" Rebecca Hawcroft, Migrant Architects
Figure 2.6.6	1952	Blackheath House	The Sydney Morning Herald, Tuesday 2 December 1952, page 9
Figure 2.6.7	1953	Sife House Castlecrag	The Sunday Herald, Sunday 1 February 1953, page 19
Figure 2.6.8	1954	Beauty Point House	The Sydney Morning Herald, Tuesday 31 August 1954, page 15
Figure 2.6.9	1958	Primavera Highland Ridge Middle Cove	Max Dupain, "Unloved Modern" Rebecca Hawcroft,

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Figure 1.2

Location Map

SIX Maps

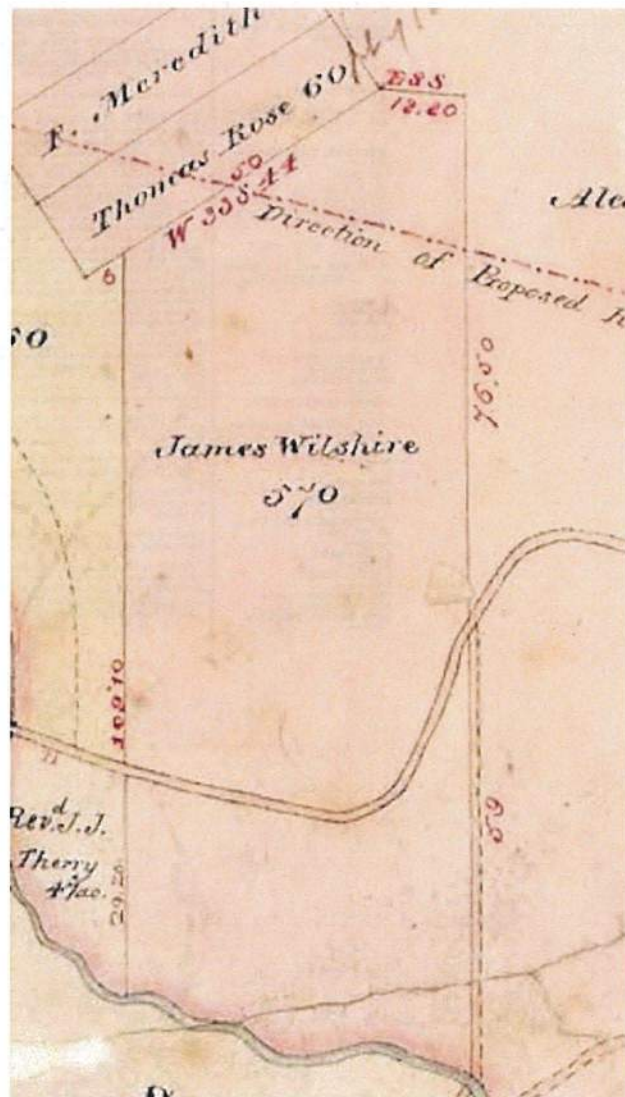


Figure 2.4.1

Undated

Parish of Concord, County of Cumberland,
showing 1808 Wilshire Grant, Parish Map
Preservation Project

Land and Property
Information



The Sydney Morning Herald,
12.10.1875, page 9



Figure 2.4.3

1880

Bushy Hill Estate Homebush, 1880 The Echo

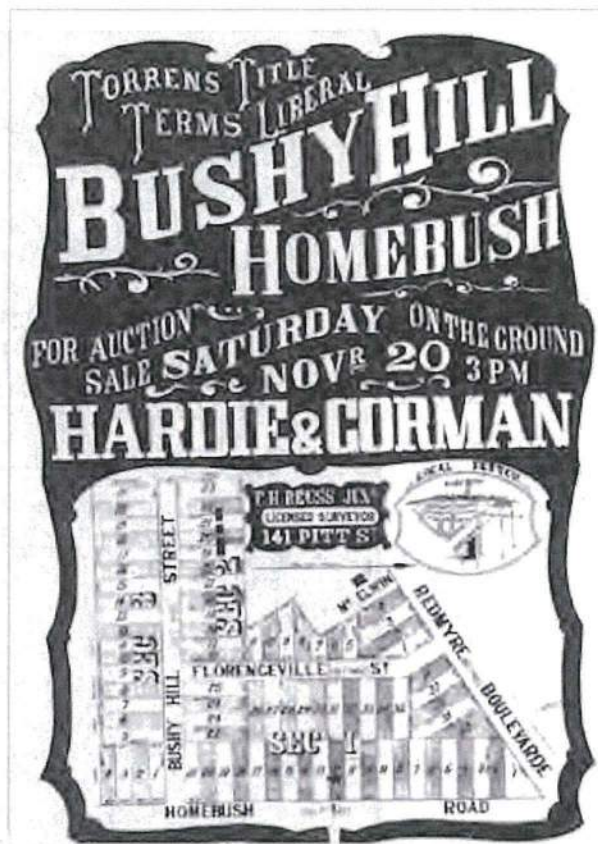
Strathfield Heritage
Organisation

Figure 2.4.4

1880

Bushy Hill Estate Homebush

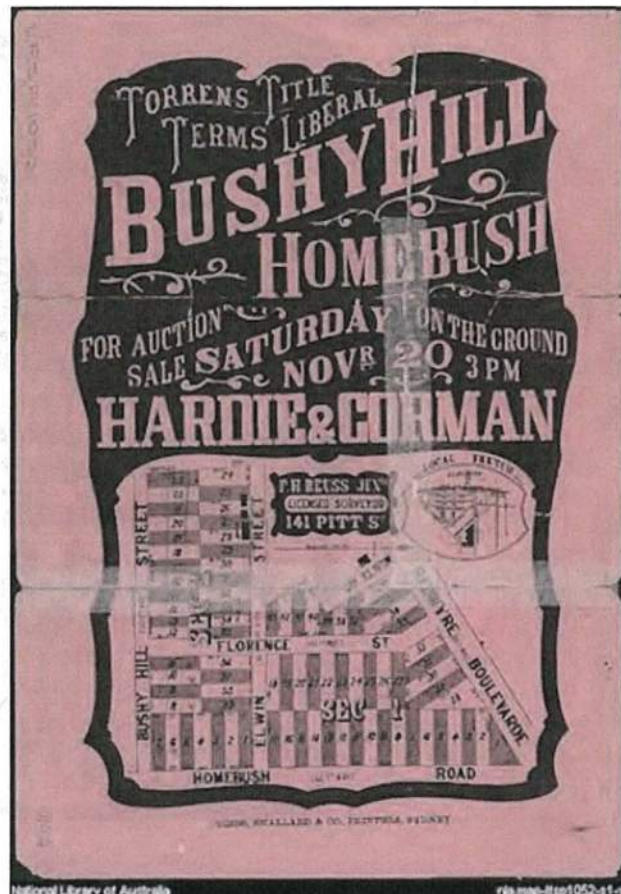
National Library of Australia,
map-lfsp1052-s1-v

Figure 2.4.5

1915

Parish of Concord, County of Cumberland,
1915, Parish Map Preservation ProjectLand and Property
Information

Figure 2.4.6

1943

Aerial Photograph

SIX maps

1943 image



Disclaimer: This report has been generated by various sources and is provided for information purposes only. Land and Property Information (LPI), a division of the Department of Finance and Services does not warrant or represent that the information is free from errors or omission, or that it is exhaustive. LPI gives no warranty in relation to the information, especially material supplied by third parties. LPI accepts no liability for loss, damage, or costs that you may incur relating to any use or reliance upon the information in this report.

