

64 St Johns Avenue, Gordon

## Heritage Assessment V 1.4

29<sup>th</sup> September 2022



for  
**Ku-Ring-Gai Council**

by  
**Hector Abrahams Architects**

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## 1. Introduction

The following report is to determine if 64 St Johns Avenue, Gordon has heritage significance and if the place should be listed. The assessment includes a description of the site, history, physical description, comparative analysis, significance assessment, listing recommendations and management recommendations.

The report was prepared by Sioned Lavery, Tristan Ryan and Hector Abrahams of Hector Abrahams Architects for Ku-Ring-Gai Council. Sioned Lavery and Tristan Ryan visited the place in August 2022.



## 2. Description of Site and relation to Heritage Conservation Area

The subject site is 64 St Johns Avenue, Gordon and the boundary of the site is lot 2 DP183731. It is a battle axe lot to both St Johns Avenue and Vale Street.

The driveway to St Johns Avenue is currently part of the St Johns Avenue Heritage Conservation Area (HCA).



Figure 1 Boundary of 64 St Johns Avenue indicated in yellow. The section of the property which is part of the St Johns Avenue HCA is indicated in red. Source: Nearmap with HAA overlay.

### 3. History

Claudine Loffi's history from the *Preliminary Heritage Assessment: 64 St Johns Avenue Gordon* has been reproduced below (indicated by italics), where appropriate the authors have added to the history.

#### *Early area history*

*The land forms part of the 1816 grant of 60 acres to the Church of England. Nominated trustees for this land included Robert Pymble II, William Henry McIntosh, and John Brown, who were all orchardists in the district. In 1872, St John The Evangelist Church was built on this land grant, designed by architect, Edmund Blackett, and extended in later years. The 1872 establishment of this building marked the beginning of the Anglican expansion in Ku-ring-gai. As settlement extended, St John's became the mother church from which churches in other parts of the municipality originated.<sup>1</sup>*

On 2 September 1872 Robert Edward McIntosh was granted 25 acres of the Church and School Estate. The grant extended from what is today, Pacific Highway (formerly Lane Cove Road) to Vale Street (not yet formed at the time of the grant).<sup>2</sup>

*The street developed on land partially cleared and planted with orchards.*

*St Johns Avenue began as a track offering access to Ku-ring-gai's only cemetery, behind St John's Church, where burials were first recorded in 1867. The street, then named St John's Road, is first mentioned in Sands' postal directory in 1913. The interface of this road with the highway was the original civic precinct of the local area, comprising the first purpose-built Shire Council Chambers and Post Office, opposite the Church of St John the Evangelist, its rectory and pioneer cemetery.<sup>3</sup>*

*The street was originally unsealed adjacent to the southern end of the cemetery, as the roadway, still one of the narrowest in Ku-ring-gai, needed first to be widened. The road appears to have been completed by the early 1930s, with relocation of 18 graves from the affected cemetery corner at Council's cost. A number of unmarked graves are thought still to be in situ.*

*An early feature at the top of the street was a well, said to lie under the back portion of the shop building on the north west corner of the avenue and highway or under the present roadway closer to the rectory. The carved stone well cap thought to be of convict handiwork now lies in the rear grounds of St John's Rectory with a [Ku-Ring-Gai] Council plaque affixed. The plaque records that this well cap was saved by Burnside family in circa 1940, and relocated by Council in April 1986. "Clearing out the well" is recorded in the minutes of the Parochial Council of St John's Church, August 1890 when considering preparation of the site for the present rectory on the south west corner of the avenue.*

*Archaeological survey is required to establish whether the well remains on this site.*

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<sup>1</sup> Heritage Draft Form [Inventory], St Johns Avenue Heritage Conservation Area (HCA C16A).

<sup>2</sup> Land Grant Vol. 167 Fol. 28.

<sup>3</sup> Helen Whitsed Davies, The evolution of a street: St Johns Avenue, Gordon, *The Historian* 38, No. 1, October 2009.



Robert McIntosh died in 1902 and his children, Grace Jane McIntosh and Edward Donald McIntosh subdivided the McIntosh Estate in 1906. This has different parcels to what subsequently developed. The 1906 plan shows some existing uses and buildings at the time and the layout of Vale Street that are not shown in the subsequent subdivision plan. At this time, this plan shows Vale Street was named Short Street. This street name continued through to the current deposited plan.



Figure 2 1906 subdivision of the McIntosh Estate. Source: Preliminary Heritage Assessment.

Only two lots were sold from the [1906] subdivision including Lot 43, later Te Roma at No 35, the first house built in the street, and Lot 8, later Rosny at No 25. The bulk of DP5962 was purchased on 3 February 1912 by the Reverend George Brown, Methodist Minister. Rev. Brown resided at Kinawanua, built on [the neighboring] Brown's Estate on the highway adjoining St John's Church.<sup>4</sup>

Rev. Brown immediately re-subdivided his purchased land as the St Johns Park Estate, DP6395, to more numerous, smaller lots.

The subject land forms part of this 1912 subdivision of the St Johns Park Estate. This subdivision produced most of the current built form of the St Johns Heritage Conservation Area during the first four decades of the twentieth century in the Federation and inter-war styles.

<sup>4</sup> Helen Whitsed Davies, The evolution of a street: St Johns Avenue, Gordon, *The Historian* 38, No. 1, October 2009.

*Covenants on St Johns Park Estate lots required houses and fences to be built of substantial materials of "brick or stone with slate or tiled roof" to a minimum value of £400. Only adjunct structures were permitted to use weatherboard. The majority of houses are mixed single-storey detached Federation and Inter-War homes. Impressive street planting and generous setbacks contributed to the establishment of a substantial middle class 'garden suburban' street.*

*Until 1924, St Johns Avenue was known as St Johns Road.<sup>5</sup>*

*In 1924, St Johns Avenue became the first paved road in the municipality. It was then planned as an access route "Broadway" between Lindfield and Wahroonga. The 1928 concrete paved roadway extended west as far as No. 65 St Johns Avenue (opposite No. 56 St Johns Avenue). The concrete was somewhat experimental at the time. The completed roadway was formally opened by John G Lockley, Shire President, before a large group of residents assembled outside No 24, Oberon. It was funded by the St Johns Avenue Improvement Group of residents through a special council levy. The brush box street trees were planted in the same year, funded by the residents. This explains the upgraded street name from a road to an avenue.<sup>6</sup>*

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<sup>5</sup> "Shire of Ku-Ring-Gai," *Government Gazette of State of New South Wales*, January 25, 1924, 707, <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/223593618?searchTerm=St.%20John%E2%80%99s%20road%20Gordon>.

