

Planning Proposal Justification Report

**Amendment to Schedule 5 of the Liverpool Local
Environmental Plan 2008**

18 October 2024

Table of Contents

Introduction	3
Background.....	3
Report Structure.....	4
Site & Locality Description	5
Delegation of plan making functions.....	7
Part 1 – Objectives and Intended Outcome.....	7
Part 2 – Explanation of provisions	7
Part 3 – Justification.....	8
Section A – Need for the planning proposal.....	8
Is the planning proposal a result of an endorsed local strategic planning statement, strategic study or report?	8
3.1 Is the planning proposal the best means of achieving the objectives or intended outcomes, or is there a better way?	9
Section B – Relationship to strategic planning framework.....	9
3.2 Will the planning proposal give effect to the objectives and actions of the applicable regional, or district plan or strategy (including any exhibited draft plans or strategies)?.....	9
3.3 Is the planning proposal consistent with a Council LSPS that has been endorsed by Planning Secretary or GSC, or another endorsed local strategy or strategic plan?	11
3.4 Is the planning proposal consistent with applicable State Environmental Planning Policies?	12
3.5 Is the planning proposal consistent with applicable Ministerial Directions (Section 9.1 directions)?	13
Section C – Environmental, social, and economic impact.....	13
3.6 Is there any likelihood that critical habitat or threatened species, populations or ecological communities, or their habitats, will be adversely affected as a result of the proposal?	13
3.7 Are there any other likely environmental effects as a result of the planning proposal and how are they proposed to be managed?	13
3.8 Has the planning proposal adequately addressed any social and economic effects? 13	
Section D – State and Commonwealth interests	14
3.9 Is there adequate public infrastructure for the planning proposal?	14
3.10 What are the views of state and Commonwealth public authorities consulted in accordance with the Gateway determination?	14

Part 4 – Mapping.....	14
Part 5 – Community Consultation.....	15
Part 6 – Project Timeline.....	15
Attachments:.....	16

List of Figures

Figure 1 Subject Site at Lot 17 Leacocks Lane, Casula (Source: Near Map)	5
Figure 2 Land Use Zoning under LLEP2008 (Source: LCC Geocortex)	6
Figure 3 View of the eastern entrance to the former laboratory / gallery building (left) and the 1960 studio (right) Source: BHHH, 2024)	6
Figure 4 Steel entrance gates to the Mount Omei property, showing bushy landscaping and the blank western façade of the former laboratory / gallery building Source: BHHH, 2024)	7
Figure 5 Current and Proposed LEP Map	14

List of Tables

Table 1 Liverpool Local Environmental Plan 2008 – Schedule 5 Amendment	8
Table 2 Consistency with Regional Plan	10
Table 3 Consistency with Western City District Plan	10
Table 4 Site Specific Merit	11
Table 5 Consistency with State Environmental Planning Policies.....	12
Table 6 Ministerial Directions Compliance.....	13
Table 7 - Anticipated Project Timeline	15

Introduction

This Planning Proposal has been prepared to initiate an amendment to Schedule 5 of *Liverpool Local Environmental Plan 2008*. The amendment involves listing Lot 17 Leacocks Lane, Casula (Mount Omei) as a Heritage Item.

Background

Liverpool Local Environmental Plan 2008 (LLEP 2008) came into effect on 29 August 2008. LLEP 2008 was a wholesale review and update of the previous planning instrument, aimed at supporting growth and development within the LGA aligned with the South Western Sydney growth precincts. It was also a consolidation of the former Liverpool City Centre LEP 2007 and other instruments in place at the time.

Liverpool City Council continuously reviews the LLEP 2008 to ensure it aligns with its adopted Community Strategic Plan and delivers positive outcomes for the Liverpool community. Our Home, Liverpool 2027 states that Council will protect and preserve Liverpool's heritage including its rural landscape and cultural history.

At the Ordinary Meeting of Council on 28 February 2024, a Motion of Urgency (MOU 01) was tabled, and subsequently endorsed by Council, seeking an immediate Interim Heritage Order be placed on Lot 17 Leacocks Lane Casula known as "Mount Omei" (to be referred to as "Mount Omei" in this Report). A copy of the gazettal is provided in **Attachment 1**.

The Interim Heritage Order (IHO) provided Council time to determine whether the property has heritage significance and should therefore be listed under Schedule 5 of the LLEP 2008.

On 1 May 2024, Council engaged an independent Heritage Consultant, Bronwyn Hanna History & Heritage, to undertake a detailed Heritage Significance Assessment and provide clear recommendations as to whether the property should be heritage listed.

On 3 May 2024, Council's A/CEO wrote to the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) to inform them of the IHO gazettal.

Council received a copy of the Heritage Significance Assessment on 17 October 2024 (see **Attachment 2**) which concluded that the "Mount Omei" property—including the house, gallery and look out area—is of local heritage significance under all seven (7) criteria of the Heritage Council of NSW.

On 24 July 2024, Council resolved for a planning proposal to be prepared to initiate an amendment to the LLEP 2008. The proposal involves amending LLEP 2008 to list Lot 17 Leacocks Lane, Casula (Mount Omei) to Schedule 5 Environmental Heritage. Specifically, the listing will include the Mount Omei's 'built precinct' which is approximately one-hectare in size, enclosing five buildings and the lookout area in a bushy landscape with surrounding gardens—all designed, mainly owner-built and largely planted.

Report Structure

This planning proposal has been prepared in accordance with Section 3.33 of the Environmental Planning & Assessment Act 1979 with consideration to DPE's 'Local Environmental Plan Making Guideline (August 2023). Accordingly, the proposal is discussed in the following parts:

Part 1 Objectives and Intended Outcome

Part 2 Explanation of Provisions

Part 3 Justification of Strategic and Site-Specific Merit

Part 4 Maps

Part 5 Community Consultation

Part 6 Project Timeline

Site & Locality Description

This planning proposal relates to lot 17 Leacocks Lane Casula (Lot 17 DP 554086). The subject site is owned by the NSW National Parks & Wildlife Service (NPWS), and is shown in **Figure 1**, and the land use zoning is shown in **Figure 2** below.

The subject site is located along Leacocks Lane Casula, being Lot 17 DP 554085. The site is locally known as Leacock Regional Park and is part of the Cumberland Plain woodland, an endangered ecological community. To the north of the site is All Saint Catholic College. There is low density residential development to the West. To the South and East is the rail line and Georges River.

Mount Omei's 'built precinct', is an area within the Leacock Regional Park, which is approximately one-hectare in size, enclosing five buildings and the lookout area in a bushy landscape with surrounding gardens-all designed, mainly owner-built and largely planted. Some Images of the buildings are included in Figure 3, and Figure 4 below.

The site is currently zoned C1 National Parks & Nature Reserve Zone in Liverpool LEP 2008. Management and appropriate use of the land is reserved under the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974 or that is acquired under Part 11 of that Act. The Primary objectives of the zone are 'to identify land that is to be reserved under the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974' and 'to protect the environmental significance of that land'.



Figure 1 Subject Site at Lot 17 Leacocks Lane, Casula (Source: Near Map)

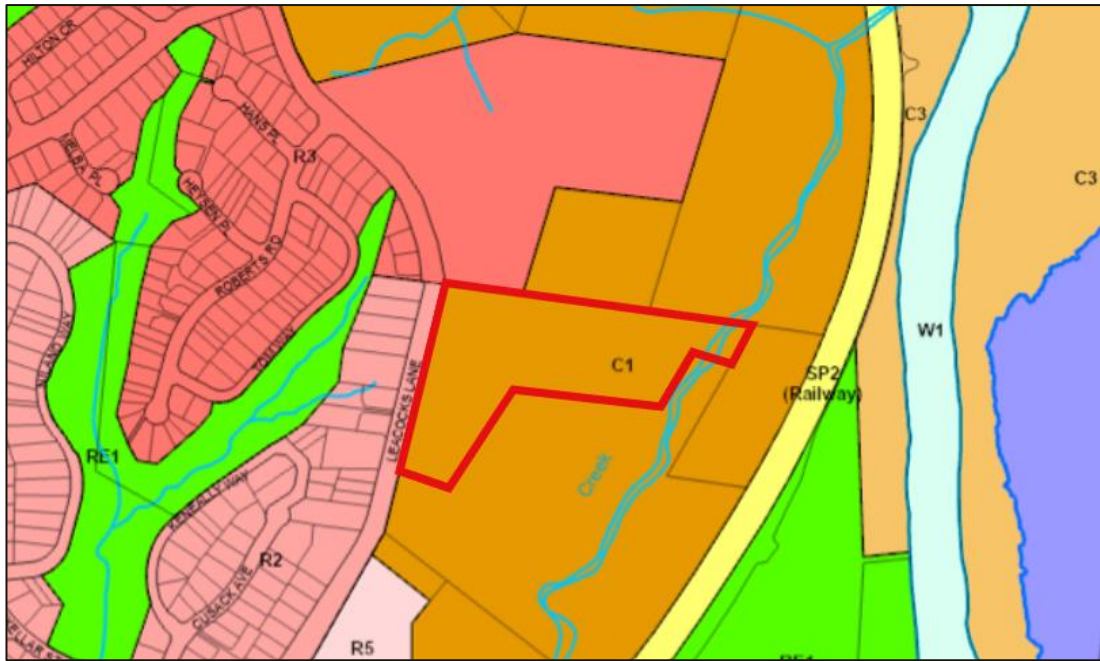


Figure 2 Land Use Zoning under LLEP2008 (Source: LCC Geocortex)



Figure 3 View of the eastern entrance to the former laboratory / gallery building (left) and the 1960 studio (right)
Source: BHHH, 2024)



Figure 4 Steel entrance gates to the Mount Omei property, showing bushy landscaping and the blank western façade of the former laboratory / gallery building Source: BHHH, 2024)

Delegation of plan making functions

This planning proposal seeks to make an amendment to the LLEP 2008, which is considered to be minor. As such, Council is seeking authority of plan making functions pursuant to Section 3.36 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* ("EP&A Act").

Part 1 – Objectives and Intended Outcome

The intent of the planning proposal is to amend Schedule 5 of the LLEP 2008 to include Lot 17 Leacocks Lane, Casula ("Mount Omei") as an item of local heritage significance. The Listing "Mount Omei" including the house/ gallery/ lookout area (approximately one hectare in area), enclosing five buildings and the lookout area in a bushy landscape with surrounding gardens-all designed, mainly owner-built and largely planted.

Part 2 – Explanation of provisions

To achieve the intended outcomes, this planning proposal seeks to amend Schedule 5 of the LLEP 2008. Table 1 shows the new additions to Schedule 5. **Error! Reference source not found.** s hows the additional details to be outlined under Schedule 5:

Table 1 Liverpool Local Environmental Plan 2008 – Schedule 5 Amendment

Amendment Number	Current Item Number	Item Name	Item Status	Summary of Amendment
1	-	Mount Omei	New	<p>Amend Schedule 5 Environmental Heritage to include:</p> <p>Lot 17 Leacocks's Lane, Casula (Lot 17, DP554086).</p> <p>The Listing "Mount Omei" including the house/ gallery/ lookout area (approximately one hectare in area), enclosing five buildings and the lookout area in a bushy landscape with surrounding gardens-all designed, mainly owner-built and largely planted.</p>

Part 3 – Justification

Section A – Need for the planning proposal

Is the planning proposal a result of an endorsed local strategic planning statement, strategic study or report?