Figure 2.4.7 1959 Strathfield War Memorial Synagogue Conservation Booklet AJHS

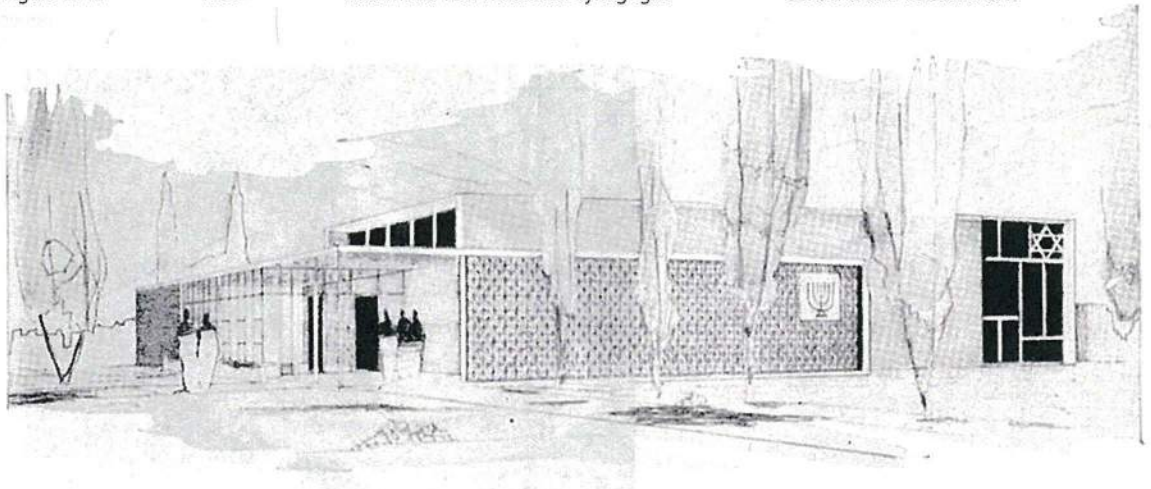


Figure 2.4.8 C.1960 The Strathfield Menorah Gary Luke AJHS



Figure 2.6.0

Undated

Hans Peter Oser

Unloved Modern, Hawcroft,
Rebecca, Migrant Architects



Figure 2.6.1

1961

Tooheys Offices

Max Dupain, Unloved Modern
Hawcroft, Rebecca, Migrant
Architects



Figure 2.6.2

1960

William Bland Centre

Max Dupain, Unloved Modern
Hawcroft, Rebecca, Migrant
Architects



Figure 2.6.3

1960

William Bland Centre

Max Dupain, Unloved Modern
Hawcroft, Rebecca, Migrant
Architects



Figure 2.6.4

1963

BOAC Booking Office

Max Dupain, Modernist
Exhibition Guide, SLNSW



Figure 2.6.5

1963

Harrogate Office Building

Max Dupain, Unloved Modern
Hawcroft, Rebecca, Migrant
Architects



Figure 2.6.6

1952

Blackheath House

The Sydney Morning Herald,
Tuesday 2 December 1952,
page 9

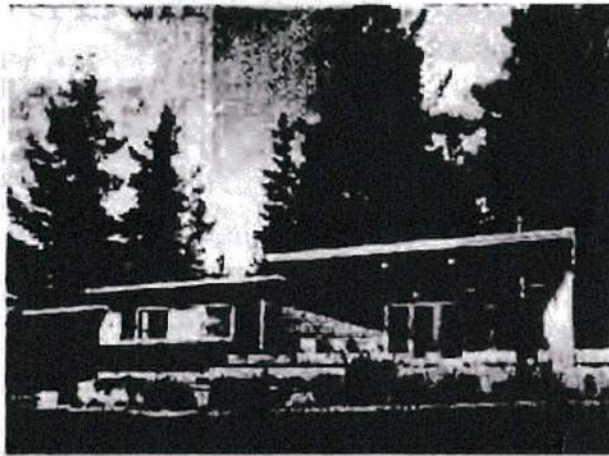


Figure 2.6.7

1953

Sife House Castlecrag

The Sunday Herald, Sunday 1
February 1953, page 19

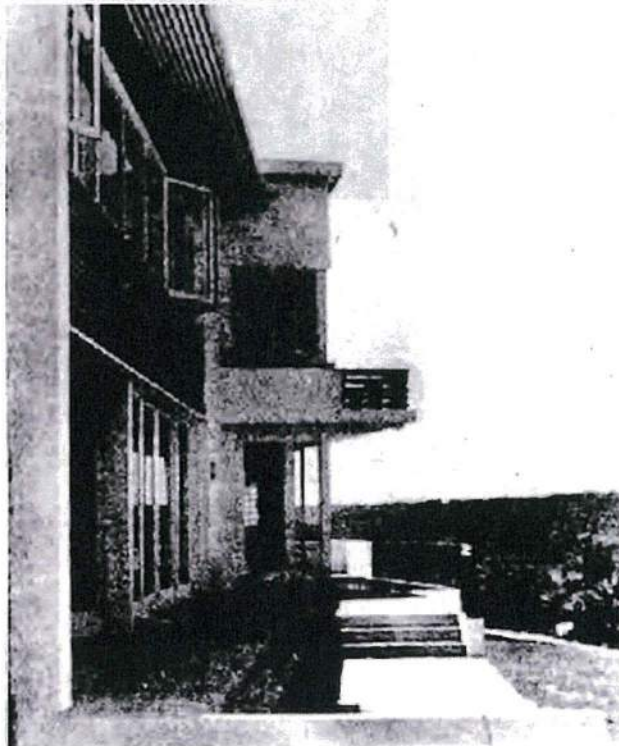


Figure 2.6.8

1954

Beauty Point House

The Sydney Morning Herald,
Tuesday 31 August 1954,
page 15

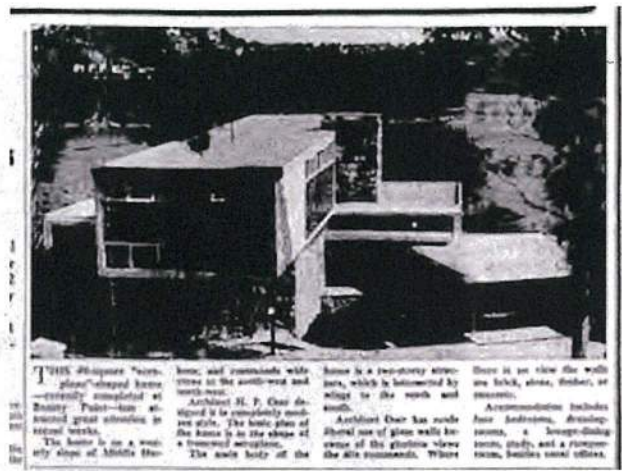


Figure 2.6.9

1958

Primavera Highland Ridge Middle Cove

Max Dupain, Unloved Modern
Hawcroft, Rebecca, Migrant
Architects



Figure 2.6.10

1958

Primavera Highland Ridge Middle Cove,

Max Dupain, Unloved Modern
Hawcroft, Rebecca, Migrant
Architects



Figure 2.6.11

1958

Primavera Highland Ridge Middle Cove,

Max Dupain, Unloved Modern
Hawcroft, Rebecca, Migrant
Architects



Figure 2.6.12

1960

Terraces in the Sun, Middle Cove

The Australian Womens
Weekly, January 13, 1960, p46



Figure 2.6.13

1961

Bayswater Rd Potts Point

Unloved Modern, Hawcroft,
Rebecca, Migrant Architects



Figure 3.2.1

2013

Strathfield Synagogue, Florence Street
Reserve View

Architectural Projects Pty Ltd



Figure 3.2.2

2013

Strathfield Synagogue, Entry from Florence
Street

Architectural Projects Pty Ltd



Figure 3.2.3

2013

Rabbi's Residence, Albyn Road

Architectural Projects Pty Ltd



Figure 3.2.4

2013

Yolanda Kramer Kindergarten

Architectural Projects Pty Ltd



Figure 3.2.5