<sup>6</sup> "New Road: Opened at Gordon: Community Spirit," *The Sydney Morning Herald*, April 28, 1924, 12, <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/28073926?searchTerm=St.%20John%E2%80%99s%20Avenue%20Gordon>; Heritage Draft Form [Inventory], St Johns Avenue Heritage Conservation Area (HCA C16A).

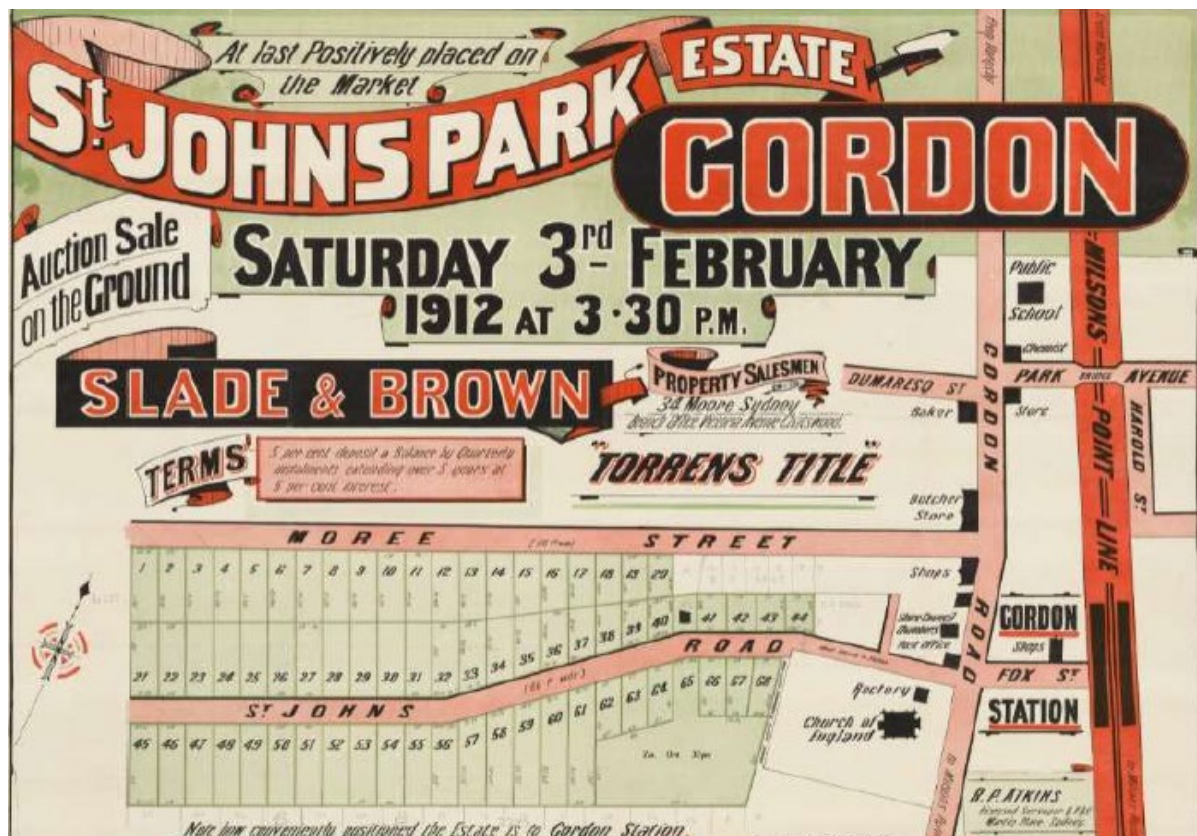


Figure 3 1912 Subdivision of the renamed St Johns Park Estate. Source: Preliminary Heritage Assessment.

### *Property and ownership*

The land of 64 St Johns Avenue comprises parts of lots 45, 46 and 47 of DP 6495 of the St Johns Park Estate on the boundary with the Moore Estate.<sup>7</sup> It is unusual for this early estate development to cover multiple or parts of lots. It includes the corner land that was subsequently developed as No. 66.

In 1914 Tatsuzo Okamoto, a Sydney merchant, purchased lots numbered 46 and 47.<sup>8</sup> These two lots, and lot 45, were purchased in 1918 by Christopher Bowes Thistlethwayte.<sup>9</sup> Thistlethwayte subdivided lot 47 before transferring ownership to his wife Mary Wills Thistlethwayte in 1922.<sup>10</sup> Mary Wills Thistlethwayte further subdivided the lots creating the subject battle axe lot facing Vale Street with its driveway to St Johns Avenue.<sup>11</sup>

In 1917-18, CB Thistlethwayte, the owner occupier of No 68, "Lynn Ridge" purchased all three lots. Lot 45, the most westerly in the St John Park Estate included a right of way of one chain wide for forming Short Street – later Vale Street.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Certificate of Title Vol. 4434 Fol. 121.

<sup>8</sup> Certificate of Title Vol. 2542 Fol. 175.

<sup>9</sup> Certificate of Title Vol. 2542 Fol. 175; Certificate of Title Vol. 2857 Fol. 55.

<sup>10</sup> Certificate of Title Vol. 3345 Fol. 213.

<sup>11</sup> Certificate of Title Vol. 4434 Fol. 121.

<sup>12</sup> Helen Whitsed Davies, The evolution of a street: St Johns Avenue, Gordon, The Historian, Vol 38 No. 1, October 2009.