The planning proposal is not a result of any strategic planning statement, strategic study or report. However, the planning proposal aligns with state and regional strategic documents that set out goals seeking to protect, increase and enhance the heritage of South West Sydney. Additionally, the proposal is aligned with Council strategies and studies. These documents include the following:

- Greater Sydney Regional Plan – A Metropolis of Three Cities
- Western City District Plan
- Liverpool Local Strategic Planning Statement - Connected Liverpool 2040

Further, the proposed amendment has been recommended by a Heritage Significance Assessment report which was undertaken as a part of Council's requirements under delegation

for the consideration of Interim Heritage Order for: Lot 17 Leacocks Lane, Casula. The Heritage Significance Assessment on 17 October 2024 (see **Attachment 2**) concluded that the “Mount Omei” property – including the house, gallery and lookout area – is of local heritage significance under all seven (7) criteria of the Heritage Council of NSW. The Assessment also recommends that this part of the property be listed in the LLEP 2008 as an item of local significance. A copy of the Heritage Significance Assessment was forwarded to the NPWS for their consideration on 2 July 2024.

The proposed amendments will improve the level of representation of the heritage of Liverpool within the LEP and provide consistency and clarity to the existing Schedule.

3.1 Is the planning proposal the best means of achieving the objectives or intended outcomes, or is there a better way?

Yes. The planning proposal is the best and only means of achieving the objectives and intended outcome in Part 1.

Section B – Relationship to strategic planning framework.

3.2 Will the planning proposal give effect to the objectives and actions of the applicable regional, or district plan or strategy (including any exhibited draft plans or strategies)?

DPE’s Planning Circular (PS 16-004) notes that a key factor in determining whether a proposal should proceed to Gateway determination should be its strategic merit and site-specific merit. It is considered that the planning proposal meets these tests as outlined in the following sections.

a. Strategic Merit

The planning proposal is considered to be consistent with relevant regional, sub-regional or district plan or strategies. The most relevant State and District plans that guide the land use direction for the site, are

- Greater Sydney Regional Plan – A Metropolis of Three Cities (GSRP)
- Western City District Plan (WCDP)
- Liverpool Local Strategic Planning Statement

The current metropolitan strategy applicable to the site is the NSW Government’s Greater Sydney Region Plan (2018). Relevant directions from the metropolitan strategy are noted at Table 2 below.

Table 2 Consistency with Regional Plan

Criteria	Comment
Objective 13: Environmental heritage is identified, conserved and enhanced	<p>The Mount Omei property in Casula has local historical significance for Liverpool for demonstrating typical early phases of urban development in Sydney.</p> <p>The site identified for listing represent a key contribution to the local heritage environment and are identified as being worthy of listing. As such the planning proposal is consistent with this objective because it protects the environmental heritage on site.</p> <p>Consistent.</p>

The site is located within the Western City District and the applicable District Plan is the Western City District Plan (2018), as established by the Greater Sydney Commission in March 2018. Relevant directions from the Western City District Plan are noted in Table 3 below.

Table 3 Consistency with Western City District Plan

Criteria	Comment
Priority W6: Creating and renewing great places and local centres, and respecting the District's heritage	<p>The Mount Omei 'Klaphake house / gallery / lookout area' has local historical significance for the 'Modern Art Gallery' run by the owner Alice Klaphake from 1976 to 1984 and exhibiting occasionally. This gallery fostered the local arts community and has been described as 'the centre of the art scene in Sydney's southwest'.</p> <p>The site identified for listing represent a key contribution to the local heritage environment and are identified as being worthy of listing. The Planning Proposal is consistent with this objective because it conserves a built-in is being identified as local heritage significance.</p> <p>The proposed planning amendment is considered to be consistent with the Western City District Plan.</p>

Assessment of the proposal with regards to the Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS) is detailed in Section 3.4.

b. Site Specific Merit

In addition to meeting at least one of the strategic merit criteria, a Planning proposal is required to demonstrate site-specific merit against the following criteria in Table 4 below.

Table 4 Site Specific Merit

Criteria	Planning Proposal Response
Does the planning proposal have site specific merit with regard to: the natural environment (including known significant environmental values, resources or hazards)?	The planning proposal will not have any negative impacts on the natural environment and seeks to conserve elements of built heritage as well as recognised past changes which have impacted on existing items.
The existing uses, approved uses and likely future uses of land in the vicinity of the land subject to a proposal?	The Mount Omei property was sold to the NSW Government in 1979 and has been part of Leacock Regional Park since 1997. Nonetheless it is still in use as a residence by Van Klaphake-the son of Wolf and Alice who were the original owners of the property. Part of the site is being used as an Art Gallery and lookout area. The listing will provide opportunities for preserving the site and additional uses which are compatible with the area and subject to consent.
The services and infrastructure that are or will be available to meet the demands arising from the proposal and any proposed financial arrangements for infrastructure provision?	The planning proposal does not impact on the provision or need for services.

3.3 Is the planning proposal consistent with a Council LSPS that has been endorsed by Planning Secretary or GSC, or another endorsed local strategy or strategic plan?

The Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS) is Council's long-term plan to shape Liverpool's future which will help guide the development of Liverpool's suburbs and balance the need for housing, jobs and services as well as parks, open spaces and the natural environment.

Local Planning Priority 8, under the Liveability goal of the LSPS, includes the planning priority: *‘Community-focused low scale suburbs where our unique local character and heritage are respected.* The LSPS reflects Council’s commitment to:

- Ensure heritage, including Aboriginal heritage, is valued and protected.
- Support heritage asset revitalisation and adaptive reuse where appropriate.

The planning proposal seeks to add one additional item, increasing the protection of the local heritage of Liverpool. The proposal therefore aligns with Council’s LSPS.

3.4 *Is the planning proposal consistent with applicable State Environmental Planning Policies?*

Several State Environmental Planning Policies apply to the land. The consistency of the planning proposal with pertinent SEPPs has been provided in Table 3 below. SEPPs which the planning proposal will not materially impact nor undermine, where it is deemed that the planning proposal is consistent or not inconsistent with the SEPP objectives are omitted from Table 5.

Table 5 Consistency with State Environmental Planning Policies

State Environmental Planning Policy	Comments/ Consistency
<i>SEPP (Housing) 2021</i>	Not Applicable
<i>Transport and Infrastructure SEPP</i>	Not Applicable
<i>Primary Production SEPP</i>	Not Applicable
<i>Industry and Employment SEPP</i>	Not Applicable
<i>Resources and energy SEPP</i>	Not Applicable.
<i>Planning systems SEPP</i>	Not Applicable
<i>SEPP 65-Design Quality of Residential Apartment Development</i>	Not Applicable
<i>SEPP (Building Sustainability Index: BASIX) 2004</i>	Not Applicable
<i>SEPP (Exempt & Complying Development Codes) 2008</i>	Not Applicable

3.5 Is the planning proposal consistent with applicable Ministerial Directions (Section 9.1 directions)?

Table 6 Ministerial Directions Compliance

Section 9.1 Direction	Consistency	Justification
Focus Area 1- Planning Systems		
1.1 Implementation of Regional Plans	Consistent	Consistency with A Metropolis of Three Cities is outlined in Section B earlier in this report.
Focus Area 3 – Biodiversity and Conservation		
3.2 Heritage Conservation	Consistent	<p>The planning proposal is consistent with this direction.</p> <p>The proposal will include a new item under Schedule 5 of the LLEP2008.</p>

Section C – Environmental, social, and economic impact

3.6 Is there any likelihood that critical habitat or threatened species, populations or ecological communities, or their habitats, will be adversely affected as a result of the proposal?

The planning proposal will not adversely affect any critical habitat or threatened species, populations or ecological communities, or their habitats.

3.7 Are there any other likely environmental effects as a result of the planning proposal and how are they proposed to be managed?

The proposed amendments will not adversely affect the environment and are largely administrative in the inclusion of an item to Schedule 5.

3.8 Has the planning proposal adequately addressed any social and economic effects?

The social and economic impact of the proposed amendment has been considered in the preparation of this planning proposal. There are no economic implications of this proposal.

The property is under the ownership of NPWS, and the land use zoning is not proposed to be changed. Therefore, will have minimal impacts on the day to days of the property.

In terms of social impact, a heritage and subsequently a heritage item is considered to be a public benefit. The retention and protection of items which have identified heritage values is recognised in academic literature as being important to an individual's understanding of place and of their own identity.

Section D – State and Commonwealth interests

3.9 Is there adequate public infrastructure for the planning proposal?

Yes. The proposed amendments do not affect the need for infrastructure.

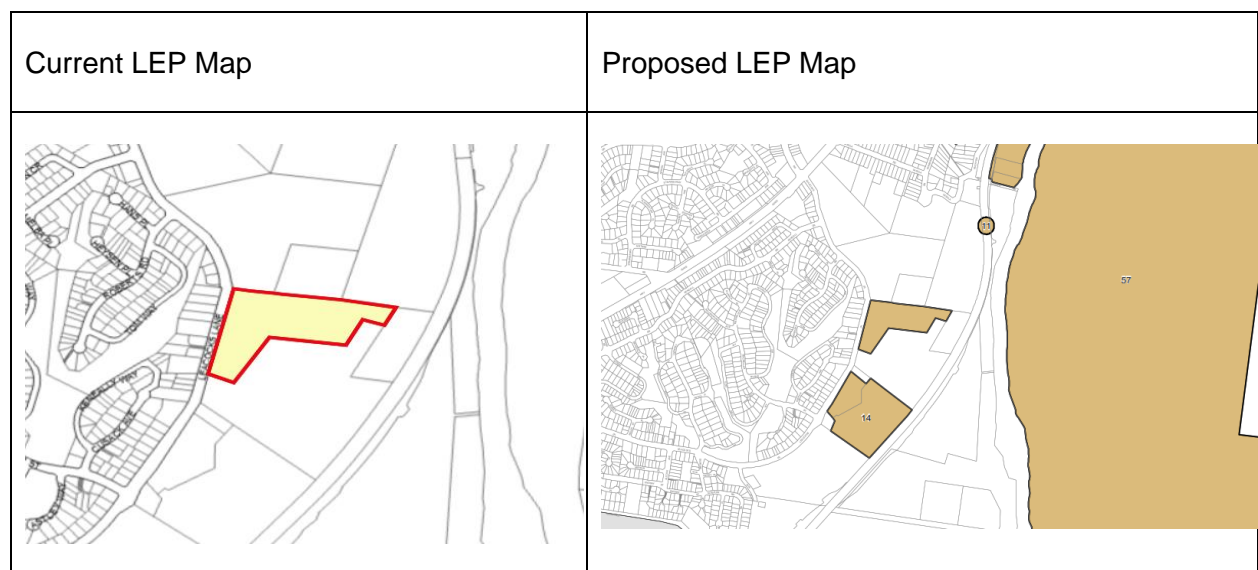
3.10 What are the views of state and Commonwealth public authorities consulted in accordance with the Gateway determination?

As a part of the Gateway determination, the relevant public authorities will be identified who are to be consulted. The referral advice provided by the public authorities will be considered, following consultation in the public exhibition period.

Part 4 – Mapping

All draft maps accompanying this planning proposal are included with the relevant amendment item, and the current and proposed map is shown in Figure 5 below:

Figure 5 Current and Proposed LEP Map



Part 5 – Community Consultation

Schedule 1, Clause 4 Division 2.6, Clause 2.2 of the EP&A Act requires the relevant planning authority to consult with the community in accordance with the Gateway determination. The planning proposal will be publicly exhibited for at least 28 days in accordance with DPE's Local Environmental Plan Making Guideline. The planning proposal exhibition will also be carried out in accordance with Council's Community Participation Plan.