2013

Yolanda Kramer Kindergarten

Architectural Projects Pty Ltd



Figure 3.3.1

2013

Strathfield Synagogue, East Façade

Architectural Projects Pty Ltd



Figure 3.3.2

2013

Strathfield Synagogue, East Façade

Architectural Projects Pty Ltd



Figure 3.3.3

2013

Strathfield Synagogue, East Façade Details

Architectural Projects Pty Ltd



Figure 3.4.1

2013

Strathfield Synagogue, Interior, Looking North

Architectural Projects Pty Ltd



Figure 3.4.2

2013

Strathfield Synagogue, Interior, Looking North

Architectural Projects Pty Ltd

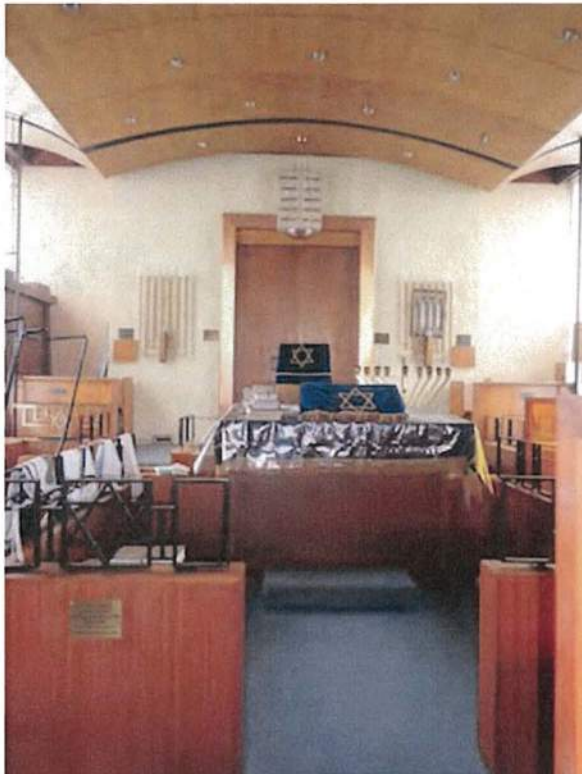


Figure 3.4.3

2013

Strathfield Synagogue, Interior, Looking North

Architectural Projects Pty Ltd



Figure 3.4.4

2013

Strathfield Synagogue, Interior, Detail of Ark

Architectural Projects Pty Ltd



Figure 3.4.5 2013 Strathfield Synagogue, Interior, Looking East Architectural Projects Pty Ltd



Figure 3.4.6 2013 Strathfield Synagogue, Interior, Looking East Architectural Projects Pty Ltd

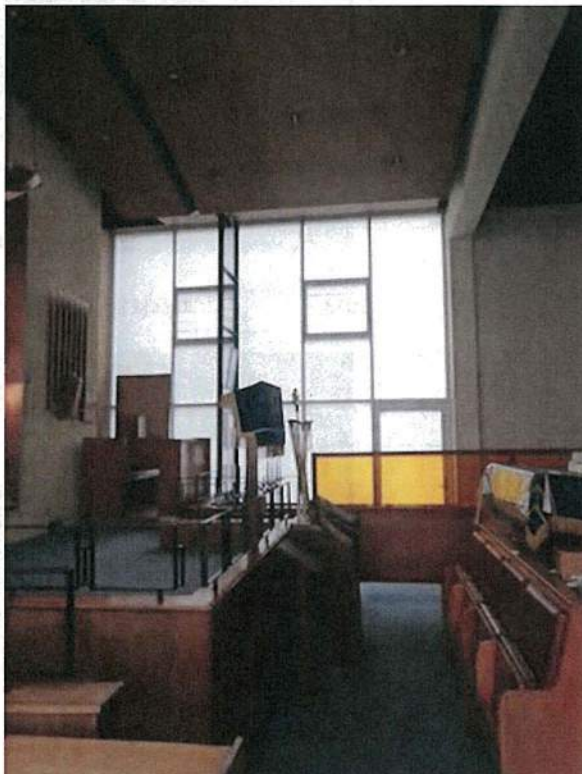


Figure 3.4.7

2013

Strathfield Synagogue, Interior, Looking South

Architectural Projects Pty Ltd



Figure 3.4.8

2013

Strathfield Synagogue, Interior, Looking South

Architectural Projects Pty Ltd



Figure 3.4.9

2013

Strathfield Synagogue, Interior, Details of
Light

Architectural Projects Pty Ltd



Figure 3.4.10

2013

Strathfield Synagogue, Interior, Details of
Pews

Architectural Projects Pty Ltd

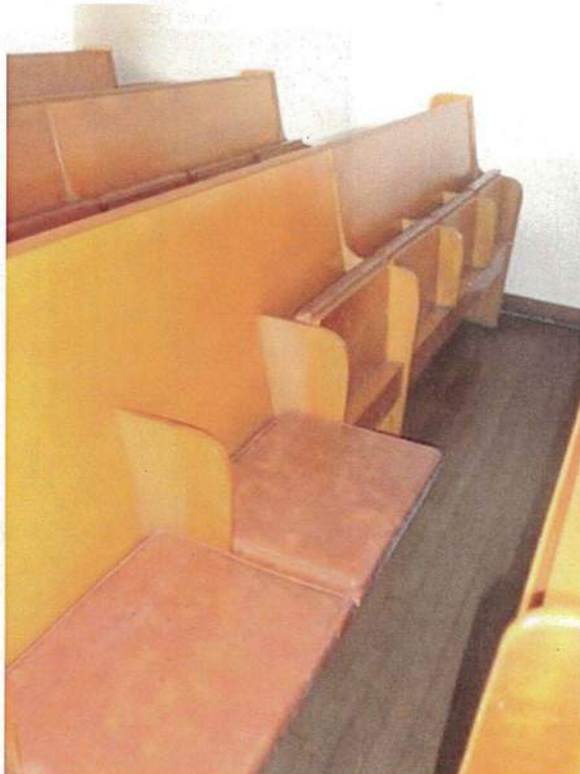


Figure 3.4.11

2013

Strathfield Synagogue, Interior, Details of
Door Pull

Architectural Projects Pty Ltd



Figure 3.4.12

2013

Strathfield Synagogue, Foyer, Memorial Wall

Architectural Projects Pty Ltd



Figure 3.4.13

2013

Strathfield Synagogue, Foyer, Looking East

Architectural Projects Pty Ltd



Figure 3.4.14

2013

Strathfield Synagogue, Entry, Looking East

Architectural Projects Pty Ltd



Figure 3.4.15: 2013 Strathfield Synagogue, Entry, Looking West to Foyer Architectural Projects Pty Ltd



Figure 3.4.16: 2013 Strathfield Synagogue, Passage Way, Looking West Architectural Projects Pty Ltd

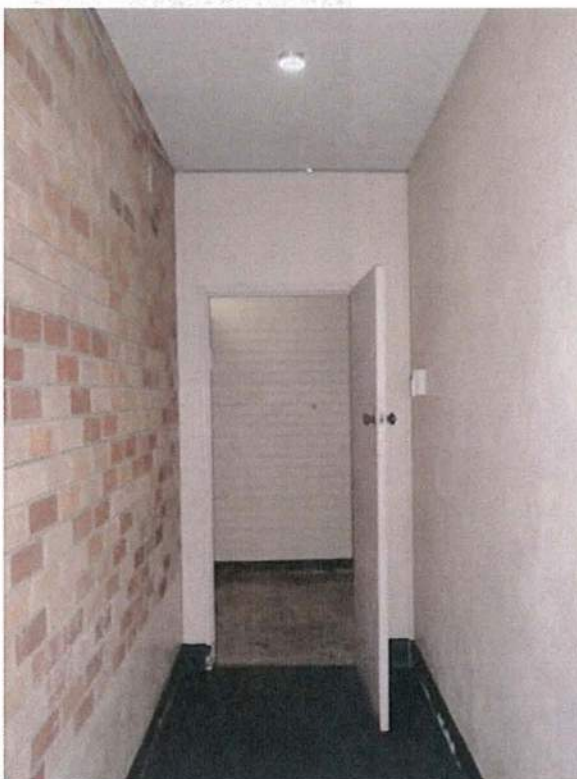


Figure 3.4.17

2013

Strathfield Synagogue, Minister's Room (New Kitchen)