In 1930, Mary Catherine Burnside, of No 58 St Johns Avenue, purchased both the subject land and 66 St Johns Avenue. The land remained undeveloped and in 1946 Mary Catherine Burnside transferred ownership of 64 St Johns Avenue to her son Colin Campbell Burnside Jnr. She also transferred No. 66 to her other son Walter Ronald Burnside in 1947.<sup>13</sup>

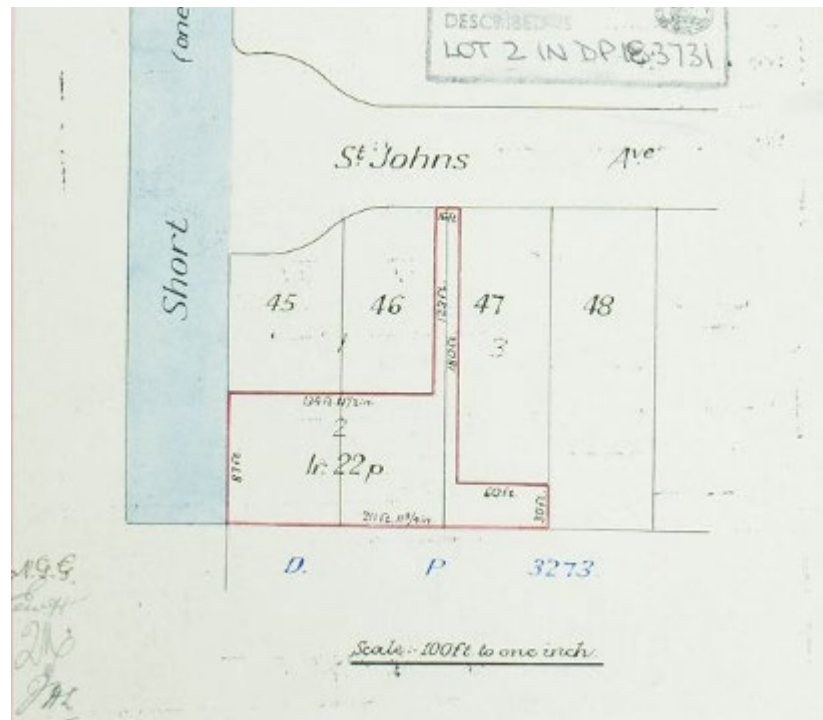


Figure 4 Mary Wills Thistlethwayte subdivision creating the battle axe lot for 64 St Johns Avenue that was bought by Mary Catherine Burnside. Source Certificate of Title Vol. 4434 Fol. 121

#### *House construction*

The land title for No. 64 records building covenants from Tatsuzo Okamoto [and Christopher Bowes Thistlethwayte]. These required no more than one dwelling to be erected for each lot of a value of no less than 400 pounds. Covenants also specified building and fence materials were to be brick or stone, roofs to be tiles or slate, and did not permit weatherboard, wood or corrugated iron.

In October 1930, Mary Burnside mortgaged the land of both No. 64 and No.66. The mortgages were discharged in February 1943. The mortgage may have been for construction of the house or just the land purchase. No further mortgages are recorded on the title that could relate to the house construction.

Historic 1930 and 1943 aerials show only cleared land at No.64 and no structure.

Construction of No. 64 St Johns Avenue was approved 2 July 1946 and is recorded as a two-storey brick dwelling with five rooms and to be constructed brick with a tiled roof.

<sup>13</sup> Certificate of Title Vol. 4434 Fol. 120.

At the time of approval Colin Campbell Burnside Jnr is recorded as living at his parents' house, No. 58 St Johns Avenue. The house was built by Armstrong and Swainson of 21 Rosebank Avenue, Epping.<sup>14</sup> The same builders are recorded for the construction of the Walter Ronald Burnside's house at No. 66 in 1947.<sup>15</sup>

The architect for No. 64 is unknown but the house could possibly have been designed by Colin Campbell Burnside Snr who was a civil engineer and draughtsman.<sup>16</sup> Other possible architects include William Ronald Richardson and Lieth McCredie. Lieth McCredie and William Ronald Robertson worked together in the 1920s and 1930s entering into a partnership in 1935, they both designed houses of a similar design in the North Shore area.<sup>17</sup> Another possible but less likely architect is Adrain Ashton. Ashton is recorded as working with Armstrong and Swainson on several occasions in the early 1940s but his designs are different to the subject place.<sup>18</sup>

*In 1949, CC Burnside proposed to build a garage.<sup>19</sup> For No. 64, no further ownership changes are recorded on the land title.*

*The land valuation appears to have lagged in recording the construction of the house at No. 64. The differing improved and unimproved land valuation is first noted in 1949 of 5,250 pounds compared to 850 unimproved land value. This was the same time when the house at No. 66 was first recorded in the land valuation as well. In 1949, the property at No. 66 was valued at 3,800 pounds.*

*In 1951, the constructed buildings at No. 64 and No. 66 are more clearly shown in the aerial photography.*

*By 1955, No. 64 was valued at 10,000 pounds and No. 66 was valued at 9,500 pounds. In 1962, the value was converted into dollars of \$24,000 improved value for No. 64 and \$26,000 improved value for No. 66. This was significantly more than for the Burnside parent house at No. 58 at the same time of \$16,700. No. 66 remained in the Burnside sons' ownership to 1972.*

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<sup>14</sup> Building Code Index, Vale Street, approved 2 July 1946.

<sup>15</sup> Building Code Index, St Johns Avenue, approved 1947.

<sup>16</sup> Claudine Loffi, Preliminary Heritage Assessment – 64 St Johns Avenue Gordon, March 2022, 13; Certificate of Title Vol. 2636 Folio. 222.

<sup>17</sup> Zeny Edwards, *Six of the Best Architects of Ku-Ring-Gai*, 1998, 101.

<sup>18</sup> "Residence," *Construction*, 2 March 1942, page 3,

<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/222863191?searchTerm=Armstrong%20and%20Swainson>;

"Residence, Woodside Avenue," *Construction*, 7 January 1942, page 4,

<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/222862791?searchTerm=Armstrong%20and%20Swainson>;

"Residence," *Construction*, 22 July 1941, page 12,

<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/222864316?searchTerm=Armstrong%20and%20Swainson>;

"Cottage, Ellalong Road, Cremorne Sydney," *Construction*, 29 May 1940, page 20,

<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/222858621?searchTerm=Armstrong%20and%20Swainson>.

<sup>19</sup> Building application No. 83.



Figure 5 1930s aerial showing cleared land at the site of 64 St Johns Avenue. Source: Ku-Ring-Gai Council Preliminary Heritage Assessment.