Part 6 – Project Timeline

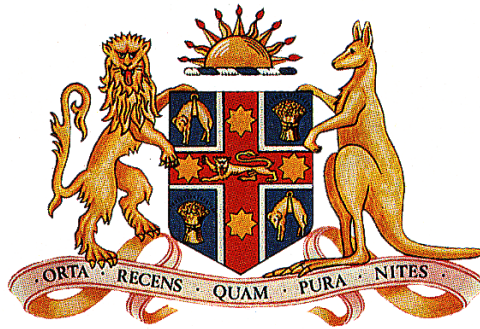
Table 7 - Anticipated Project Timeline

Timeframe	Action
28 October 2024	Local Planning Panel
February 2025	Council Endorsement
March 2025	Submission of Planning Proposal to DPE
May 2025	Gateway Determination issued
June 2025	Consideration of Gateway conditions and State agency consultation
June 2025 – July 2025	Community consultation
August 2025	Consideration of submissions and proposal post-exhibition
August 2025	Post-exhibition report to Council
September 2025	Legal drafting and making of the plan

Attachments:

Attachment 1: NSW Govt Gazette no. 103 & IHO Correspondence

Attachment 2: Mount Omei Heritage Assessment Report, 17 October 2024



Government Gazette

of the State of

New South Wales

Number 103—Planning and Heritage

Friday, 22 March 2024

The New South Wales Government Gazette is the permanent public record of official NSW Government notices. It also contains local council, non-government and other notices.

Each notice in the Government Gazette has a unique reference number that appears in parentheses at the end of the notice and can be used as a reference for that notice (for example, (n2019-14)).

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To submit a notice for gazettal, see the Gazette page.

ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING AND ASSESSMENT ACT 1979

Order under clause 6 of Schedule 2 to the *Environmental Planning and Assessment (Savings, Transitional and Other Provisions) Regulation 2017*

Under delegation from the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces, I declare the development specified in column 1 of the table in Schedule 1 to this Order, on the land specified in the corresponding row in column 2 of the table in Schedule 1 to this Order, to be State significant development under clause 6 of Schedule 2 to the *Environmental Planning and Assessment (Savings, Transitional and Other Provisions) Regulation 2017*, for the purposes of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (the Act).

This Order takes effect upon publication in the *New South Wales Government Gazette*.

Dated: 18 March 2024



Keiran Thomas

Director, Regional Assessments

Planning

SCHEDULE 1

Column 1	Column 2
Development	Land
Development known as the “Residential Subdivision ‘Rosarii’ (MP 05_0058)”, approved by the then Minister, Department of Planning under section 75J of the Act on 12 December 2007.	All land identified by Lot and DP references in Schedule 1 of the project approval to carry out the development known as “Residential Subdivision ‘Rosarii’ (MP 05_0058)” as in force on the date of this Order.

HERITAGE ASSESSMENT

FINAL — 17 October 2024

Mount Omei

Lot 17, Leacock's Lane, Casula, NSW 2170



Cover image: The house (at right) and former laboratory/ art gallery building and ancillary building (at left) in the bushland setting at Mount Omei (BHHH, 2024)

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY & BACKGROUND

1.1 INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND

This report provides an assessment of the built heritage significance of the property known as 'Mount Omei', at Lot 17, Leacocks Lane Casula, within the Liverpool City LGA. Encompassing just over three hectares, Mount Omei (pronounced 'OH-may') was originally part of Charles Throsby's Glenfield Estate established in 1809—until it was subdivided off in 1946 and sold to Alice Klaphake (pronounced 'kla-PAH-ka') and her German immigrant husband Wolf. The Klaphakes erected five modest mid-20th century buildings on the property—including a scientific laboratory for use by Wolf until his death in 1967, which was turned into a modern gallery run by Alice from 1976 to 1984, a home for themselves and three garage-workshops. They also extensively replanted the denuded dairy farm landscape.

The property was sold to the NSW Government by Alice Klaphake in 1979, then was reserved as part of Leacock Regional Park in 1997 (NPWS, 2016), while the Klaphake family have continued to live there on a permissive occupancy basis. It is managed by the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS), within the NSW Department of Environment. Although in early 2024 the Klaphakes' son Van Klaphake continues to lease and live at Mount Omei, NPWS has initiated proceedings with the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal to evict him, (Hansard, 19 March 2024). As Liverpool City Council noted, 'the eviction will leave the property vacant, and due to its isolated location, will likely become the target of vandalism and potentially arson' (*NSW Government Gazette*, 22 March 2024).

This report has been commissioned by Liverpool City Council, the local government authority responsible for conserving local heritage items within its LGA. Liverpool City Council has made an Interim Heritage Order (IHO) on the property, gazetted on 22 March 2024 (*NSW Government Gazette* no.103). This effectively means that for the six-month term of the order, changes cannot be made to the property except with the approval of the Heritage Council of NSW. An IHO is designed to allow the relevant authorities to assess the place's significance and to give it a permanent heritage listing where appropriate, so that its heritage significance will be taken into account when changes are planned.

Mount Omei is not listed on the New South Wales State Heritage Register (SHR), nor is it recognised as a heritage item or within a heritage conservation area on Liverpool City Council's Local Environmental Plan 2008 (NSW State Heritage Inventory). It is not on any NSW Government Section 170 Heritage & Conservation Register—although NSW government agencies 'have a responsibility to lead by example by adopting best practice heritage management strategies, processes and practices' (Heritage NSW HAMS, 2005, forward). Neither is it included in the non-statutory heritage lists of the National Trust of Australia (NSW) or the Register of the National Estate.

By 2012, however, Mount Omei had been recognised as 'potential heritage item' on the 'Historic Heritage Information Management System' of the NPWS (NPWS, 2012, p14). After being reserved as part of Leacock Regional Park in 1997, a 2012 Draft *Plan of Management* for the park recommended that Mount Omei be assessed. If found to have heritage significance, it was further recommended that a 'Heritage Action Statement' be prepared to guide its future management and works (NPWS, 2012, p15).

In 2016 NPWS commissioned Ashley Built Heritage to undertake a heritage assessment of Mount Omei. Ashley's report concluded that Mount Omei was of local heritage significance under all seven heritage criteria laid out by the Heritage Council of NSW (historical, historical associations, aesthetic, social, scientific, rarity and representativeness) (Ashley, 2016, pp39-43). It recommended that the buildings and cultural plantings on the site be retained and conserved. For future management, Ashley recommended the option of establishing an entity to use the place for environmental sustainability and arts programs such as an artist in residence program (Ashley's conclusions and recommendations are included in full at Annexure 3).

This report follows the Heritage NSW guidelines for assessing heritage significance (Heritage NSW, 2023) and is based on analysis of the current condition and known history of the place.

1.2. SUMMARY CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This BHHH assessment of heritage significance of Mount Omei concludes that the Klaphake's 'built precinct', including the house/ gallery/ lookout area (approximately one hectare in area, as pictured in Image 1.5) is of local heritage significance under all seven criteria of the Heritage Council of NSW. It is recommended that this part of the Mount

Omei property be listed on Liverpool City Council's Local Environmental Plan as an item of local significance. It is recommended that the Mount Omei built precinct also be added to the Section 170 Heritage and Conservation Register associated with NPWS. The Mount Omei built precinct should be retained, repaired, conserved and, ideally, made available for community and cultural related purposes.

1.3. THE STUDY AREA

The study area is the property of Mount Omei, located in Leacocks Lane, Casula, Lot 17, DP 554086, Parish of Minto, County of Cumberland, within the Liverpool City Council LGA.

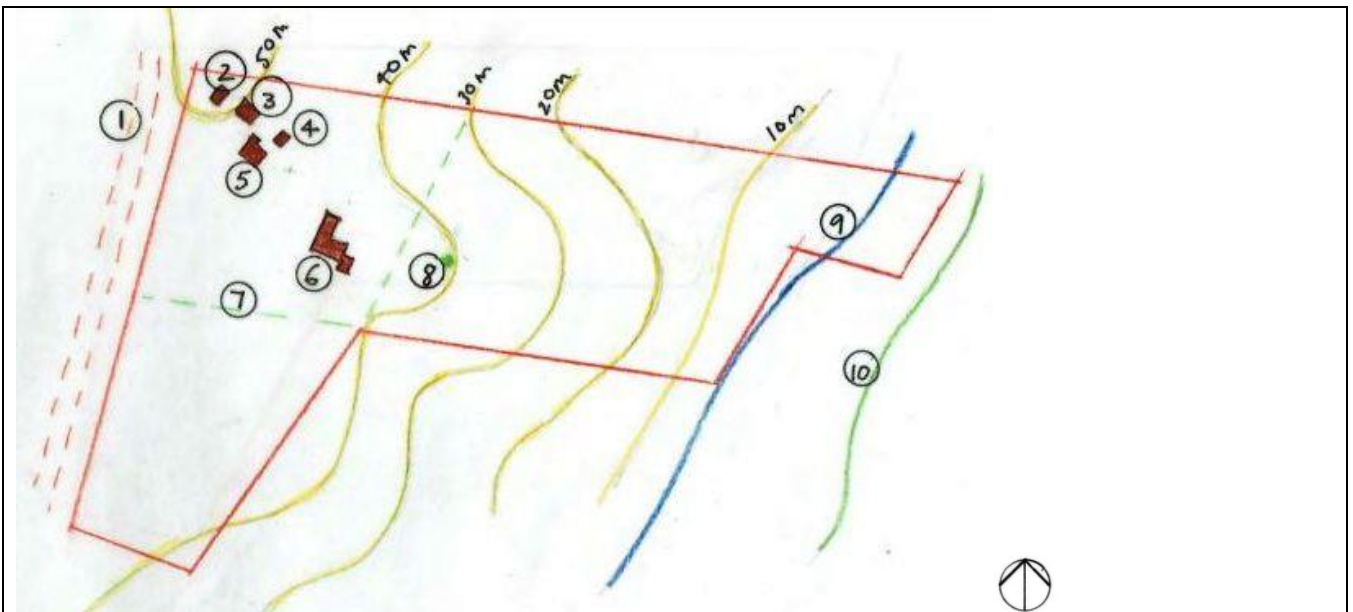


Image 1.1. Site plan of the Mount Omei property, drawn by Geoff Ashley, 2016. Key: 1) Leacocks Lane entrance to Mount Omei 2) 1959 Garage 3) 1946 Garage/ studio 4) 1960 Workshop 5) 1946 Former laboratory-gallery 6) 1947-48 House 7) Fencing around house precinct 8) Pond overlooking slopes 9) Glenfield Creek 10) Path/cycleway (Ashley, 2016, p25 and Annexure A).