Architectural Projects Pty Ltd



Figure 3.4.18

2013

Strathfield Synagogue, Amenities

Architectural Projects Pty Ltd



Figure 3.4.19

2013

Strathfield Synagogue, Store

Architectural Projects Pty Ltd



Figure 3.7.1

1958

North Sydney Synagogue

Max Dupain, Unloved Modern
Hawcroft, Rebecca, Migrant
Architects

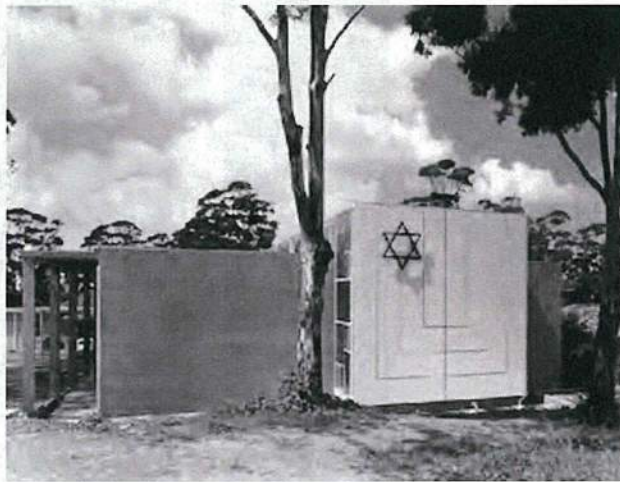


Figure 3.7.2

1958

North Sydney Synagogue

Max Dupain, Unloved Modern
Hawcroft, Rebecca, Migrant
Architects

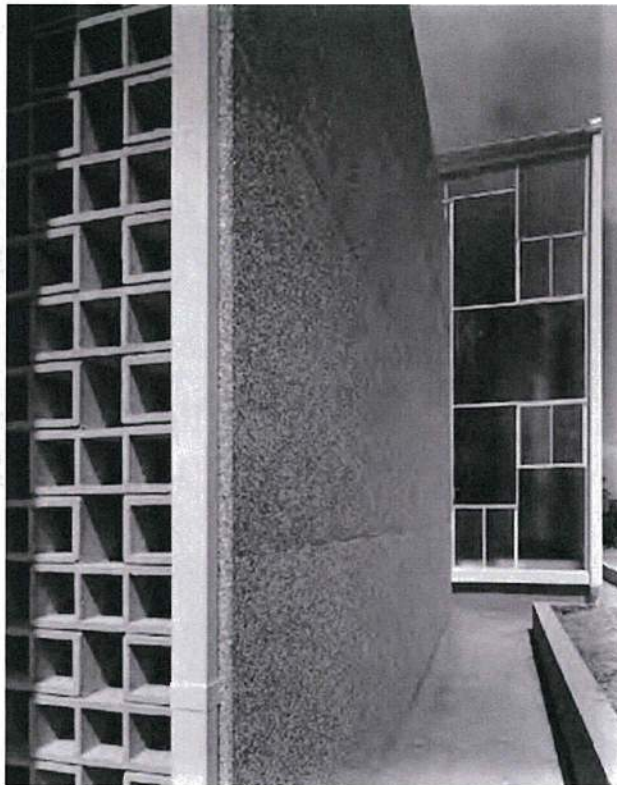


Figure 3.7.3

1957

Lindfield Synagogue Exterior

Cross Section, December 1957

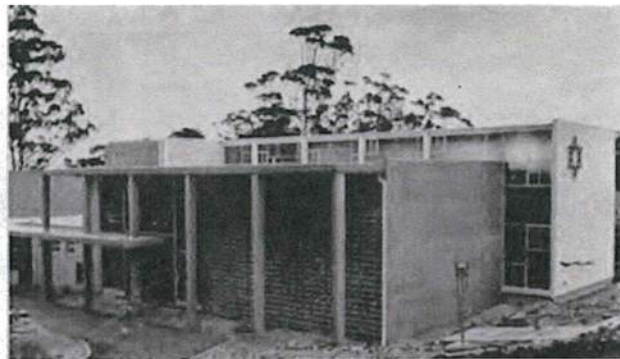


Figure 3.7.4

1957

Lindfield Synagogue Interior

Cross Section, December 1957