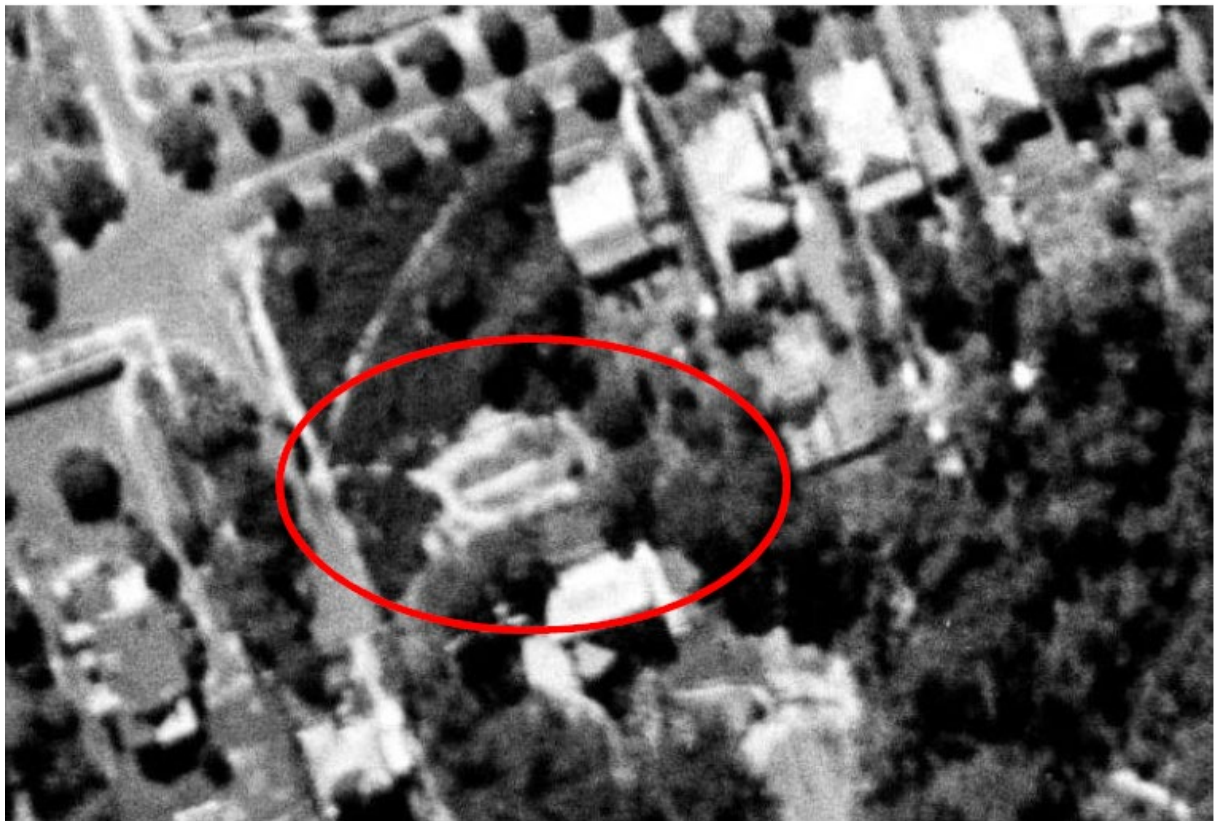


Figure 6 1943 Aerial showing only cleared land at 64 St Johns Avenue. Source: Ku-Ring-Gai Council Preliminary Heritage Assessment.

## The Burnside Family

*Colin Campbell Burnside (1894-1964), a civil engineer and draughtsman, married Mary Catherine Sawle in 1917. They had three sons, all of whom attended Knox Grammar School: (Dr) Colin Campbell Jnr, Walter Ronald and (Commodore) Ian Malcolm.*

Originally from Mascot the Burnside's moved to Chatswood before they purchased, in 1917, the land at No. 58 St Johns Avenue, Gordon. In 1919, Charles Henry Johnson of Chatswood, built the Burnside's a house at No. 58, *Kilbirnie*, which was a replica of their Chatswood home.<sup>20</sup>

The garden at no. 58 was well known for its "bird aviaries containing peacocks, pheasants, all types of finches and Java Sparrows. A [rainforest] effect was displayed, incorporating fishponds with every type of fish imaginable." The flagstone for the boarder paths were "exotic stones" which were bought from trading of the fish and birds.<sup>21</sup>

The Burnside's are also noted as the custodians of the stone well cap located behind the church.<sup>22</sup>

The eldest son, Colin Campbell Burnside Jnr (1918-2004), served in WWII in the Royal Australian Navy. He was discharged from the Navy as a Lieutenant in 1946 when he went on to study medicine. In 1947, Colin Campbell Burnside Jnr married Jane Eveline Gourlay of Hawthorn in Melbourne, and in 1952 he graduated from the University of Sydney with a Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery. In 1960, he received a post graduate diploma in Ophthalmology. In 1970, Dr Burnside registered as a doctor of Osteopathic medicine. Until at least 2009 a plaque was located at the front of 64 St Johns Avenue identifying Dr CC Burnside, Ophthalmology. Colin Burnside also served a justice of the peace. Dr Burnside died in 2004 and was interred at the columbarium of St John's Church, Gordon.

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<sup>20</sup> Helen Whitsed Davies, The evolution of a street: St Johns Avenue, Gordon, *The Historian* 28, no. 1, October 2009.

<sup>21</sup> Helen Whitsed Davies, The evolution of a street: St Johns Avenue, Gordon, *The Historian* 28, no. 1, October 2009.

<sup>22</sup> Helen Whitsed Davies, The evolution of a street: St Johns Avenue, Gordon, *The Historian* 28, no. 1, October 2009.



## 4. Physical Description

64 St Johns Avenue, Gordon is a medium sized masonry two-storey house on a battle axe lot.

Whilst it has two driveway entrances, one to Vale Street and the other to St Johns Avenue, its main elevation faces west to Vale Street. A wall marks the boundary on both streets but they differ in design. To Vale Street there is a low red face brick wall with a colonial inspired wooden picket gate and to St Johns Avenue a low sandstone wall.

The front garden is informally planted with medium to large shrubs and some trees, arranged around lawn and against the house. The informal planting continues in the rear garden. The topography is generally even with the most significant difference being to the rear of No. 62 where the land slopes downward, where there is also a brick retaining wall.

The style of the house is English Domestic, to use a contemporary term, with prominent gables and steep roof, yet with colonial revival joinery and art deco detailing throughout. Its' walls are rendered and painted and the roof covering is terracotta tiles in Marseilles pattern and a single colonial style chimney.

The front Vale Street elevation is symmetrical about its centralised steep gable and small sized Georgian divided sash windows on the ground floor and two smaller ones on the first floor. Two dormer windows are located on either side of the gable. A straight path leads from the colonial inspired gate and terminates with two steps at the front door, recessed in a curved art deco doorway with a fine metal lamp fixed above.