Image 1.2. Aerial cadastral view of the extent of the 3 hectare Mount Omei property (shaded in yellow), fronting Leacocks Lane to the west (Source: SIX maps)

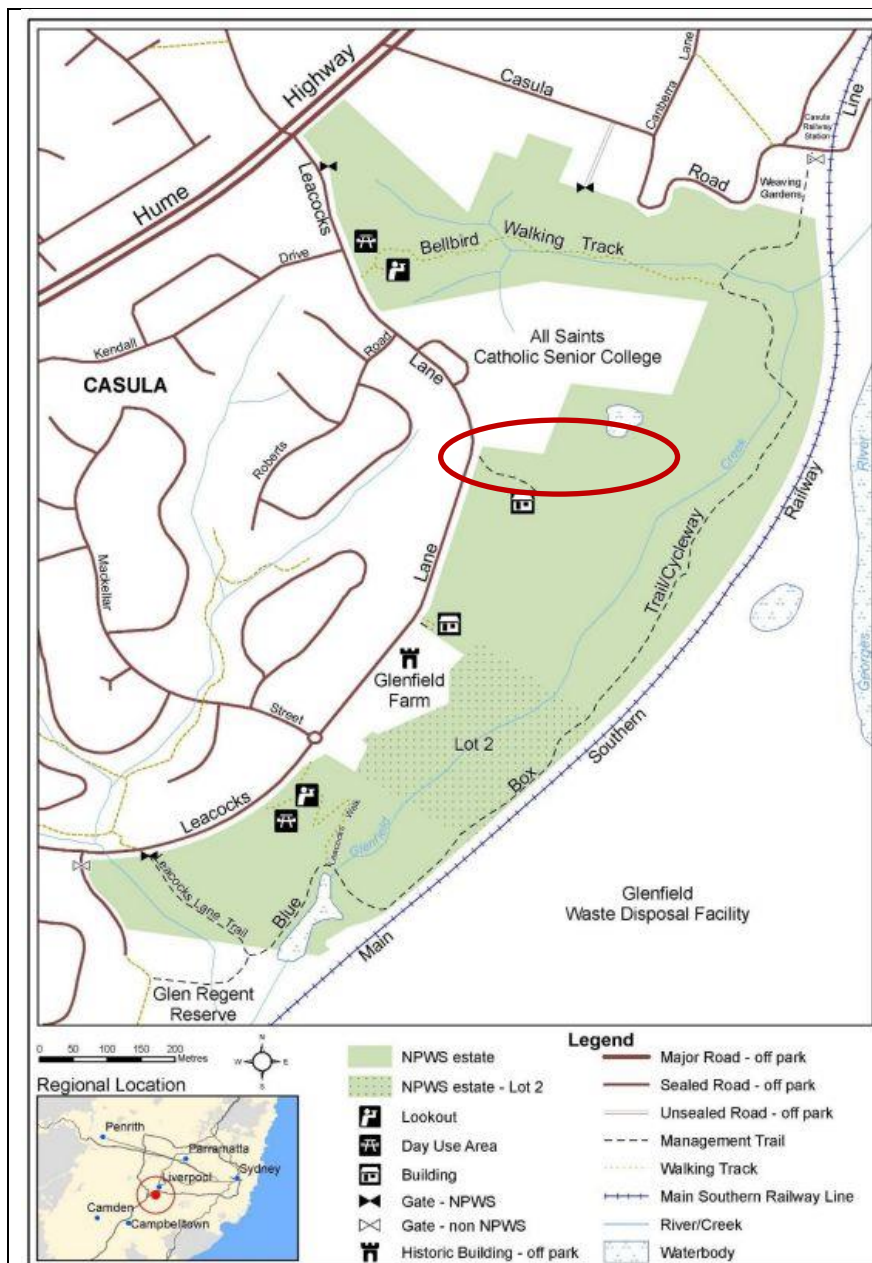


Image 1.3. Leacock Regional Park map showing Mt Omei (marked with red oval) relative to the railway line and Georges River to the east, All Saints Catholic Senior College to the north and remnant Glenfield Estate buildings to the south (NPWS, 2016)

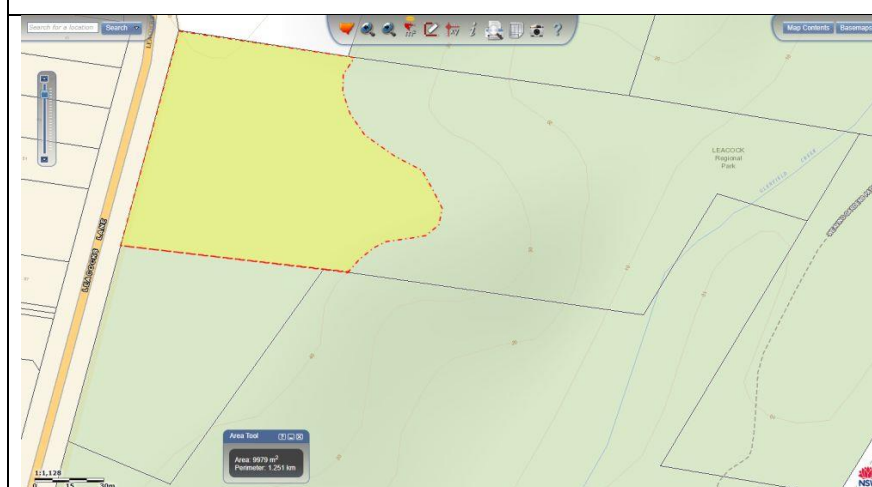


Image 1.4. Cadastral map showing the BHHH recommended proposed curtilage for the LEP listing of Mount Omei, encompassing its 'built precinct' in its bushland context (shaded yellow) within the overall boundary of Lot 17. The proposed curtilage follows the 40m contour at the east, and encompasses the approximately one-hectare area enclosing the Klaphakes' 'house/ gallery' and 'lookout area' (SIX maps annotated by BHHH, 2024).

1.4. BHHH ASSESSED STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Mount Omei's 'built precinct', an area approximately one-hectare in extent, enclosing five buildings and the lookout area in a bushy landscape largely designed and planted by Wolf and Alice Klaphake, is of local heritage significance under all seven NSW Heritage Council criteria.

The Mount Omei property overall has low-level local historical and associational significance as former dairy farming land from the colonial Glenfield Estate, which was located on the outskirts of Sydney and owned at different times by Dr Charles Throsby, explorer, and James Leacock, innovative farmer. The entire Mount Omei property also has potential local scientific significance for contributing both to the 'considerable Aboriginal value and educational potential' identified in Leacock Regional Park by Mary Dallas archaeologists in 1999, and for the archaeological potential of remnant features still in situ from the colonial Glenfield Estate era.

Mount Omei has high historical and associational local significance for the built precinct area of the lot sold in 1946 to German émigré Dr Wolf Klaphake, chemist, and his Australian-born wife Alice, artist, which was transformed into a functional and attractive place for the Klaphakes' scientific, artistic and social activities. In this 'house / gallery/ lookout area' in the north western corner of the lot, Wolf built a laboratory for his experiments in chemistry with commercial applications, which after his death in 1967, was transformed by Alice into the Mount Omei Modern Art Gallery. Focused on showing contemporary art by western Sydney artists, this gallery became 'the centre of the art scene in Sydney's southwest' from 1976 to 1984. Occasional exhibitions have continued to be held there to 2024 under the custodianship of the Klaphake's son Van. As such Mount Omei's 'house/ gallery/ lookout area' is historically significant, rare and representative as a residential property in the urban outskirts which has fostered the local arts community.

The Mount Omei 'house/ gallery/ lookout area' has local aesthetic significance for the five buildings set in a bushy landscape with surrounding gardens—all designed, mainly owner-built and largely planted by the Klaphakes. Although simply constructed in inexpensive materials without professional design input, the mid-twentieth century buildings have been thoughtfully proportioned and oriented in relation to each other, the weather and the

bushland setting to form an attractive precinct, sometimes nick-named 'Alice's Wonderland'.

Mount Omei has local social significance demonstrated by dozens of positive newspaper articles about art exhibitions and artists' gatherings held here since the 1970s and the demonstrated regard in which the place is held by the nearby Casual Powerhouse Arts Centre and the Liverpool Arts Society. Local regard was also demonstrated in 2024 by questions being asked about Mount Omei's future in the NSW Parliament, followed by the making of an Interim Heritage Order over the place by Liverpool City Council.

1.5 METHODOLOGY & LIMITATIONS

This report is prepared in accordance guidelines issued by Heritage New South Wales, notably *Assessing heritage significance*, 2023. It also follows the heritage approach advocated by the *Australia ICOMOS Burra Charter* 2013 and James Semple Kerr's *The Conservation Plan*, 7th ed., 2013.

The key occupants of Mount Omei were Wolf Klaphake, Alice Klaphake and Van Klaphake. To avoid confusion arising from them sharing the same surname, this report generally refers to them by their first names. No disrespect is intended.

This study did not attempt any new archaeological assessment, nor any structural assessment of the condition of the buildings, nor any detailed landscape assessment. The report focuses on European occupation of the site rather than the thousands of years of indigenous occupation which preceded it. Apart from Van Klaphake, no local community members have been consulted, Aboriginal or non-Aboriginal. For social significance assessment, the report relies on newspaper articles, Council reports and local community consultation previously undertaken by Ashley Built Heritage in 2016.

1.6. AUTHORSHIP

This report, including photographs, was prepared by Bronwyn Hanna, PhD, M.ICOMOS, unless otherwise identified. Bronwyn has worked for more than 20 years as a heritage specialist in various NSW government agencies and as a heritage consultant for community groups and in private industry. Bronwyn Hanna History & Heritage was established in 2016 (see www.bhhh.com.au).

1.7. DISCLAIMER

The author has no financial or personal involvement in this property.

1.8. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author thanks Van Klaphake (custodian) and Tara Eagleton (Liverpool local studies librarian).

1.9. LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AC	asbestos-cement sheeting or 'fibro'
Burra Charter	Burra Charter: The Australian ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance (2013) guide to caring for heritage places in Australia, available online from Australia ICOMOS
CPAC	Casula Powerhouse Arts Centre
CMP	Conservation Management Plan
DP	Deposited Plan
Heritage NSW	Heritage New South Wales (the office of the Heritage Council of New South Wales, previously also known as the NSW Heritage office, the Heritage Branch, the Heritage Division of the Office of Environment and Heritage, OEH)
IHO	Interim Heritage Order (made under the <i>NSW Heritage Act 1977</i>)
km	Kilometre
LASN	Liverpool Arts Society Newsletter
LALC	Local Aboriginal Land Council
LGA	Local Government Area
LEP	Local Environmental Plan (made by local government Councils)
NPWS	National Parks & Wildlife Service (a NSW Government agency, part of NSW Environment & Heritage)
NSW	New South Wales
PA	Primary Application (the process required to convert Old System land title into Torrens Title in NSW)
RAHS	Royal Australian Historical Society
S170	Section 170 of the <i>NSW Heritage Act 1977</i> which requires government agencies to keep a Heritage & Conservation Register of the heritage places they own and manage
SHI	State Heritage Inventory (Heritage NSW's response to requirement to keep a publicly accessible list of all statutory-listed heritage places under <i>NSW Heritage Act 1977</i>)
SHR	State Heritage Register

2. HISTORY OF THE PLACE

See 'Historical Timeline' in **Annexure 1** for further details and illustrations.

2.1. ABORIGINAL LAND

Australia has been inhabited by Aboriginal people for at least 60,000 years. The traditional owners of the land on which Mount Omei is located are the Darug people. It is now located within the area of the Tharawal Local Aboriginal Land Council (LALC) (NPWS, 2016, pp.ii, 1).

2.2. COLONIAL HISTORY AND AFTERMATH

The First Fleet of the British penal colony arrived in Sydney Harbour in 1788, settling at Sydney Cove, about 35km north-east of Mt Omei, and opening up the colonisation of the Australian east coast. In 1810 the British Governor Macquarie formally granted a parcel of land (950 acres or 384 ha), to the British colonist Dr. Charles Throsby, an assistant surgeon, magistrate, explorer and land-owner. The land on which Mount Omei would be located was in the north-eastern corner of this grant, which Throsby named 'Glenfield'. Throsby was a colonist who tried to foster peaceful relationships with the traditional owners of the land (Ashley, 2016, p6). The remnant Glenfield colonial buildings have been described as 'arguably the most intact representation of a rural farm complex from the Macquarie period that survives in New South Wales' (Clive Lucas Stapleton, 2007, cited in NPWS, 2016, p13).

Glenfield remained a dairy farm run by the Throsby family until the early 1920s when James Freeland Leacock purchased the estate, including the Mount Omei land. Leacock was an innovative farmer and entrepreneur with many interests including organic farming, land cooperatives and Aboriginal rights (NSW Heritage SHR listing for Glenfield). Leacock subdivided and sold off sections of the Glenfield Estate throughout the 1940s, 1950s and 1960s (NSW Lands CTs Vol.4649 Fol.84 and Vol.5838 Fol.227). Yet, although considerably reduced over time, Glenfield 'continued to operate as a farm until around 2003 when it was purchased by the NSW Department of Planning' (Ashley, 2016, p7).