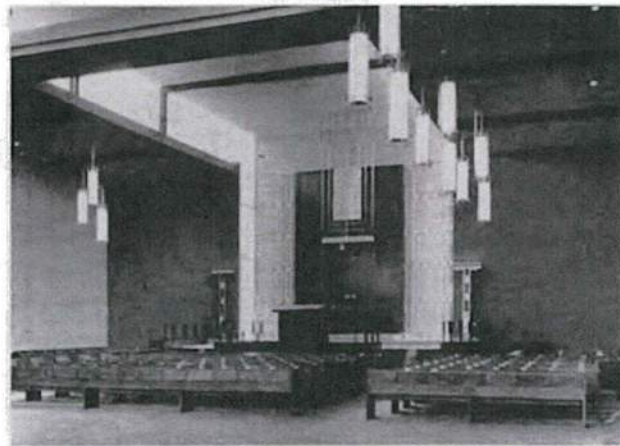


Figure 3.7.5

2013

Garden Synagogue

North Shore Synagogue
Website



Figure 3.7.6

1958

Dover Heights, Neville Gruzman

Cross Section, October 1958

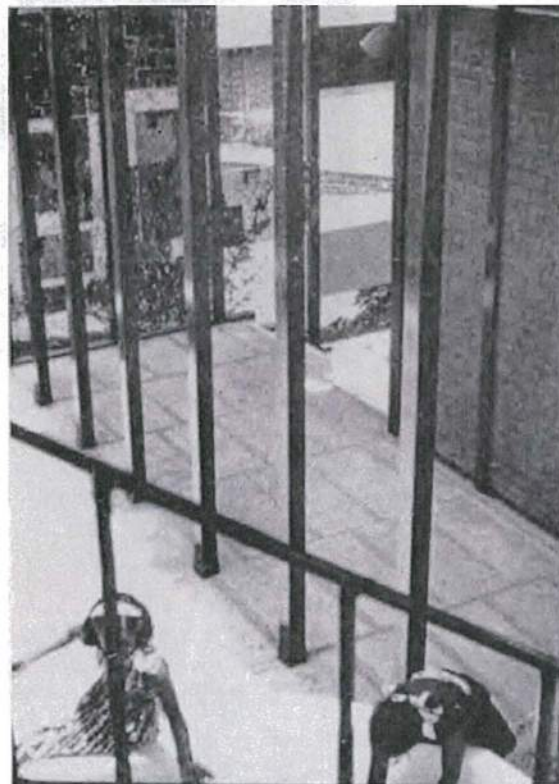


Figure 3.7.7

192

South Head Synagogue, Neville Gruzman

Architecture and Arts 1962

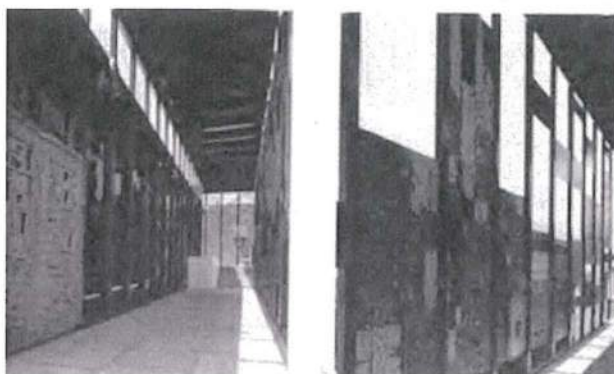
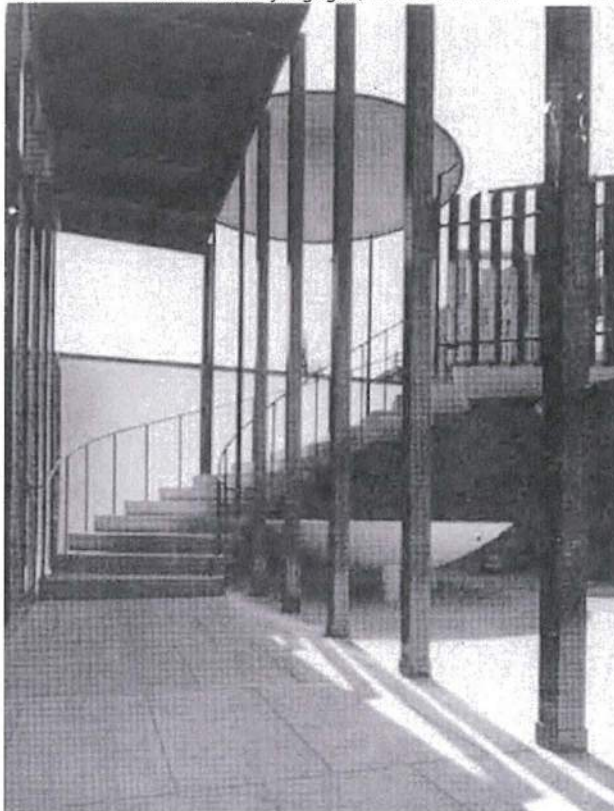


Figure 3.7.8

192

South Head Synagogue, Neville Gruzman

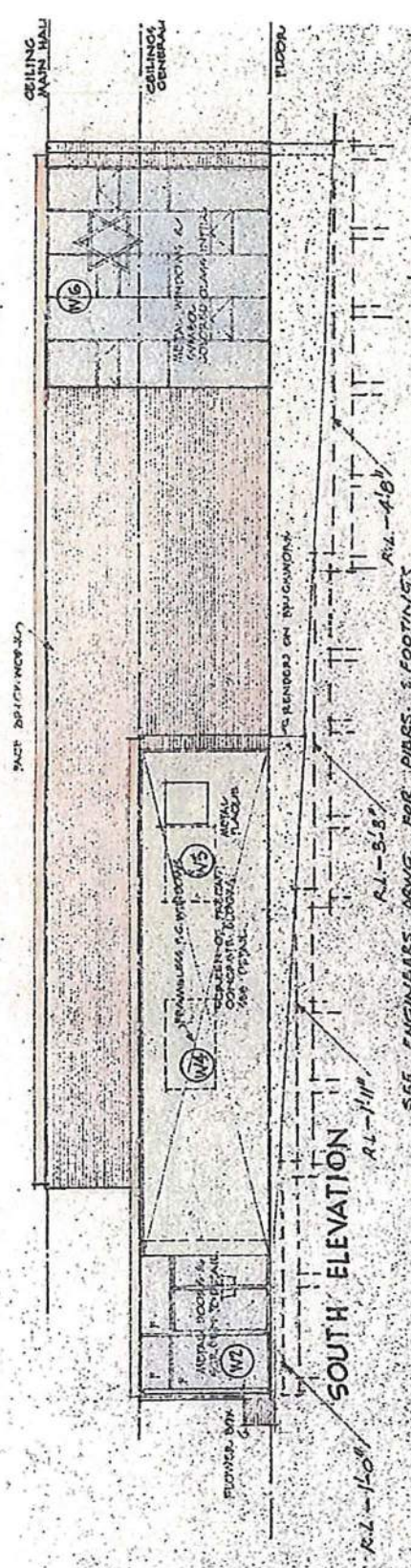
Architecture and Arts 1962



APPENDIX A

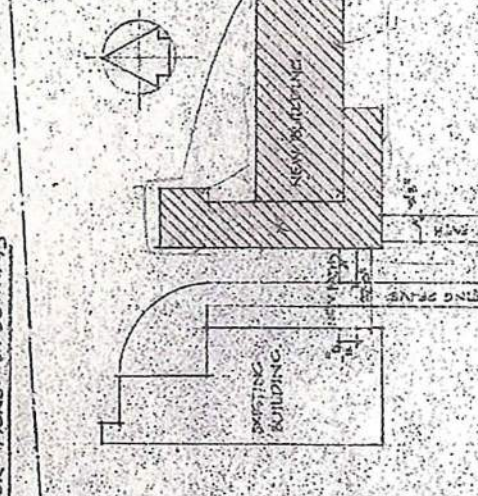
ORIGINAL PLANS





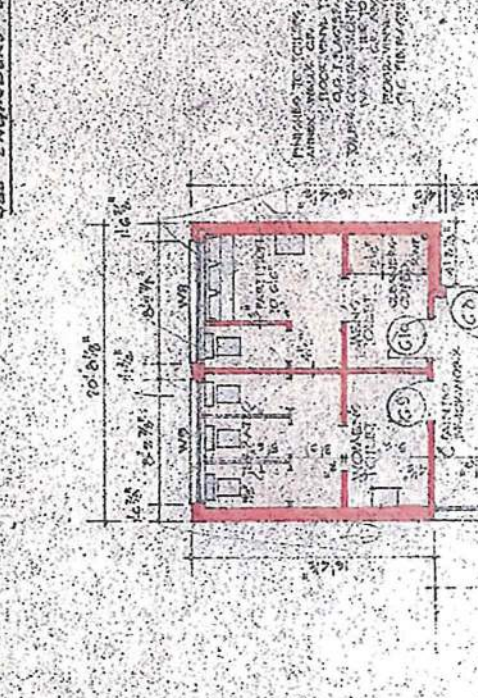
SOUTH ELEVATION

SCALE 1" = 40'0"