The rear eastern elevation also has a centralised steep gable. On one side of the gable is a dormer window and on the other is a skillion dormer window. The skillion dormer is likely a later addition. Georgian windows are continued on the ground and first floor of the gable. A low single storey rear extension extends from the south eastern end of the house.

The planning of the house is centralised about its stair hall, which is reached from the front door by a short passage focused on the curtail of the timber staircase. The ground floor contains the formal living room and formal dining room which are interconnected by an original curved art deco opening with curved jambs. Two colonial inspired arched recessed are located in the formal living room and another in the formal dining room. Its focus is an original fireplace and white painted timber mantle in the formal living room. The multi paned colonial inspired glass doors on the northern and eastern walls of the formal living room open directly into the garden.

The kitchen is part of the original envelope but has been substantially renovated. There are original folding doors leading from the kitchen to the stair hall cutting neatly under the rising stair. The wide doorway with a stepped art deco motif suggests that the kitchen was likely designed to be open to the air as a breezeway kitchen, though the door and infill appears to be a relatively early intervention.

The rear extension is likely 1960s or 1970s and is constructed of fibro cladding with a skillion roof. The extension contains an additional living room and laundry.

A second original and face brick fireplace is located in the ground floor study, the surrounding shelving takes up the southern wall and the north western corner of the study accommodates the curved main entrance wall.

The downstairs bathroom is of a recent fit out, but the concaved wall (which comprised part of the curved entrance) in the south western wall has been concealed. A fourth bedroom is located on the ground floor.

The first floor is within the roof and contains three bedrooms and a bathroom arranged around the stair. A filled-in fireplace is located in the northern bedroom which has four original single door built-in wardrobes in each corner. The wardrobes have been designed to relate to the gables. Similarly, the middle bedroom has an original built in wardrobe under the gable. The built-in wardrobe in the southern bedroom is a recent addition.

A separate bathroom and toilet are located on the first floor. The configuration is likely original but they have been recently renovated.

The first floor is carpeted with what is presumed to be the original timber floor. The downstairs timber floor appears to have been replaced.

Other original details in the house are the cornices and colonial inspired interior doors. The cornices in the communal areas are decorative, and more reminiscent of the art deco features, compared to the more private spaces which are a much simpler design and of a style closer to a colonial revival.

A garage is located in the rear garden and opens onto the St Johns Avenue driveway. It has two steep gable ends and a terracotta roof. It is a later addition but has been purposefully designed to complement the house.





Figure 7 Vale Street elevation of 64 St Johns Avenue.



Figure 8 Rear of 64 St Johns Avenue. The original eastern elevation is the background, the single storey extension in the middle and the garage to the right.





Figure 9 One of two arched colonial inspired recesses in the formal dining room.



Figure 10 Built-in wardrobes under the gable in one of the bedrooms.







Figure 11 Art deco curved wall in the hallway.



Figure 12 The hallway with the original staircase.

## 5. Comparative analysis of relevant examples

Image	Address	Description
Within St Johns Avenue HCA		
 <p>Figure 13 St Johns Avenue HCA.</p>	St Johns Avenue HCA	<p>St Johns Avenue HCA is adjacent and includes part of the subject site. The subject site is also historically part of the St Johns Avenue subdivision. The HCA is comprised primarily of single storey face brick bungalows with small front gables. Some houses have small double gables and a porch.</p> <p>The lot boundaries date from the 1912 subdivision and are rectangular in shape.</p>
 <p>Figure 14 24 St Johns Avenue. Source: <a href="https://www.onthefhouse.com.au/property/nsw/gordon-2072/24-st-johns-ave-gordon-nsw-2072-2202301">https://www.onthefhouse.com.au/property/nsw/gordon-2072/24-st-johns-ave-gordon-nsw-2072-2202301</a></p>	24 St Johns Avenue, Gordon	<p>64 St Johns Avenue, Oberon, is an arts and craft federation style house and was built between 1900 and 1920. It is one of three individual heritage items within the St Johns Avenue HCA. The other two face Pacific Highway and No. 24 is the only item which faces St Johns Avenue.</p> <p>The place is listed (No. 127) for its cultural, architectural and rarity value.<sup>23</sup></p>

<sup>23</sup> "Oberon, dwelling," State Heritage Inventory, <https://www.hms.heritage.nsw.gov.au/App/Item/ViewItem?itemId=1880483>

 <p>Figure 15 748 Pacific Highway. Source: Google Street View.</p>	<p>748 Pacific Highway, Gordon</p>	<p>Windsor House was constructed between 1900 and 1920 and is one of three items within the St Johns Avenue HCA.</p> <p>The place is listed for its historic, architectural, landmark value and municipal significance.<sup>24</sup></p> <p>Item No. I15</p>
 <p>Figure 16 58 St Johns Avenue.</p>	<p>58 St Johns Avenue, Gordon</p>	<p>The house, <i>Kilbirnie</i>, was built in 1919 by the Burnside family. Colin Campbell Burnside Jnr. lived here during construction of his home at 64 St Johns Avenue.</p> <p>The house is a single storey face brick building with a porch. The Burnside family made various additions to the house.</p>

<sup>24</sup> "Windsor House, dwelling house," State Heritage Inventory, <https://www.hms.heritage.nsw.gov.au/App/Item/ViewItem?itemId=1880471>





Figure 17 66 St Johns Avenue.

66 St Johns Avenue,  
Gordon

66 St Johns Avenue was built by the brother of Colin Campbell Burnside Jnr., Walter Burnside, after the land was transferred to him by his mother.

The house was built by Armstrong and Swainson the same builders of 64 St Johns Avenue.

The house is much simpler and more Georgian than the subject house. It does not have dramatic steep gables and like others on the street is single storey, though there are two storeys to the rear. The similarities are the render, terracotta roof and windows.

Others houses of a similar style in Ku-Ring-Gai (listed)





Figure 18 48 Earl Street. Source:  
<https://www.realestate.com.au/property/48-earl-st-roseville-nsw-2069>

48 Earl Street,  
Roseville

48 Earl Street is an item (No.1682) and part of the Earl of Canarvon HCA.



Built in the late 1930s the house is a good example of a hybrid style. The house is principally English Cottage revival with art deco detailing. Some significant elements are intact but the rear of the house has been significantly altered.