2.3. THE KLAPHAKES ESTABLISH MOUNT OMEI

Wolf Klaphake (1900-1967) and Alice Klaphake (1909-2004) were a remarkable newlywed couple in 1945. Wolf had been born in Germany in 1900 and obtained his doctorate in

chemistry in Leipzig by 1923. He went to work as a corporate chemist in Berlin while also developing his own inventions. He was not Jewish but he didn't care for Hitler and emigrated to Australia in 1935 where he hoped to build a 'dew condenser' in the desert (Neumann, 2003). That invention fell through, then during World War II Wolf was interned as an 'enemy alien' for four years (1940-1944). In 1945 he met and married Alice (nee Lardi, m. Wilton) (Ashley, 2016; NAA, 2024).

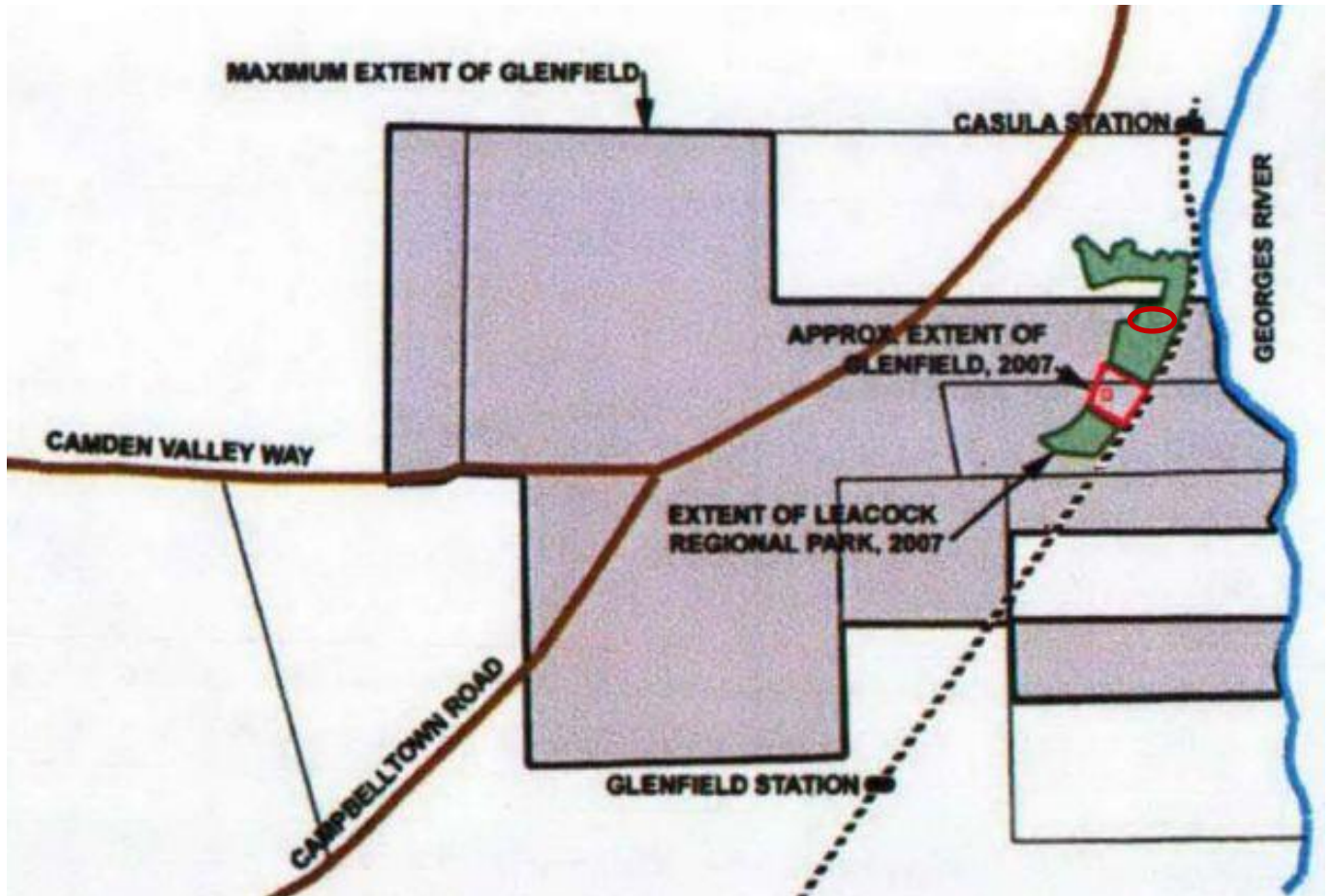


Image 2.1. Diagrammatic map of Charles Throsby's Glenfield Estate, illustrating the maximum extent of Throsbys' estate in mauve. The red square depicts the approximate size of the remnant Glenfield estate in 2007; the extent of Leacock Regional Park is shown in green; a red oval has been added indicating the approximate location of Mount Omei (Clive Lucas Stapleton, 2007, p3, annotated by BHHH).

Alice had been born in 1909 in Kalgoorlie and was divorced with two nearly-grown children in 1945 when she met Wolf. She had trained as a drama / elocution teacher in Perth and acted with the Melbourne Repertory Company; she also worked as a journalist, wrote poetry, and was interested in spiritualism. In late 1945 the couple settled at Minto where, the story goes, they took a train ride into town and liked the look of this hill so decided to buy it.



Image 2.2. Wolf Klaphake in the 1950s (NAA, 2024, courtesy Zita Klaphake).



Image 2.3. Alice Klaphake in the 1940s (CPAC Memorial dedication to Alice Klaphake, 2004).

On 8 July 1946 Alice Gertrude Klaphake, wife of Wolf Klaphake, purchased 6 acres, 23 $\frac{1}{4}$ perches [2.48 ha] from Leacock's Glenfield Estate for £245 (NSW Lands CT Vol.5888 Fol.220, dealing D859380). Even before this purchase was formally recorded, 'Dr Klaphake' was calling for tenders for the 'erection of a fibro cottage at Casula—plans and spec' (*Construction*, 5/12/1945 p9 via Trove). They called the place 'Mount Omei'. 'Omei' literally means 'raised eyebrow' in Chinese and the property was probably named after China's sacred Buddhist mountain, Emei Shan (Neumann, 2003). Wolf was a keen student of Chinese language and culture (Ashley, 2016, p9; NAA, 2024).

Wolf & Alice Klaphake bought the Mount Omei property in 1946 when the land was largely denuded after its years as a dairy farm (see Image 2.4). Although their backgrounds were in science and the arts respectively, they turned their intellects to design and quickly set about building a group of modest, vernacular buildings to service their working and domestic needs. According to Ashley's research, the laboratory was the first building to be constructed, probably in stages from 1946 onwards. The family lived in this building until the house was constructed in 1947-48 (Ashley, 2016, pp27, 29). Two sheds and a workshop were also constructed in these early years, and the denuded dairy landscape was extensively replanted with trees. During this early period Wolf and Alice Klaphake also had two children: Van born in 1947 and Zita born in 1949.



Image 2.4. This 1947 aerial image of the Mount Omei property shows the land almost denuded after 130 years of dairy farming as part of the Glenfield Estate, except for some large trees on the northern boundary line. The laboratory building and house are already in evidence. There are new plantings around the house precinct including a 'hook' shaped line of trees to the east delineating the edge of the ridgetop (NSW Lands Historical Imagery; Ashley, 2016, p25).

Wolf used the laboratory to continue working independently as a consultant chemist. 'His business brought him neither riches nor fame. In the years before he died in 1967, he made a living by manufacturing toilet cleaner in his laboratory' (NAA, 2024). Despite (or perhaps because of) the difficulties Wolf encountered in Australia, he has been memorialised with an online biographical account of his time in internment on the website of the National Archives of Australia (NAA, 2024), and a 'radio play' produced by the ABC (2003):

'Wolf Klaphake was gifted, eccentric, naive, intelligent, stubborn, charming, withdrawn, romantic, uncommunicative, generous, intense, exuberant, repressed, depressed. There is little doubt that he was extraordinarily talented' (NAA, 2024).

Alice Klaphake considered selling the Mount Omei property after Wolf's death, but instead decided to stay, and even added another acre or so of land to the property, in 1972 (NSW Lands CT Vol.11816 Fol.132).

2.4. THE MODERN ART GALLERY AT MOUNT OMEI

While Alice maintained her interests in theatre and spiritualism, it was painting and sculpture that became the focus of her activities throughout the 1960s and 1970s. She became close friends with Lenore Rays and Tom Bass and Margo and Gerald Lewers, and was also inspired by painting lessons she took with John Olsen. She joined a Workers Educational Association study group on modern art, where she became friendly with Margaret Whitlam, and connected with the artists at Wedderburn near Campbelltown. Ashley explains:

'Van Klaphake said that Alice started painting at 55 years old, that is in 1961. An article in the *Australian Women's Weekly* quotes Alice as saying that she first received a commission for a mural for a hotel in Terrigal "after which commissions started pouring in and Alice's hobby became a full-time occupation". In 1975 Alice won the Camden Art Prize. According to the *Women's Weekly* article Alice was hung in "collections in England, Greece and the United States" (Ashley, 20165, pp15-16, quoting *Australian Women's Weekly*, 17/11/1976, p69)

Already busy as a successful abstract artist, in 1976 Alice decided to adapt Wolf's laboratory building at Mount Omei into a privately run art gallery specialising in contemporary modern art produced by local and regional artists. From 1976 to 1984, 'Mount Omei had a second life: as the centre of the art scene in Sydney's southwest' (NAA, 2024):

'Dubbed "Alice's Wonderland" by locals the Modern Gallery became a gathering place for local artists and crafts people. Alice was 67 by the time she opened the gallery but she relished the hard work and role of the gallery as a bushland oasis for friends and visitors. She was feisty, energetic and flamboyant . . . 'The Gallery' was a huge success, partly because of Alice's extrovert nature and ability to connect with people, but also because of the quality of the artists she showed. Artists such as the sculptor Tom Bass and painters such as Elisabeth Cummings exhibited there. From this small space a hugely important and influential group of people showcased and developed their work (Ashley 2016, p17-18).

Ashley further explained:

'Alice herself was a strong personality who both charmed and influenced many, including non-artists who say that they were influenced by her and her life philosophies, such as local resident and former NSW State Minister Craig Knowles and

Campbelltown solicitor John Marsden . . . Many individual artists and others who knew of Alice Klaphake and her art gallery have a strong sense of personal association with both Alice and the place' (Ashley, 2016, p41).



Image 2.5. Alice Klaphake pictured in front of her Mount Omei modern gallery in 1977 (Champion, 18/5/1977, from Ashley, 2016, Annexure B newsclippings)

The Casula Powerhouse Arts Centre (CPAC) recognised Alice's major contribution to the arts in Liverpool in 2001 by dedicating an amphitheatre in her name on the banks of the Georges River. Following her death in 2004, the CPAC also held a memorial service in her honour. In addition, CPAC holds about 50 heritage objects and art works associated with Mount Omei, called the 'Klaphake Collection' (Ashley, 2016, pp33, 36; CPAC, 2004). Also in 2003, the Casula Powerhouse Arts Centre proposed that it be given management of the Mount Omei property to help develop a 'Georges River Cultural Corridor' (Ashley, 2016, p22 quoting Kon Gouriotis personal communication); however this proposal was not developed at the time.

2.5. MOUNT OMEI FORMS PART OF LEACOCK REGIONAL PARK

In 1979, in the middle of this period of intense artistic activity, Alice sold the Mount Omei property to the NSW Government's 'Planning & Environment Commission' for \$90,000 (NSW Lands CT Vol.11816 Fol.132, R265258). The sale made no apparent difference to the Klaphakes' living arrangements, nor to the running of the art gallery because Alice, and later Van Klaphake, continued to lease the property on a basis of 'permissive occupancy' (Ashley, 2016, p22). Although Alice formally closed the art gallery in 1984, when she was 75 years old (Ashley, 2016, pp18, 22), there have been ongoing art events held at Mount Omei until very recently (as for example reported in the *Liverpool Leader*, 21/6/2017, 7/3/2018, 20/6/2018; LASN, May-June 2024).