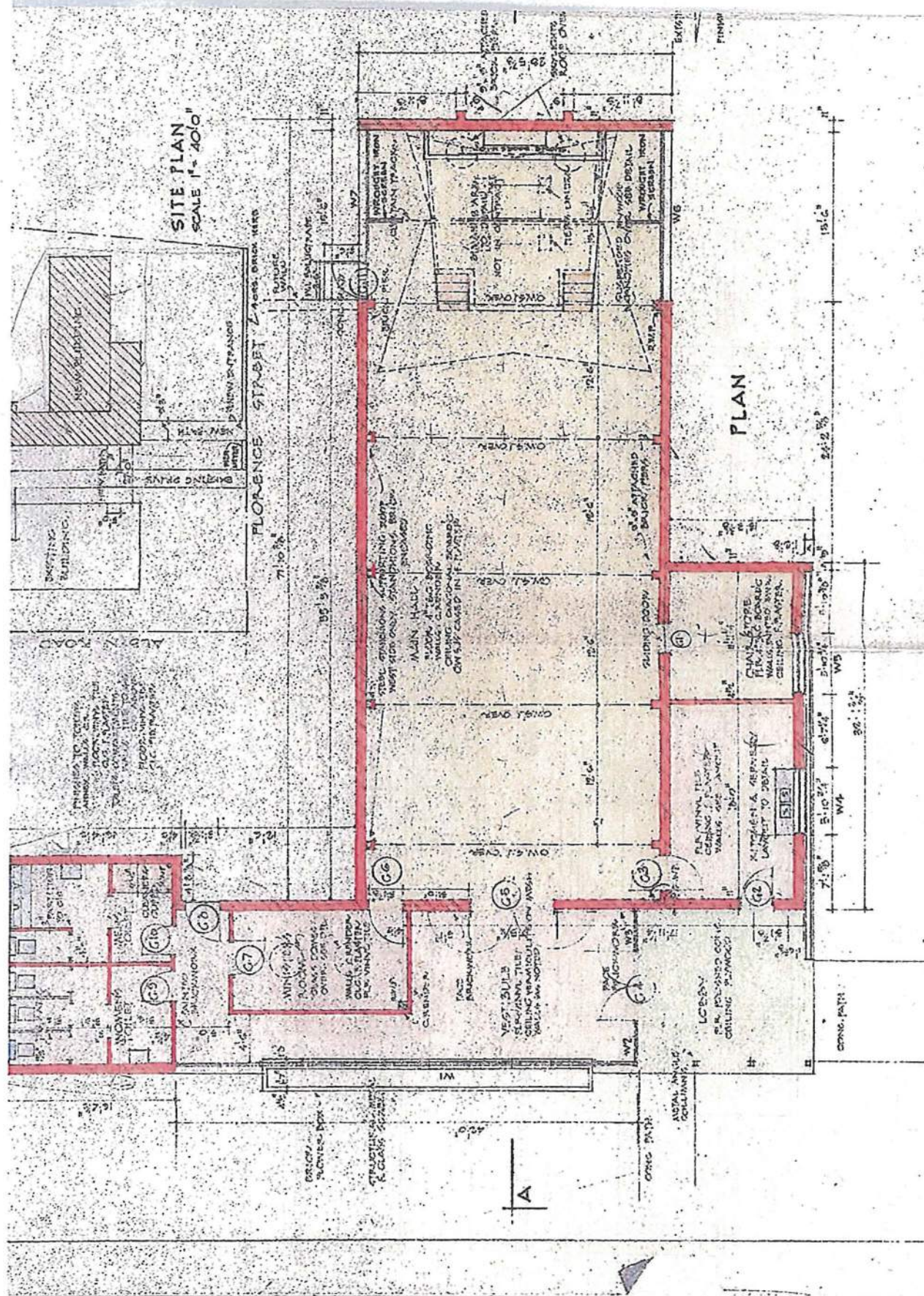
SITE PLAN

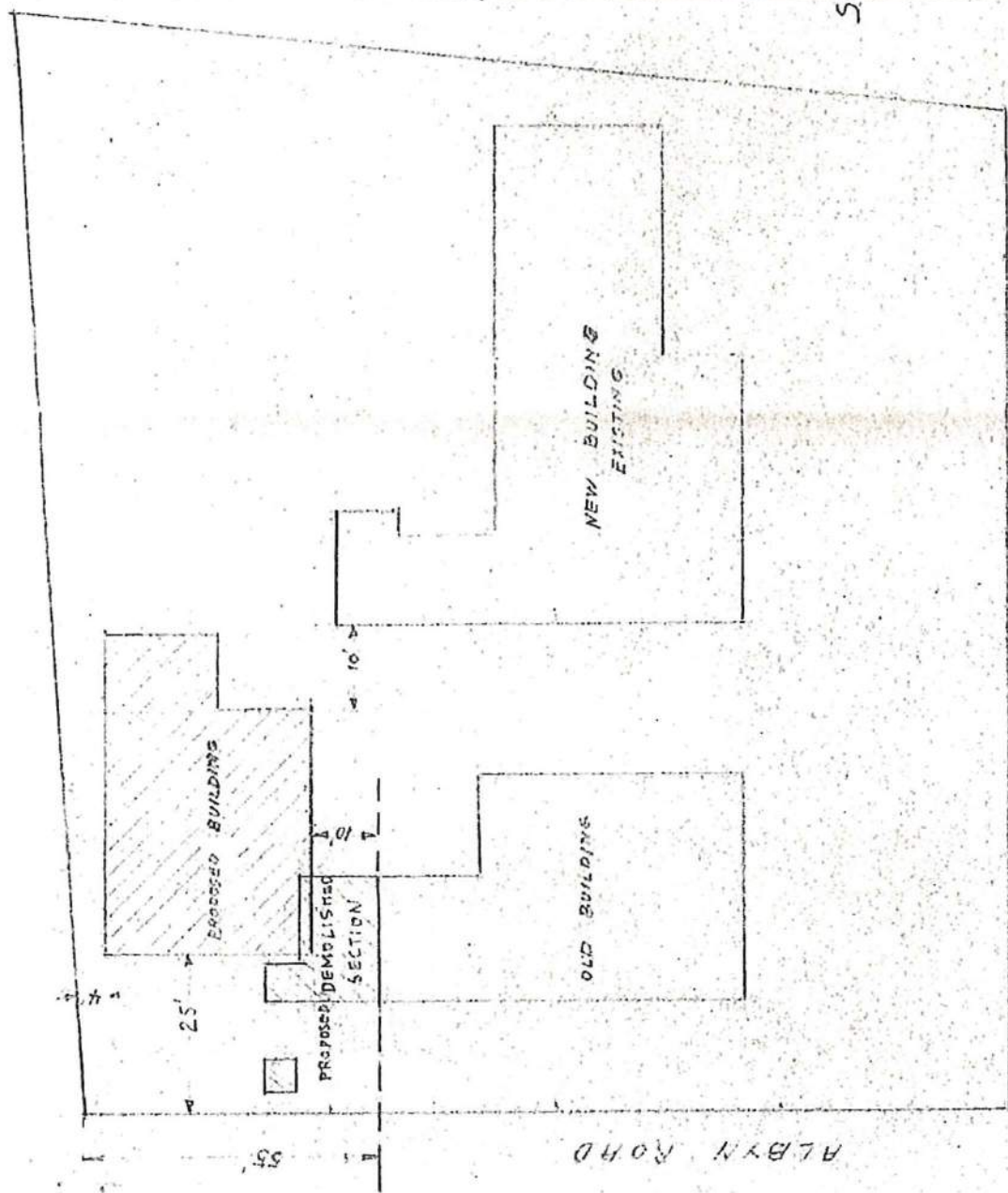
SCALE 1" = 40'0"



FLOOR PLAN

SCALE 1" = 40'0"





W
A
S
E
N

SCALE 1" = 20'

FLORENCE STREET

ALBYN ROAD

SITE PLAN FOR MINISTERS RESIDENCE
STRATHFIELD WAR MEMORIAL SYNAGOGUE

APPENDIX B

AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS, NSW ARCHITECTS BIOGRAPHICAL
INFORMATION
HANS PETER OSER – BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION 1 JULY 2013

**AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS
NSW ARCHITECTS BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION**

Hans Peter OSER A.R.I.B.A. A.R.A.I.A.

Dates	1913 - 1967
Active	1945 - 1967
Born	17 June 1913, Vienna, Austria
Died	27 April 1967 ¹
Parents	Leopold and Josephine Oser
Married	Married
Children	No children
Educated	Technical High School, Vienna (Honours Pass)
Qualifications	<i>Diploma of B.Arch, University of Vienna (Technische Hochschule), Honour Pass</i> 10 July 1936 ²
Severed articles with	N/A
Commenced Practice	1945

NSW Board of Architects Registration

Approved	No: 1103, 26 Feb 1945 ³
Business Address	c/o Housing Commission of NSW, Macquarie Street, Sydney
Private Address	Cowdroy Avenue, Cammeray
Boards Rolls	
1946	Cowdroy Avenue Cammeray
1947 - 1962	Scot Chambers Hosking Place Sydney
1963 - 1967	Oser Fombertaux & Associates BOAC House 64 Castlereagh Street, Sydney

Affiliations

Clubs

Societies

Recreation

R.I.B.A.

Associate

I.A.N.S.W.

Not Applicable

R.A.I.A.

No:

Associate

27 March 1945⁴

Last Address

Oser Fombertaux & Associates, BOAC House 64 Castlereagh Street Sydney

Employment

Professor Behrens (University holidays), Vienna
Draughtsman, later Chief Draughtsman, Professor Hoffman & Haerdtl, Vienna
John D. Moore
Prevost & Associates
Crane & Scott
Malleys Ltd
Housing Commission of NSW

Partnerships/Firm

H.P. Oser from 1946
H.P. Oser & Associates formed March 1956
Oser Fombertaux & Associates, 1960
Continued after Oser's death in 1967

¹ RAlA Minutes Meeting No.10 11 July 1967 p.1

² Oser's application to the registration board describes the qualification as being a Diploma of B.Arch.