 <p>Figure 19 28 Lynwood Avenue Killara. Source Google Street view.</p>	<p>28 Lynwood Avenue Killara</p>	<p>28 Lynwood Avenue was built in 1928 and designed by Leith McCredie.</p> <p>The place is listed as an item (No. I315) and is part of the Lynwood Avenue HCA. There is no information in the State Heritage Inventory detailing its reason for listing.<sup>25</sup></p> <p>The places envelope with its centralised gable and fenestration bares a strong resemblance to the subject site.</p>
 <p>Figure 20 34 Treatts Road. Source: <a href="https://www.realestate.com.au/sold/property-house-nsw-lindfield-137725654">https://www.realestate.com.au/sold/property-house-nsw-lindfield-137725654</a></p>	<p>34 Treatts Road, Lindfield</p>	<p>34 Treatts Road is part of the Oliver Grant HCA. There is no inventory on the state heritage inventory for the HCA.</p> <p>The steep gables are similar to the subject site but 34 Treatts Road does not appear (as seen in Real Estate photos) to have colonial revival and/or art deco detailing.<sup>26</sup></p>

<sup>25</sup> "Dwelling House," State Heritage Inventory, <https://www.hms.heritage.nsw.gov.au/App/Item/ViewItem?itemId=1882445>

<sup>26</sup> "34 Treatts Road, Lindfield, NSW 2070," realestate.com.au, <https://www.realestate.com.au/sold/property-house-nsw-lindfield-137725654>.

Other houses of a similar style in Ku-Ring-Gai (not listed)		
 <p>Figure 21 27 Beechworth Road, Pymble. Source: <a href="https://www.realestate.com.au/property/27-beechworth-rd-pymble-nsw-2073">https://www.realestate.com.au/property/27-beechworth-rd-pymble-nsw-2073</a></p>	<p>27 Beechworth Road, Pymble</p>	<p>27 Beechworth Road was designed by William Ronald Richardson.</p> <p>The place is not listed.</p> <p>The house is an English Cottage revival with some Georgian Revival detailing.</p> <p>The original house appears largely intact (as seen in Real Estate photos).<sup>27</sup> There is a large contemporary extension to the rear.</p>
 <p>Figure 22 27 Wahroonga Avenue. Source: <a href="https://www.realestate.com.au/property/27-wahroonga-ave-wahroonga-nsw-2076">https://www.realestate.com.au/property/27-wahroonga-ave-wahroonga-nsw-2076</a></p>	<p>27 Wahroonga Avenue, Wahroonga</p>	<p>Design by William Ronald Richardson, 27 Wahroonga Avenue is not listed but its gabled design and Georgian revival windows have similarities to the subject place.</p> <p>The eastern half of the house is a later addition designed to look original.</p>



<sup>27</sup> "27 Beechworth Road," realestate.com.au, <https://www.realestate.com.au/property/27-beechworth-rd-pymble-nsw-2073>.

Houses by Armstrong and Swainson		
 <p>Figure 23 9 Adelaide Avenue. Source: <a href="https://www.onthehouse.com.au/property/nsw/east-lindfield-2070/9-adelaide-ave-east-lindfield-nsw-2070-5901165">https://www.onthehouse.com.au/property/nsw/east-lindfield-2070/9-adelaide-ave-east-lindfield-nsw-2070-5901165</a></p>	9 Adelaide Avenue, East Lindfield	<p>Designed by Adrian Ashton and built by Armstrong and Swainson the house has been sustainably altered since its construction having been recently rendered and shutters added.</p> <p>The house featured in the magazine <i>Construction</i> in 1942.<sup>28</sup></p> <p>The place is not listed.</p>
 <p>Figure 24 73 Woodside Avenue, Strathfield, Source: Google Street View.</p>	73 Woodside Avenue, Strathfield	<p>This art deco residence in Strathfield is very different to other works by Adrian Ashton and Armstrong and Swainson.</p> <p>It appears to be highly intact.</p> <p>The place featured in <i>Construction</i> in 1942.<sup>29</sup></p> <p>The place is not listed.</p>

<sup>28</sup> "Residence," *Construction*, 2 March 1942, page 3, <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/222863191?searchTerm=Armstrong%20and%20Swainson>

<sup>29</sup> "Residence, Woodside Avenue," *Construction*, 7 January 1942, page 4, <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/222862791?searchTerm=Armstrong%20and%20Swainson>





 <p>Figure 25 House built by Armstrong and Swainson on Rickard Avenue, Mosman. Source: <i>Construction</i> 22 July 1941.</p>	<p>Rickard Avenue, Mosman</p>	<p>This residence in Mosman was designed by Adrian Ashton and built by Armstrong and Swainson in 1941.</p> <p>It was featured in the magazine <i>Construction</i>.<sup>30</sup> Its style is different to the subject site with a much smaller, off-centre gable, and is face brick.</p> <p>It is unclear if the building is extant. If extant the place is not listed.</p>
 <p>Figure 26 Residence at Ellalong Road built by Armstrong and Swainson. Source: <i>Construction</i> 29 May 1940.</p>	<p>Ellalong Road, Cremorne</p>	<p>This cottage in Cremorne was designed by Adrian Ashton and built by Armstrong and Swainson in 1940.</p> <p>It was featured in <i>Construction</i> in 1940.<sup>31</sup> The facade and building envelop are very different to the subject place in particular the smaller gable, verandah and brick piers.</p> <p>Part of Ellalong Road is within a HCA. It is unclear if the place is listed.</p>

<sup>30</sup> "Residence," *Construction*, 22 July 1941, page 12, <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/222864316?searchTerm=Armstrong%20and%20Swainson>

<sup>31</sup> "Cottage, Ellalong Road, Cremorne Sydney," *Construction*, 29 May 1940, page 20, <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/222858621?searchTerm=Armstrong%20and%20Swainson>



Demolished or possibly demolished houses of a similar style		
 <p>Figure 27 House by Lieth McCredie on Warrangi Street. Source: Six of the Best Architects of Ku-Ring-Gai, page 111.</p>	<p>Warrangi Street, Turramurra</p>	<p>It is unclear if this house designed by Leith McCredie is extant.</p> <p>The rendered house with two gable ends and centralised gable façade and dormer windows have a strong resemblance to the 64 St Johns Avenue.</p> <p>The design differs with the double gable and weatherboard to the front elevation.</p>
 <p>Figure 28 House designed by Leith McCredie, 15 Billyard Avenue. Source Six of the Best Architects of Ku-Ring-Gai, page 118.</p>	<p>15 Billyard Avenue, Wahroonga</p>	<p>This house, designed by Leith McCredie, appears to have been demolished but the building envelope with its centralised steep gable on a rectangular building is similar to the subject site.</p>

## Comparative Analysis Conclusion

Notwithstanding that 64 St Johns Avenue does not face St Johns Avenue the place is distinctive within the immediate area. The lack of address to St Johns Avenue and its two-storey plan, steep central gable, and lack of porch to its façade make it distinct to the street.