On 11 March 1997, the Mount Omei property was transferred within the NSW Government's property portfolio to the National Parks & Wildlife Service (NPWS). Combined with other land acquisitions in the area, the NPWS reserved 'Leacock Regional Park', including the Mt Omei property, as a new regional park, on 5 September 1997 (Ashley, 2016, pp21-22).

In August 2016, the NPWS noted that Mount Omei had only been recognised as 'potential heritage item' on its 'Historic Heritage Information Management System' and that its heritage significance 'was yet to be determined' (NPWS, 2016, p14). Later in the same year, NPWS commissioned heritage consultant Ashley Built Heritage to undertake a heritage assessment of the place. Ashley assessed the entire Mount Omei property as being of local heritage significance under all seven NSW Heritage Council criteria: historical, historical associations, aesthetic, social, scientific, rarity and representativeness. He recommended that the place be retained, repaired, conserved and made available for community-related purposes (Ashley, 2016, pp43, 51; see Ashley's conclusions and recommendations included in full at Annexure 3). Ashley's recommendations have not been implemented to date.

2.6. INTERIM HERITAGE ORDER FOR MOUNT OMEI

On 19 March 2024 the NSW Member of Parliament for Liverpool, Charishma Kaliyanda, discussed the conservation of Mount Omei in the NSW Parliament's Legislative Assembly where she told the Legislative Assembly that NPWS had initiated proceedings to evict the tenant, Van Klaphake, and described an array of community concerns in response to this.

On 22 March 2024 Liverpool City Council made an Interim Heritage Order (IHO) for six months on the Mount Omei property (*Government Gazette* 22/3/2024 no.103).



Image 2.6. *Liverpool Arts Society Newsletter* montage of recent photos of arts people at Mount Omei (March-April 2024, p6).

3. DESCRIPTION

See illustrations in **Annexure 2** for further details and images.

3.1. BACKGROUND

The Mount Omei property was sold to the NSW Government in 1979 and has been part of Leacock Regional Park since 1997. Nonetheless it is still in use as a residence by Van Klaphake. Two brief inspections of the property were undertaken by Bronwyn Hanna in June 2024. A site plan for the place prepared by Geoff Ashley in 2016 is given at Image 1.1.

3.2. WRITTEN DESCRIPTION

The cadastral description of Mount Omei is Lot 17 DP 554086 in the Municipality of Liverpool, Parish of St Minto, County of Cumberland.

Mount Omei is 3.17 hectares in area, and is located about 35 kilometres south-west of the City of Sydney and 4 kilometres south of the centre of Liverpool.

The 'built precinct' at Mount Omei occupies about one hectare in area at the top of a hill about 40 metres above the Georges River. From here the eastern side of the Mount Omei property falls steeply down towards Glenfield Creek and a shared walking-cycling path. Further to the east beyond its boundary is the Southern Railway Line and the Georges River. The remnant historic homestead buildings of Glenfield are located about 300m to the south, at 88 Leacock Lane. There is suburban housing closely adjacent on the other side of Leacock Lane, and the All Saints Senior Catholic College is adjacent to the north.

3.2.1. The Mount Omei buildings

Wolf & Alice Klaphake bought the Mount Omei property in 1946 and, in the next fifteen years, and with limited funds, designed and built the five modest vernacular buildings there—with much of the work undertaken by Wolf as owner-builder (for example, see LCC Minutes, 2/7/1957, p2). Wolf also replanted the property extensively.

The two main structures at Mount Omei are the former scientific laboratory used by Wolf, 1946-1967, which was turned into a modern gallery run by Alice, 1976-1984 (#5 in the site plan at Image 1.1); and their own home constructed 1947-48 (#6). There are also three

ancillary buildings: a garage with skillion wings built in 1946 (#3), another garage built in 1956 (#2) and a workshop-studio built about 1960 (#4).



Image 3.1. View from near the Leacock Lane entrance, with the 1956 and 1946 garages (at left and centre) and the western facade of the former laboratory/ gallery building (at right) (BHHH, 2024).



Image 3.2. View of the eastern entrance to the former laboratory / gallery building (left) and the 1960 studio (right) (BHHH, 2024).



Image 3.3. Interior of the former gallery building sighted June 2024, with the juncture of low-pitched gable roofs between two wings expressed in the ceiling design (BHHH, 2024)



Image 3.4. 2024 view of the Mount Omei house from the north-east across its terrace (BHHH, 2024).



Image 3.5. Enclosed garden area to the east of the house used for picnics, with pond, bunya trees and lookout over the Georges River (BHHH, 2024)

3.2.1.1. Fabric and design of the buildings overall

The five buildings are functional, modest, single-storey, mid-twentieth century, vernacular structures clad in asbestos-cement (AC or 'fibro') with brick foundations and a brick fireplace in the case of the house. They all have concrete or timber floors, fibro or Canite interior wall and ceiling linings, timber joinery and low-pitched corrugated iron roofing (which has largely replaced the earlier AC roofing). There was no known involvement by an architect in their design but they are thoughtfully oriented in relation to each other, the weather and the bushland setting and solidly built with generously sized interior rooms. The house has large window openings opening to the surrounding vegetation, including a feature corner where two windows meet. Pathways between the buildings are lined with gravel.

Innovative aspects of these buildings include: raising the water tanks above the living areas in each of the two main buildings to allow for gravity-fed water; designing the house without corridors in an open-plan manner; using side-lit lamps rather than overhead lighting for a gentler ambience; using the 'Golden Mean' to guide the proportions of important rooms such as the house's lounge room; and consulting spiritual markers akin to 'song-lines' to create harmonious focal points within the buildings, for example, in front of the hearth in the lounge room. The painting of all the building exteriors in white with black contrasting door and window frames is a simple but effective way of providing coherence and variety for the group.

3.2.1.2. Style of buildings overall

An analysis of the buildings at Mount Omei in relation to the standard Australian architectural style text—Apperly, Irving & Reynolds' *Pictorial Guide to Identifying Australian Architecture*—suggests these buildings fall into the 'Inter-War Functionalist' style and the 'Post-War Regional' styles (Apperly, 1989, pp186-187, 218-223).

Apperly's 'Inter-War Functionalist style c.1915-1940' was an Australian response to European modern architecture of the 1920s and 1930s which emphasised 'functionalism', 'clean lines' and 'complete dissociation from styles of the past'. Like the buildings at Mount Omei, it was characterised by simple geometric shapes, light colours, large glass areas and its 'radical, progressive image' typically appealed to 'non-conformist individuals' (Apperly, 1989, p187).

Apperly's 'Post-War Melbourne Regional c.1940-1960' style also has a number of characteristics which apply to the Mount Omei buildings:

'The archetypal Melbourne Regional house was to be found in an outer suburb or in the bush. It was single-storeyed and had a narrow, linear plan. It gained an unassertive horizontality from its low-pitch gabled roofs of corrugated asbestos cement with . . . slim bargeboards . . . walls of bagged and painted brick or varnished boarding . . . large glass areas' (Apperly et al., 1989, p218).

Although Apperly didn't propose a post-war regional style associated with Sydney, other architectural historians have long argued about the existence and characteristics of the 'Sydney School'. Jacqueline Urford's summary of the debates mentions many qualities of the 'Sydney School' which apply to the buildings at Mount Omei, including:

'sympathetic materials, economy, simplicity and an appreciation of the beauty and harmony of nature . . . a concern for honest expression of materials and minimal disturbance of natural sites . . . [creating] a setting for a comfortable, secure and informal lifestyle that minimised barriers between inside and outside through terraces, courtyards and wide, glazed openings . . . sensitive site placement' (Urford, 2012, p674, quoting Jennifer Taylor, 1984).

The Mount Omei buildings were thoughtfully designed and situated by the Klaphakes in a recovered bushland setting to create a functional and inviting place for their scientific, artistic and social activities.

3.2.2. The former laboratory/ gallery building (#5 in site-plan in Image 1.1)

Ashley considered that the former laboratory/ gallery building was commenced in 1946 with the construction of the eastern end in double brick. This included a small bathroom with water tank over it (providing gravity-fed water). The building was soon extended to the west, with the additions of three fibro-clad rooms with timber framing, turning it into a 'L'-shaped building with the inside-corner oriented to the north-east. The two arms of the L-shaped building each have their own gabled metal roof and the tower over the water tank has a hipped metal roof. The north room adjoining bathroom, now the kitchen, was apparently Wolf Klaphake's laboratory. In the mid-1970s, Alice Klaphake adapted the building for use as an art gallery, and it is likely that the arched interior openings between rooms were input under her supervision at that time (Ashley, 2016, pp27-28)

3.2.3. The house (#6 in site-plan in Image 1.1)

The Mount Omei house was constructed in 1947-48 in another L-shaped structure with the inside corner again oriented towards the north-east, but here occupied by a concrete-floored terrace. The orientation minimises the house's exposure to westerly winds and gives full access to northern sunlight. The house design is unusual for lacking interior corridors linking the internal spaces. There is a laundry attached to the south east corner of the house with an enclosed water tank raised above to provide gravity fed water to the house (as in the former laboratory / gallery building). Ashley described the house as having 'a good open and generous character with features being the corner windows in the lounge room and the large window area in the kitchen that Alice designed with its aspect over the north facing terrace' (Ashley, 2016, p29).

Although Ashley suggested that the house was designed by Alice Klaphake (Ashley, 2016, p29), Van Klaphake considered his mother was not likely to have drawn any plans herself but that she would have had design input into aspects such as the building's orientation to the north, the view from the kitchen and the special attention given to the area in front of the fireplace as a focal point. Van recalled that Wolf designed the proportions of the rectangular lounge room using the Golden Ratio (Klaphake, 2024, personal communication).

3.2.4. The ancillary buildings (nos 2, 3 and 4 in site-plan in Image 1.1)

Ashley suggests the 1946 garage (#3 in site-plan in Image 1.1) was built by Wolf Klaphake. It is a rectangular, gable-roofed structure with a skillion wing on each side. The building has been used variously for storage, a spare room, a studio, a darkroom for photography and a workshop. Ashley noticed some 'severe termite damage to the studs in the western skillion behind some AC sheeting' in 2016 (Ashley, 2016, p31). Sheets of broken fibro are apparent on the south façade in 2024.

The 1956 garage (#2 in site-plan in Image 1.1) is a rectangular structure with gable roof has a garage with a roller door on the western side, with no internal linings, and a room on the eastern side lined internally with fibro sheeting and a corner louvre window, which was used as a 'quiet room' or 'studio'.

Ashley states that the 1960 Workshop-studio-gallery building (#4 in site-plan in Image 1.1) was built by Wolf Klaphake for himself. It is another simple rectangular building with a gable roof on brick foundations (Ashley, 2016, p32)

3.3. Condition of buildings

In 2016 Ashley assessed the condition of the former laboratory/ gallery building as 'generally in fair condition only, with external deterioration of roofing gutters and fibro external wall claddings . . . Roofing is . . . in fair condition, but the gutters have not been maintained and some of the eaves are rotted' (Ashley, 2016, p33).

He assessed the condition of the house being 'in fair condition in relation to external timbers and external paintwork and good condition internally. However, it is showing lack of external maintenance generally . . . The gutter in the House is asbestos and is worn and should be replaced with a steel gutter' (Ashley, 2016, pp13, 29, 33, 38).

He assessed the two garages and the workshop as being 'in poor condition with termite and dry rot fungus (from water ingress) most evident. Many of the hidden stud frame timbers may be termite effected . . . The AC sheeting is best protected by encapsulation under paint and so repainting these surfaces should happen as a priority if the buildings are retained' (Ashley, 2016, pp33, 38).