³ Nominated by (among others) Walter Bunning, John D Moore, Alfred Hook & Henry Helman

⁴ RAlA NSW Chapter Minutes Meeting 27 March 1945 m.499

AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS NSW ARCHITECTS BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Biographical Entry

Oser, Hans Peter (1913 – 1967) was born in Vienna, Austria on 17 June 1913. He attended Primary school in Vienna and the Technical High School in Vienna passing with Honours. He studied in the Faculty of Architecture, University of Vienna, graduating as B.Arch in 1936. During the holiday periods in his time at University he worked in different architectural offices, one of them being professor Behrens of Vienna. After completing his University studies, he was employed first as a draughtsman and then as Chief Draughtsman in the office of Professor Hoffman & Haerdtl, Vienna. This firm sent him to several European capitals to supervise their work their including Budapest and Paris World Fair in 1937.⁵

[Check possible association with Commonwealth Experimental Building Station, as the director signed his application form.]

Oser arrived in Australia in December 1938 and was employed by John D. Moore & Dowling, Messers Prevost & Associates, Architects, Crane & Scott Architects, Malles Ltd.⁶ He is also believed to have worked for the Housing Commission of NSW however he does not list this on his application to the Board of Architects. Further research may determine the projects he was part of for the Housing Commission. Later commissions indicate that it was probably apartments however this has yet to be confirmed.

Oser also worked on his own finally establishing his own firm in 1946, having gained registration as an architect at the end of the war. In 1941 an extensive article has appeared in the Sydney Morning Herald that described the built in cabinets installed as part of the refurbishment of a house in Vaucluse Heights.⁷ Oser was to become well known as a designer of kitchens, appearing on radio shows and in magazine articles. A modern house he designed in the early 1950s was featured in Australian House and Garden in December 1952, one a series of oiled timber houses he designed in Blackheath. In the early 1950s Australian House and Garden magazine published a number of modern timber houses by émigré European architects working in both Australia and New Zealand.

From 1947 he was also designing apartment blocks in the Eastern Suburbs and by 1950 he had commissions in Singapore, initially the Capitol Nightclub (1950) and in 1953 the interiors for the Odeon Theatre (1952, demolished in 1984).

Listed as ARIBA in tenders in 1951 – still to confirm date

H.P. Oser & Associates was formed March 1956, the associates were R.F.L. Mugdan ARAIA and J.G. Fombertaux⁸ A.R.A.I.A and the office continued to be located in Scot Chambers, Hosking Place. Mugdan left the practice in 1957. He has been the project architect for the Synagogue in Lindfield.⁹

In 1960 Hans Oser took Jean Georges Henri Fombertaux into partnership, forming Oser Fombertaux & Associates.¹⁰ Fombertaux had been working in the firm since at least 1956, when he was made an associate.

After Oser died on 27 April 1967 at 54 years of age and the firm continued to operate as Oser Fombertaux & Associates until Fombertaux's death in 1975.

⁵ Personal Record of Hans Oser, part of his application to the Architects Registration Board of NSW

⁶ Personal Record of Hans Oser, part of his application to the Architects Registration Board of NSW. Dates of employment not listed

⁷ SMH 25 February 1941

⁸ Jean Georges Henri Fombertaux had previously with Lipson & Kaad

⁹ Synagogue at Lindfield, Construction Review, July 1957

¹⁰ Oser, H.P., partnership with J.G. Fombertaux, vol.17 (1960), no.4, p.4

**AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS
NSW ARCHITECTS BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION**

Awards

In 1953 Oser won an international competition for the design of the interior of the new Odeon Theatre to be erected Singapore (now demolished)¹¹.

Buildings H P OSER,

1941	Refurbishment of a house in Rose Bay			Listed as Vaucluse Heights		SMH 25 February 1941
1947	Block of 12 flats			Rose Bay		SMH 4 October 1947
1950	Betteridge House (with later Fombertaux additions)	4	Prince Edward Street	Blackheath	Blue Mountains	
Undated	The Cabin formerly La Cabana for Walter Magnus		Prince Edward Street	Blackheath	Blue Mountains	
Undated	Lilly Pilli formerly Sunbretta		Prince Edward Street	Blackheath	Blue Mountains	
	House (Not found)		Golf Links Road	Blackheath	Blue Mountains	
	House (Not found)		Govetts Leap Road	Blackheath	Blue Mountains	
	House		Echo Point	Katoomba	Blue Mountains	
	House		Rosebery Road	Killara	Ku-Ring-Gai	
1950	Capitol Nightclub				Singapore	SMH 10 November 1952
1951	Tender for brick residence			Northbridge		SMH 1 Sept 1951
1951	Alterations and Additions, Killara Synagogue			Treatts Road	Killara	SMH 17 November 1951
1952	Odeon Theatre interiors (international contest)				Singapore	SMH 10 November 1952
1952	Additions and alterations for North Shore Synagogue at Lindfield			Lindfield		SMH 3 May 1952
1954	House	64	Victoria Road	Bellevue Hill	Woollahra	
1954	House			Woollongong	Woollongong City	
1954	Lindfield Synagogue	15	Treatts Road	Lindfield	Ku-Ring-Gai	
1954-55	House		Beauty Point Road	Beauty Point	Mosman	
1954-55	The Hotel Brookvale			Dee Why	Pittwater	

¹¹ SMH 10 November 1952 and Townsville Daily Bulletin 20 June 1953

**AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS
NSW ARCHITECTS BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION**

1955	House			Woollahra	Woollahra	
1955	House		Babbage Road	Roseville	Ku-Ring-Gai	
1956	House			Avalon Beach	Pittwater	

H P Oser & Associates, from March 1956

1957	House		Hopetoun Avenue	Beauty Point	Mosman
1958	William Bland Centre (Dental Chambers Building)	229 -231	Macquarie Street	Sydney CBD	Sydney
1957-59	Gibb & Beeman House	383-385	George Street	Sydney CBD	Sydney
1958-59	Flats	10	Wylde Street	Potts Point	Sydney
1959	Flats	40	Bayswater Road	Kings Cross	Sydney
1959-60	House	3	Highland Ridge	Middle Cove	Willoughby
1960	House	36	Headlands Ave	Castle Cove	Willoughby
1960	Former Toohey's Offices Former State Rail Offices Tokiwa Holdings School & Offices	72-84	Mary Street	Surry Hills	Sydney
	18 Home Units		Fairlight Crescent	Fairlight	Manly
	Oser House			Point Piper	Woollahra

H O Oser, Fomberteaux & Associates, from 1960

1960	House		Hopetoun Avenue	Beauty Point	Mosman
1960	35 Bachelor Flats	40	Bayswater Road	Darlinghurst	Sydney
1960	14 Storey Office Block for Harrowgate	155-159	Castlereagh Street	Sydney	Sydney
1960	230 Home Units for Parkes Development		Spring Street	Arncliffe	
1960	Home Units	389	Sydney Road	Fairlight	Manly
	Helena Rubenstein Centre		Frenchs Forest	Warringah	
1962	Office Building			North Sydney	North Sydney
1965	NSW Housing Commission Apartments		Florence Avenue	Rosebery	Botany Bay
1965	NSW Housing Commission Apartments		Maloney Street	Rosebery	Botany Bay
1966	Home Units		Chatswood	Willoughby	

AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS NSW ARCHITECTS BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Buildings on the RAIA NSW Register of Twentieth Century Buildings of Significance

H. P. OSER	1960	Former Toohey's Offices (Former State Rail Offices Tokiwa Holdings, School & Offices)	72-84	Mary Street	Surry Hills	Sydney	4702893
H. P. OSER	1958	William Bland Centre (Dental Chambers Building)	229 -231	Macquarie Street	Sydney CBD	Sydney	4702943
H. P. OSER	1950	Betteridge House	4	Prince Edward Street	Blackheath	Blue Mountains	4703430
H. P. OSER	By 1951	The Cabin formerly La Cabana (built for Walter Magnus)		Prince Edward Street	Blackheath	Blue Mountains	4703431
H. P. OSER		Lilly Pilli formerly Sunbretta		Prince Edward Street	Blackheath	Blue Mountains	4703432