The limited information on the State Heritage register limited the ability to search for listed places of a similar style, but in general it appears that few places of this hybrid English Domestic, colonial revival and art deco styles with a high degree of integrity are extant and listed. But on the North Shore of Sydney several houses of this style are listed, some published examples are known, enough to suggest this is a type of house particular to the North Shore.

## 6. Assessment of Significance

### 6.1. Current listing

64 St Johns Avenue is currently partially included in the St Johns Avenue HCA. The HCA is listed for its historical association with St Johns Church and subdivision of church land, its intact Federation and inter-war housing, its streetscape defined by the brush box plantings, narrow street and historic association as the first paved road in Ku-Ring-Gai.

### 6.2. Ability to demonstrate

Guidelines from the NSW Heritage Office emphasise the role of history in the heritage assessment process. A list of state historical themes has been developed by the NSW Heritage Council, in *New South Wales Historical Themes Table showing correlation of national, state and local themes, with annotations Dated 4 October 2001*.

The table below identifies fabric, spaces and visual relationships that demonstrate the relevant historic themes in evidence at 64 St Johns Avenue.

Australian Theme	NSW Theme	Discussion
4 Building settlements, towns and cities	Towns, suburbs and villages	<p>It is possible that the Thistlethwayte family, who resided at No. 68, and bought the three lots in 1917, intended to pass them on to their children. The family re-subdivided the land creating the current battle axe at No. 64. The lots were never occupied or owned by the Thistlethwayte children and instead two of the lots sold to the Burnsides. Mary Catherine Burnside later transferred the lots to two of her sons.</p> <p>Historically 64 St Johns Avenue is part of the St Johns Park Estate which was subdivided in 1912. Although Nos. 62, 64 and 66 St Johns Avenue have not retained their 1912 subdivision pattern, their current arrangement is demonstrative of common middle class land purchasing practices in the North Shore.</p>
4 Building settlements, towns and cities	Land tenure	<p>The shape of the battle axe lot is unusual for St Johns Avenue which is primarily comprised of rectangular lots. The lot therefore demonstrates the intentions of the Thistlethwayte and Burnside families. Although it is unclear exactly why the Thistlethwaytes re-subdivided 64 St Johns Avenue to the current arrangement, it may have been intended to pass the three lots to their children, or to create larger lots for an investment.</p>

Australian Theme	NSW Theme	Discussion
4 Building settlements, towns and cities	Accommodation	<p>Anecdotally, it was not uncommon for middle class families of the North Shore to live in close proximity to each other. Here, the Burnside family occupied Nos. 58, 64 and 66 St Johns Avenue.</p> <p>The house was built in 1946. The quality of construction is unusual for the immediate post-war period, when materials were generally scarce, and the design is more associated with the interwar period. With its hybrid design, English Domestic envelope with colonial revival and art deco fenestrations and detailing, is a good example of middle-class tastes and housing trends on the North Shore during the interwar to mid-century.</p>



### 6.3. Assessment against NSW heritage assessment criteria (Heritage Item)

**Criterion (a)** *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).*

64 St Johns Avenue is associated with the middle-class development of Sydney's North Shore, and the practice of families buying land near their place of residence for their children but is not in itself an important place in the course of this history.

As an item the place does not meet the criterion for historical value. It does however fulfill the criterion for inclusion in the neighbouring Heritage Conservation Area due to its historical association with the church and St Johns Park Estate.

Inclusion Guidelines	Check
Shows evidence of a significant human activity	No
Is associated with a significant activity or historical phase	Yes (Heritage Conservation Area)
Maintains or shows the continuity of a historical process or activity	No
Exclusion Guidelines	
Has incidental or unsubstantiated connections with historically important activities or processes	No
Provides evidence of activities or processes that are of dubious historical importance	No
Has been so altered that it can no longer provide evidence of a particular association	No

Level of Significance: Local (Heritage Conservation Area)

**Criterion (b)** *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 architect for 64 St Johns Avenue has not been identified but the place has design characteristics similar to notable architects of the North Shore in the period, particularly Leith McCredie and William Ronald Richardson.

The place does not meet the criterion for associative value.

Inclusion Guidelines	Check
Shows evidence of a significant human occupation	No

Is associated with a significant event, person, or group of persons	No
Exclusion Guidelines	
Has incidental or unsubstantiated connections with historically important people or events	Yes
Provides evidence of people or events that are of dubious historical importance	No
Has been so altered that it can no longer provide evidence of a particular association	No

Level of Significance: Not applicable

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

The house is a good example of an English Domestic style house with colonial revival and art deco detailing, one of a distinctive type in the North Shore during the interwar to mid-century. The planning of the house is well resolved around a central stair hall featuring a good quality timber stair with curtail. Its detailing niches, joinery and built-in cabinetry is also well resolved and uniformly intact.

Given the limited supply of building material in the post-war period the houses detailing and construction is of an unusually high quality.

The garden is a mature shrub-based garden with some specimen plants such as palms and magnolia arranged with lawn and integrated with the house. It appears to retain some original landscaping in its garden beds and paths, and possibly also some plantings, and is demonstrative of the gardens of the North Shore in this period.

As a heritage item 64 St Johns Avenue meets the criterion of aesthetic significance. It does not meet the criterion for listing with the St Johns Avenue HCA as it does not address the street.

Inclusion Guidelines	Check
Shows or is associated with, creative or technical innovation or achievement	Yes
Is the inspiration for a creative or technical innovation or achievement	No
Is aesthetically distinctive	Yes
Has landmark qualities	No
Exemplifies a particular taste, style or technology	Yes
Exclusion Guidelines	
Is not a major work by an important designer or artist	Yes (as far as is known)
Has lost its design or technical integrity	No

Its positive visual or sensory appeal or landmark and scenic qualities have been more than temporarily degraded	No
Has only a loose association with a creative or technical achievement	No

Level of Significance: LOCAL

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

The place does not meet the criterion for social value.