In 2024, the two main buildings (the house and the former laboratory-gallery) have not had major repairs but appear to be in fair-to-good, serviceable condition, although with rusting iron roofs. The 1960 studio and 1956 garage are in fair but still serviceable condition. The 1946 garage is in poor condition, with broken fibro panelling and rotting timber joinery.

3.4. Mount Omei landscape areas and features

This BHHH analysis of Mount Omei proposes that the three-hectare property is composed of three main landscape areas. This analysis is similar to that proposed by Ashley in 2016 (pp25-27) except that two of his areas are combined here to make one, understood to be both the laboratory/ gallery and the lookout area together constituting the 'built precinct' ('A') which was designed and inhabited by the Klaphakes.



Image 3.6. Aerial cadastral map of the Mount Omei property with three precincts marked approximately with three red ovals (NSW Lands SIX map annotated by BHHH, 2024).

- A) the Klaphake's 'built precinct' area in the north-western corner of the property, including all the numbered features on Geoff Ashley's site map (Image 1.1) and encompassing both his 'laboratory/ gallery' area and his 'lookout' area. The 'built precinct' includes the five mid-twentieth century buildings set amongst Klaphakes' plantings and linked by gravel pathways. This area also includes the 'sheltered garden area to the east of the house created by a hook' of trees planted by Wolf Klaphake (see image 2.4) with a cleared path to the eastern lookout with a small pond and several planted Bunya pine trees. On the other side of this precinct is the distinctive feature of the steel entrance gates from Leacock Lane with the words 'Mount' and 'Omei' welded into them (Image x.x.).
- B) the steep eastern slopes around the lookout falling down to Glenfield Creek. In 2016 much of this area had been overtaken by the weed African Olive, but was being revegetated by NPWS (Ashley, 2016, p26).
- C) the area to the south of the house-gallery area, adjacent to Leacock's Lane, which was purchased by the Klaphakes in 1972, and which includes 'trees planted by Klaphake, the site of a tank/cistern from the Glenfield Farm period that was filled in at some stage as well as some furrows to retain water that Van said his father formed' (Ashley, 2016, p27).

3.5. MOVEABLE HERITAGE

Ashley suggested a range of moveable heritage may be associated with Mount Omei:

'There is a collection of approximately 50 objects . . . held by CPAC titled the Klaphake Collection and this includes some objects from Wolf's laboratory, artworks by Alice and artworks and sculptures by other artists. There are also a number of objects in and around the site that include bird baths and sculptures. Artworks in other galleries include the three paintings by Alice Klaphake held in the Campbelltown Arts Centre' (Ashley, 2016, p33).

3.6. ARCHAEOLOGICAL POTENTIAL

Leacock Regional Park was the subject of an archaeological study by Mary Dallas in 1999 (NPWS, 2016) but this has not been made available during the research for this report. Although this BHHH report does not attempt any archaeological assessment, the following comments from Ashley's 2016 report bear repeating:

'The site as a whole is likely to contain European archaeological remains from the Colonial era Glenfield property. There are remains of a dam/weir on Glenfield Creek at the eastern edge of the Mount Omei property and there is a filled in cistern/holding tank at the top of the site . . . from 1952.' (Ashley, 2016, p22)

4. ASSESSMENT OF HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

The assessment of significance offers previous and current understandings of the significance and meanings of the place. The Heritage Council of NSW recommend the use of its seven criteria of significance. The conclusive 'Statement of Significance' summarises the assessment of significance in a concise statement.

4.1. BHHH ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE UNDER THE HERITAGE COUNCIL OF NSW CRITERIA

4.1.1. Criterion A) Historical Theme *(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 Mount Omei property in Casula has local historical significance for Liverpool for demonstrating typical early phases of urban development in Sydney. Mount Omei was part of the original grant which formed Charles Thorsby's (iconic) colonial Glenfield Estate in 1810. After being used for dairy farming for over a century, it was subdivided from the estate in 1946 as part of the breaking up of the farmland by James Leacock, resulting in the formation of the suburb of Casula.

The Mount Omei phase of urban development under the ownership of Wolf and Alice Klaphake since 1946 was, by contrast, exceptional. Mount Omei was one of a small number of properties across the peri-urban hinterland of Sydney in the post-war era made by, and for, people with artistic and alternative ideas. The Mount Omei 'Klaphake house/ gallery/ lookout area' has local historical significance as an attractive group of vernacular buildings which were largely owner-designed in inexpensive materials, set in a bushland setting they largely planted themselves, for their domestic, scientific, artistic and social activities.

The Mount Omei 'Klaphake house/ gallery/ lookout area' has local historical significance for the 'Modern Art Gallery' run by Alice Klaphake from 1976 to 1984, and exhibiting occasionally since then under the custodianship of Van Klaphake. This gallery fostered the local arts community and has been described as 'the centre of the art scene in Sydney's southwest'.

4.1.2. Criterion B) Historical Associations *(An item has strong or special associations 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)*

Mount Omei in Casula has local historical associations with:

- Dr Charles Throsby (1777-1928), a well-known colonial surgeon, magistrate and explorer who was formally granted the land on which Mount Omei is situated in 1810, and who built the large and successful dairy farm known as Glenfield. He was understood to maintain good relations with the traditional owners of the land.
- James Leacock (d. 1974), who acquired Glenfield in the early 1920s and was an innovative dairy farmer and entrepreneur who embraced interests ranging from organic farming and land cooperatives to Aboriginal rights. In the 1950s he established the first Aboriginal heritage museum in Sydney, known as the 'Austro-Asian Cultural Centre'. Leacock subdivided and sold off large swathes of the estate throughout his tenure, including the Mount Omei property, resulting in the formation of the suburb of Casula.
- Dr Wolf Klaphake (1900-1967), an industrial chemist and inventor who, with his wife Alice, bought the newly subdivided property in 1946, named it Mount Omei and lived and worked in the home and laboratory they purpose-built there, until his death in 1967. Wolf migrated to Australia from Germany in 1935 but was interned as an enemy alien for four years during World War II, an experience which has been commemorated in an online biographical account by the National Archives of Australia (NAA, 2024), and a radio play/ documentary by the ABC (ABC, 2003).
- Alice Klaphake (1909-2004, nee Lardi, m. Wilton), who studied drama and acted with the Melbourne Repertoire Theatre in the 1920s, worked as a journalist and wrote poetry before marrying Wolf Klaphake and buying the Mount Omei property. During the 1960s she studied painting with John Olson and became a successful abstract artist, winning the Camden Art Prize in 1975. She was good friends with other prominent artists such as Margot & Gerard Lewers, Lenore Rays & Tom Bass, and the Wedderburn artists at Campbelltown. Her privately owned Modern Art Gallery at Mount Omei, run from 1976 to 1984, was described as 'the centre of the art scene in Sydney's southwest' (NAA, 2024). Her memory has been honoured by the Casula Powerhouse Arts Centre.
- Van Klaphake, son of Wolf and Alice, who has lived at Mount Omei for much of his life and been its custodian for the last twenty years. An expert in Australian botany, he has self-published a series of authoritative books on native flora, focusing on eucalypts,

sedges, grasses and rainforest species. His figures of native birds carved from local timbers have been exhibited in gallery shows at the Mount Omei gallery.

- Artists who exhibited their work at the Mount Omei Modern Art Gallery between 1976 and the present day, including: Bob Baker, James Baker, Juanita Bailey, Lenore Bass, Tom Bass, Fonika Booth, Fred Braat, Joan Brassil, Raymond Coles, Elisabeth Cummings, Gray Dunreath-Cooper, Greg Fawley, Philip Grienke, Hanna Juskovic, Arpad Kinka, Alice Klaphake, Van Klaphake, Gerard Lewers, Margo Lewers, Darryl Lock, Lorraine Maggs, Daphne Miller, John Paice, Carl Plate, Barbara Romalis, Nick Romalis, Colleen Shaliapin, Robyn Smith, Brian Stratton, Robert Sugden, Vince Vozzo and Georgina Worth.

4.1.3. 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)*

Mount Omei's 'house/ gallery/ lookout area', an approximately one hectare precinct at the top of the hill which includes five buildings set amongst trees and gardens, and linked by gravel pathways, has local aesthetic significance. Designed and largely owner-built by Alice and Wolf Klaphake in the mid twentieth century, the buildings are modest, single-storey, vernacular structures constructed in brick and fibro with metal roofing, white painted exteriors with black trim, and generously proportioned interior rooms which provided a functional and attractive place for the Klaphakes' scientific, artistic and social activities. Although simply constructed in inexpensive materials without professional design input, they are thoughtfully proportioned and oriented in relation to each other, the weather and the bushland setting, making an attractive precinct sometimes nick-named 'Alice's Wonderland'.

4.1.4. Criterion D) Social Values *(The item has strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group in NSW (or the local area) for social or spiritual reasons)*

The one-hectare 'Klaphake house/ gallery/ lookout area' of Mount Omei, which was developed by Alice and Wolf Klaphake in the mid twentieth century, has local social significance for its associations with the local artistic community in Casula, Liverpool and western Sydney. Alice Klaphake's Modern Art Gallery, run from Mount Omei in the 1970s

and 1980s, was described as 'the centre of the art scene in Sydney's southwest'. Although officially closed in 1984 when Alice was 75, exhibitions have continued to be held there occasionally, which has resulted in the place remaining widely known and appreciated by the local arts community.

The Casula Powerhouse Arts Centre (CPAC), located nearby, has demonstrated its special regard for Mount Omei by dedicating an amphitheatre on the banks of the Georges River in Alice Klaphake's name in 2001; by holding a memorial service in her honour after her death in 2004; by keeping a collection of about 50 moveable heritage items and art works associated with Mount Omei, called the 'Klaphake Collection'; and by proposing, in 2003 that CPAC be given management of the Mount Omei property to manage as a community resource and include in a 'Georges River Cultural Corridor'. The Liverpool Arts Society has also recently demonstrated its regard in a number of 2024 newsletter articles advocating to save Mount Omei.

The local social significance of the place was recently attested by the Liverpool Member for Parliament, Charishma Kaliyanda, who told the NSW Legislative Assembly on 19 March 2024 that artists, friends and others who have benefitted from its legacy have been rallying in support of Mount Omei since 2016, when concerns were first raised about its future. Dozens of local newspaper articles have been published about the place since the 1970s. Another demonstration of local regard was the making of an Interim Heritage Order over the place by Liverpool City Council in 2024.

4.1.5. Criterion E) Scientific and Archaeological Values *(An item has the 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))*

Mary Dallas' archaeological investigation of the entirety of Leacock Park in 1988 and 1999 found just one Aboriginal camp site, which was not located at Mount Omei. Dallas nonetheless concluded that the park, including Mount Omei, contained 'considerable Aboriginal value and educational potential' (NPWS, 2016, pp11-12). The identification of historic geographical features associated with the Glenfield Estate by Ashley Built Heritage in 2016, such as fence posts and buried cisterns, suggests that the Mount Omei property has historic archaeological potential, at least at the local level.

4.1.6. Criterion F) Rarity of the Place *(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 one-hectare 'Klaphake house/ gallery/ lookout area' of Mount Omei, which was developed by Alice and Wolf Klaphake in the mid twentieth century, is rare at the local level in Liverpool as a domestic precinct with modern buildings which, although simple and vernacular, share attributes with post-war regional styles such as the 'Sydney School'. The house, former laboratory and ancillary buildings were thoughtfully designed and situated in a recovered bushland setting to create a functional and inviting place for scientific, artistic and social activities, sometimes nick-named 'Alice's Wonderland'. The use of the former laboratory building as a privately-run art gallery, on and off since 1976, is rare in the local context, and has resulted in the place being widely known and appreciated by the local community.