Published Works

Houses included in [still to add Shillito &c]

Drawing Collections

Mitchell Library

OSER, FOMBERTEAUX & PARTNERS - Alterations to Usher's Hotel, Castlereagh Street, 1961 / 13 dwgs
(Locn No.: PXD 413)

Photographs

Portrait

Video/DVD

Taped Talk

Web Sites

Exhibitions Architecture in Australia, RIBA February to March 1956

House, 1954, Beauty Point, H P Oser & Associates

RAIA Exhibition of Members Work Blaxland Gallery 28 May – 6 June 1964

Colman House, North Sydney
Apartments, Kings Cross
BOAC House, Sydney

Obituary Not located

Oral History

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Referred to in:									
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Quinton, Teddy, *Post-War Modernism in Sydney George Reeves and Hans Peter Oser* 1997 UTS Honours Thesis (copy held by the AIA)

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Oser, H.P., employee required, vol.16 (1959), no.8, p.2

Oser, H.P., Fombertaux and Associates, name change, vol.17 (1960), no.4, p.4
Oser, H.P., partnership with J.G. Fombertaux, vol.17 (1960), no.4, p.4

Oser, H.P., Fombertaux and Associates, change of address, vol.20 (1963), no.7, p.2
Oser, H.P., Fombertaux and Associates, employee required, vol.21 (1964), no.6, p.5

Oser, Fombertaux and Associates, change of address, vol.25 (1968), no.8, p.4

Other References

Application for Registration as an Architect NSW 1944 (copy held AIA architects biographic files – Oser)

Jahn, Graham, *Sydney Architecture*, p.163

Caroline Butler-Bowden & Charles Pickett, *Homes in the Sky Apartment Living in Australia*, HHT 2007, p. 110, 110

House at Wollongong *Architecture*, January- March, vol.42, No.1, 1954
Architecture, April-June 1955, p.36

Architecture in Australia April- June, vol.45, no.2, 1956 p.42
Architecture in Australia April- June, vol.45, no.2, 1956 p.43
Architecture in Australia, June 1957
Architecture in Australia, October-December, 1957, p.60-61

Architecture and Arts, December 1960

The Australian HOME BEAUTIFUL, May 1951, pp.34, 35, 46

Building Ideas, December 1963 p.14 7 Storey Office Block, North Sydney

Building: Lighting: Engineering, 25 July 1955, pp.19-21

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Building: Lighting: Engineering, 25 March 1957, p.47 Gibb & Beeman House

Building Ideas, December 1963, p.143

Constructional Review, September 1965, pp.14-16

Constructional Review, August 1966, pp.10-12

Also timber trade publications and adverts – Still to put in (refer hardcopy file)

The Salon (1912 -1917) Studies and Indexes

Not applicable

Sands Directory Building Trades Architects

Not applicable

City of Sydney Archives

Still to check

North Sydney Building Plans Archives 1930 -1949 www.northsydney.nsw.gov.au

Still to check

Biography		
Created	18 July 2007	Anne Higham
Updated	17 October 2007	Anne Higham
	1 May 2009	Anne Higham
	28 September 2009	Anne Higham
	8 November 2010	Anne Higham
	10 August 2011	Anne Higham
Updated	15 July 2013	Dr Noni Boyd

APPENDIX C

HISTORIC TITLE

Cadastral Records Enquiry Report

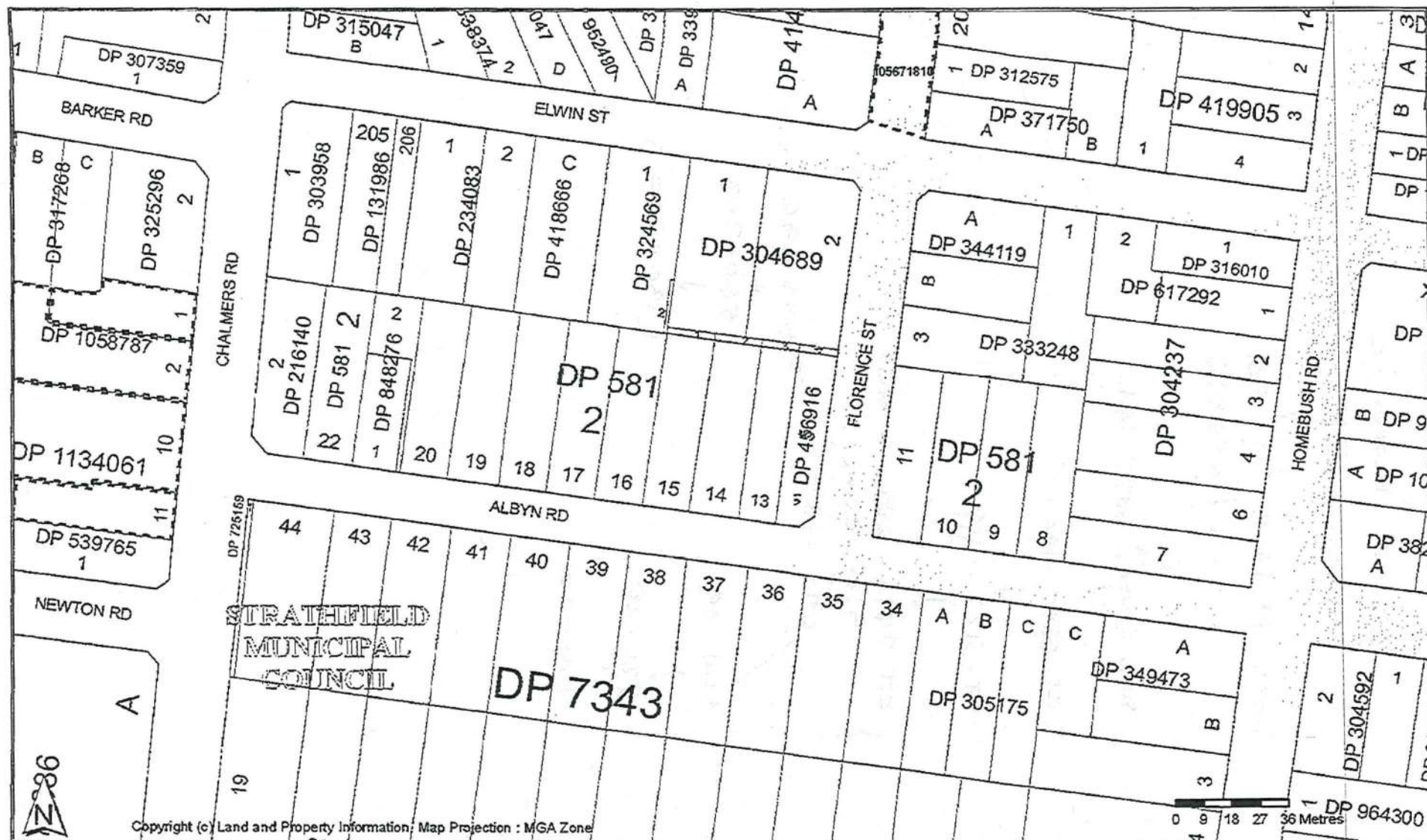
Requested Parcel : Lot 14 Section 2 DP 581

LGA : STRATHFIELD

Parish : CONCORD

Identified Parcel : Lot 14 Section 2 DP 581

County : CUMBERLAND



Copyright (c) Land and Property Information; Map Projection : MGA Zone

Re: 19 Florence ST

STRATHFIELD

LOTS, 13, 14, 15 / 2 / 581

1-5 / 456916

↓
Auto Console^{cf} 5875-144

↓
CT. 5875-144.

↓
CT. 5127 - 110

↓
{ CT 2994 - 250 - STRIP
· 719 - 46
694 - 18 °

↓
564-39

↓
526.20

↓
130-200

→ 596-196

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540-203

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(130-200)