Inclusion Guidelines	Check
Is important for its associations with an identifiable group	No
Is important to a community's sense of place	No
Exclusion Guidelines	
Is only important to the community for amenity reasons.	No
Is retained only in preference to a proposed alternative	No

Level of Significance: Not applicable

**Criterion (e) 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 place does not meet the criterion for research value.

Inclusion Guidelines	Check
Has the potential to yield new or further substantial scientific and/or archaeological information	No
Is an important benchmark or reference site or type	No
Provides evidence of past human cultures that is unavailable elsewhere	No
Exclusion Guidelines	
The knowledge gained would be irrelevant to research on science, human history or culture	Yes
Has little archaeological or research potential	Yes
Only contains information that is readily available from other resources or archaeological sites	Yes



Level of Significance: Not applicable

***Criterion (f) 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)***

St Johns Avenue HCA is listed for its rare residential subdivision of the church lands. The subject place is historically associated with this but in itself does not satisfy the criteria.

Inclusion Guidelines	Check
Provides evidence of a defunct custom, way of life or process	No
Demonstrates a process, custom or other human activity that is in danger of being lost	No
Shows unusually accurate evidence of a significant human activity	No
Is the only example of its type	No
Demonstrates designs or techniques of exceptional interest	No
Shows rare evidence of a significant human activity important to a community	No
Exclusion Guidelines	
Is not rare	Yes
Is numerous but under threat	No

Level of significance: Not Applicable

***Criterion (g) An item is important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of NSW's cultural or natural places or environments (or a class of the local area's cultural or natural places or environments)***

The house is demonstrative of a English Domestic style, representative particularly on Sydney's North Shore. English in form, its colonial inspired detailing, most notably the Georgian revival windows and arched recesses, are typical of the adaption of this style in middle class homes during the interwar to mid-century. Similarly, the inclusion of art deco elements, curved walls and stepped motifs was common in such homes.

The design is a result of its social and historical context and is representative of middle-class housing trends in the area. These social and historical contexts are tangible in the architectural style, English Domestic as expressed on the north shore.

The house and grounds have a high degree of intactness. Its original plan has been largely retained and elements demonstrating the quality of detailing are intact including the doors, cornices, skirting boards, built-in wardrobes, recesses and windows. Together they form a cohesive style throughout the house.

64 St Johns Avenue and neighbouring No. 66, were initially purchased by Mary Catherine Burnside who later transferred the titles to her sons. This practice, of parents buying land for their children, was common on Sydney's North Shore.

Inclusion Guidelines	Check
Is a fine example of its type	Yes
Has the principal characteristics of an important class or group of items	Yes
Has attributes typical of a particular way of life, philosophy, custom, significant process, design, technique or activity	Yes
Is a significant variation to a class of items	No
Is part of a group which collectively illustrates a representative type	Yes
Is outstanding because of its setting, condition or size	Yes
Is outstanding because of its integrity or the esteem in which it is held	Yes
Exclusion Guidelines	
Is a poor example of its type	No
Does not include or has lost the range of characteristics of a type	No
Does not represent well the characteristics that make up a significant variation of a type	No

Level of Significance: LOCAL

## 6.4. Statement of Significance

With its historical connection to the development of a distinctive street in Gordon, following its subdivision in 1912, this house is a good example of an interwar to mid-century middle-class house on Sydney's North Shore. Its English Domestic form mixed with good colonial revival and art deco detailing is highly intact. Likely designed in the interwar period but built post war the house is of an excellent quality despite supply shortages of the time. The house demonstrates some technical achievement in its well-resolved centralised plan.

It has a strong historical relationship to Nos. 66 and 58 St Johns Avenue which were owned and built by Colin Campbell Jnr's brother and parents respectively. The proximity of the family to each is demonstrative of a common practice in the North Shore where the parents bought land, in close proximity to their own, that they later transferred to their children.

The previous ownership, subdivision pattern and house design of 64 St Johns Avenue is representative of the historical social context of the North Shore. The place has aesthetic and representative significance.



## 7. Listing Recommendations

In light of its significance, 64 St Johns Avenue is worthy to be listed as a heritage item in the Ku-ring-Gai LEP and that the St Johns Avenue Conservation Area be extended to include the entirety of the subject site.

It is recommended that the curtilage encompass the existing site boundary and includes, fencing and posts, the sandstone wall to St Johns Avenue and the brick wall and gate to Vale Street, landscaping and the house including its interior elements (Figure 29).



Figure 29 Recommended curtilage indicated in red. Source Nearmap with HAA overlay.

## 8. Management Recommendations

The below recommendations are drawn solely from a consideration of the significance of the place. They do not consider, as similar recommendations in a Conservation Management Plan or other heritage management document would, the owner's requirements or other factors such as financial implications.

### 8.1. Obligations arising from significance

The high cultural significance of the place identified in the statement of significance obliges its conservation and good management (Burra Charter Article 2).

The significance is embodied in the place. Place means site, area, land, landscape, building or other work, group of buildings or other works, and may include components, contents, spaces and views. Place also includes fabric, setting, use, associations, meanings, records, related places, and related objects. (Burra Charter Article 1).

### 8.2. Conservation of fabric

All original fabric should be retained. Detailing which contains the essence of its hybrid architectural style should be retained, in particular but not limited to the staircase, arched recesses, built-in wardrobes, fireplaces, curved walls and stepped motifs, cornices and skirting boards and original windows.

If the opportunity arises the concaved wall in the downstairs bathroom should be revealed.

Other elements of the site to be retained include all fencing, the sandstone wall to St Johns Avenue and brick wall and gate to Vale Street. Paths, paving and garden beds can be altered but should where possible retain their present overall location and materiality. Where possible the garage should be retained.

Individual trees and shrubs are not considered significant and their retention is not required.

The fibro extension is not considered significant and its retention is not required.

Advice from a heritage professional should be sought when making changes to the place.

### 8.3. Tolerance for change

The house itself has some tolerance for change. The original layout of the house is intact and should largely be retained. The kitchen and bathrooms interiors are not significant and can be replaced.

There is a high tolerance for change to the rear of the house. The fibro extension is not considered significant and can be retained or demolished. There is possibility for

further development to the rear of the house. Any development to the rear should not obscure significant architectural elements on the eastern façade.

The landscaping has a medium tolerance for change. The boundary walls and gate should be retained. Paths and garden beds may be altered but should retain their overall present location and materiality. Plantings can be replaced or added to but significant architectural elements should not be completely obscured from the street.

#### **8.4. Future use**

The place should be retained as a place of residence.