4.1.7. Criterion G) Representative Significance of the Place *(An item is important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of NSW's Cultural or natural places; or Cultural or natural environments)*

The one-hectare 'Klaphake house/ gallery/ lookout area' of Mount Omei, which was developed by Alice and Wolf Klaphake in the mid twentieth century, has representative significance as the local level in Liverpool as a place associated with artistic activities, largely because of the Mount Omei art gallery run by Alice Klaphake 1976-1984, which has continued to be the site of occasional art exhibitions. Mount Omei is also representative of places associated with alternative lifestyles in western Sydney in the post-war period.

4.2. COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

This section briefly discusses other places in NSW (and elsewhere in Australia) which have been heritage-listed for qualities comparable to those found significant at Mount Omei, to enable a better understanding of Mount Omei's degree of significance.

4.2.1. Peri-urban residential properties associated with artistic activity

In the mid-twentieth century, a number of communities associated with the fostering of artistic and intellectual culture developed around residential properties in the urban

outskirts of Australian cities, often in alternative settings, which have since been recognised in heritage listings, and sometimes turned into government-supported cultural hubs. These include:

Lewers Bequest and Penrith Regional Gallery, 84-88 River Road, Emu Plains.

The Penrith Council LEP listing entry states: 'The place is of historic significance at a regional level as the former home and workshop of Gerald and Margot Lewers, important artists of the mid twentieth century period in Australia . . . The place is of social significance at a regional level because its function as a regional Art Gallery provides an important and valued resource for the community' (Extract from NSW SHI, LEP listing entry Statement of Significance).



Image 4.1. (NSW SHI LEP listing image)

Ashley also mentioned this comparable place because of its links to the Klaphakes: 'Perhaps through her friendship with Lenore Rays and Tom Bass, Alice had become friends with Margo Lewers, who with her husband Gerard were accomplished artists also living on Sydney's peri-urban fringe, at Emu Plains near Penrith. The Nobel-prize winning novelist Patrick White considered the Lewers' home on the banks of the Nepean River to be "one of the focus points of our still tentative civilisation". The Lewers home has now been transformed into The Penrith Regional Gallery & Lewers Bequest, and is a major regional art gallery, house museum and popular café (Ashley, 2016, p14).

Norman Lindsay House, 14-20 Norman Lindsay Crescent, Faulconbridge.

The NSW SHR listing entry states: 'The house, studios, grounds and bush walk which comprise what we know as the Norman Lindsay Gallery Museum, etching studio and grounds, are intrinsically connected to Norman and Rose Lindsay, the Lindsay family generally, and the society of visitors and artists which the place attracted. The Norman Lindsay house and grounds occupied an important place in the artistic, literary and moral history of early to mid-20th century Australia: and as such the place is significant within a national context. The place provides potential to reveal the creative achievement of Norman and Rose Lindsay, and their family in integrating building, landscape and artwork (Extract from NSW SHI, SHR listing entry Statement of Significance)

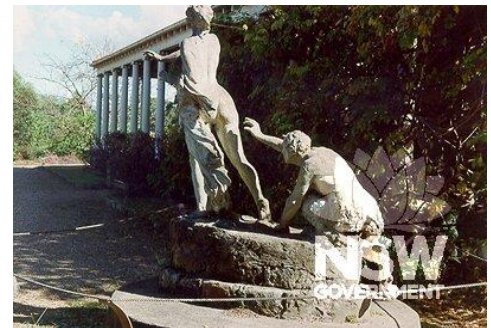


Image 4.2. (NSW SHI SHR listing image)

Varuna house, studio, garden and interiors, 139-141 Cascade Street, Katoomba

The Blue Mountains LEP listing entry states: 'Varuna's association with a major novelist and today with a stream of writers in residence, inspired by Eleanor Dark's custom built creative environment, give it a high level of significance at the state level. Its studio, garden and furnishings have maintained a high degree of integrity since the Darks lived there and the continuing association with the family emphasises its significance, especially its high local significance socially and



Image 4.3. (NSW SHI LEP listing image)

aesthetically' (NSW SHI, LEP listing entry Statement of Significance).

Dobell House, 47 Dobell Drive, Wangi Wangi.

The NSW SHR listing entry states: 'As well as being Dobell's home from 1942-1970, it was also the place where he painted numerous works . . . Dobell House is further associated with the artist, having been designed by Dobell, originally as a two-room weekender, then modified by him, through the series of additions which included the second-storey studio' (Extract from NSW SHI, LEP listing entry Statement of Significance).



Image 4.4. (NSW SHI SHR listing image)

Bungonia, 77 Myola Road, Newport.

The Northern Beaches Council LEP listing entry states: 'built c.1890 by A.G. Yewen as a house for his family, has historic and aesthetic significance as a sandstone cottage dating from the early development of Newport used as an artists' colony. It is the oldest surviving building on Bungan Head, being part of the early subdivision . . . The house also has associations with prominent artists, writers, philosophers and political thinkers such as Norman Lindsay, Fullwood and Minns who all stayed there . . . built with local natural materials to simple designs made with traditional techniques to reduce their visual impact and harmonise with the natural context and surroundings . . .' (Extract from NSW SHI, LEP listing entry Statement of Significance).



Image 4.5. (NSW SHI LEP listing image)

Haefliger's Cottage, Denison Street, Hill End.

The Bathurst Regional Council LEP listing entry states: 'Haefliger's Cottage is of considerable Local and State significance in its association with the Artists of Hill End of the post WWII period: 1947-1958, and to the present day, but especially artist and Art Critic Paul Haefliger and his wife artist Jean Bellette, colleagues Donald Friend and Russell Drysdale and John Olson . . . [it is] one of the houses occupied by widely recognised artists who used Hill End as an inspirational getaway during the 1950s and 1960s' (Extract from NSW SHI, LEP listing entry Statement of Significance).



(NSW SHI LEP listing image)

Laverty House, 207 Eastern Road, Wahroonga.

The Ku-Ring-Gai Council LEP listing entry states: 'The substantially intact Laverty House is a rare example of an artist's residence still with its functioning and identifiable artist studio. The way of life of the Laverty Family is still clearly evident in the extant planning and fabric of the house and studio. The design of the house and studio is of exceptional interest when planned expansion of the house is understood in order to cater for young couples of modest financial means in the post-war years, of post-war frugality, and of their increasing wealth and family size through later additions and enlargement of the small house nucleus . . . The Laverty House is of local aesthetic significance as its design exhibits the



(NSW SHI LEP listing image)

hallmarks of Modernism with its clean lines, simple form, and walls of glass . . . The Laverty House is one of a series of houses within the Ku-ring-gai municipality that demonstrate the emergence of modern architecture in New South Wales, of which the architect Sydney Ancher was a leading proponent. The Laverty House is of local associative significance because of its strong association with renowned architect, Sydney Ancher and his firm, Ancher, Mortlock & Murray and also because of its association with two prominent Australian artists, Ursula and Peter Laverty, who was Head of the National Art School and later Director of the Art Gallery of NSW The Laverty House has the potential to yield information about cultural history in NSW, through its association with the artistic world, which is strongly reflected through the extant building fabric, arrangement and composition of elements on the site, including a purpose-built artist studio' (Extract from NSW SHI LEP listing entry Statement of Significance).

4.2.2. Modern but modest functional design in bushland settings

In the mid-twentieth century it was not only modernist architect but many non-professional designers and builders who dispensed with ornamentation and used inexpensive new building materials (like AC fibro) alongside traditional techniques, to make robust functional buildings carefully situated in bushland settings. These include:

Royal National Park Coastal Cabin Communities

The NSW SHR listing entry states: 'The Royal National Park (RNP) coastal cabin communities of Little Garie, Era and Burning Palms are of State heritage significance as the largest and most intact groups of vernacular coastal weekend cabin communities remaining in NSW . . . The cabins provide evidence of the development of simple weekend accommodation around Sydney from the 1920s and 1930s starting with tent accommodation that developed into huts and cabins. The cabins also reflect the embracing of Sydney's bush hinterland in the early part of the twentieth century and the reciprocal role the bush had in the development of recreation and conservation philosophy in NSW The cabins themselves are significant for their continuity of use and associations, most of them for over sixty years . . . The cabin communities are significant for their long historic associations with important designers, artists, musicians, writers and poets over time including Gordon Andrews, Max Dupain, Hal Missingham, David Moore and more recently Chris O'Doherty aka Reg Mombasa' (Extract from NSW SHI SHR listing entry Statement of Significance).



(NSW SHI SHR listing image)

Currawong Works Holiday Camp

The NSW SHR listing entry states: '[Currawong is significant] for its aesthetic values as a workers' holiday camp located amongst bushland and surrounded by national park on a magnificent Sydney waterfront. The cottages are aesthetically distinctive as a group and although not architecturally significant form a rare and important composition grouping. They exemplify a style' (Extract from NSW SHI SHR listing entry Statement of Significance)



(NSW SHI SHR listing image)

Ahimsa, 67 Corbran Road, Cheltenham

The NSW SHR listing entry states: 'Ahimsa and surrounding landscape stand as a testimony to Marie Byle's life and vision as a feminist and a conservationist . . . Aesthetically, the small-scale understated buildings fit unobtrusively into the Australian bushland. The peaceful atmosphere of the property gives visitors an insight into the character of the woman who gave the property to the National Trust' (Extract from NSW SHI SHR listing entry Statement of Significance).



(NSW SHI SHR listing image)

Plumwood, 4120 Kings Highway, Monga

The NSW SHR listing entry states: 'Plumwood has . . . significance . . . as the home, workplace and inspiration of pre-eminent environmental philosopher, Dr Val Plumwood . . . where she wrote her ground-breaking scholarly body of works in the interdisciplinary field of the environmental humanities between the years 1975-2008 . . . Plumwood is of aesthetic value for Dr Plumwood's hand-built stone octagonal residence, her garden design and its setting which is embedded within the surrounding pristine old-growth forest . . . Dr Plumwood's home is an example of a sustainable eco-house, associated with the 'back-to-earth' rural lifestyle movement and represents ingenuity in its design as a fire-resistant structure' (Extract from NSW SHI SHR listing entry Statement of Significance).



(NSW SHI SHR listing image)

4.3. BHHH STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Mount Omei's 'built precinct', an area approximately one-hectare in extent, enclosing five buildings and the lookout area in a bushy landscape largely designed and planted by Wolf and Alice Klaphake, is of local heritage significance under all seven NSW Heritage Council criteria.

The Mount Omei property overall has low-level local historical and associational significance as former dairy farming land from the colonial Glenfield Estate, which was

located on the outskirts of Sydney and owned at different times by Dr Charles Throsby, explorer, and James Leacock, innovative farmer. The entire Mount Omei property also has potential local scientific significance for contributing both to the 'considerable Aboriginal value and educational potential' identified in Leacock Regional Park by Mary Dallas archaeologists in 1999, and for the archaeological potential of remnant features still in situ from the colonial Glenfield Estate era.

Mount Omei has high historical and associational local significance for the built precinct area of the lot sold in 1946 to German émigré Dr Wolf Klaphake, chemist, and his Australian-born wife Alice, artist, which was transformed into a functional and attractive place for the Klaphakes' scientific, artistic and social activities. In this 'house / gallery/ lookout area' in the north western corner of the lot, Wolf built a laboratory for his experiments in chemistry with commercial applications, which after his death in 1967, was transformed by Alice into the Mount Omei Modern Art Gallery. Focused on showing contemporary art by western Sydney artists, this gallery became 'the centre of the art scene in Sydney's southwest' from 1976 to 1984. Occasional exhibitions have continued to be held there to 2024 under the custodianship of the Klaphake's son Van. As such Mount Omei's 'house/ gallery/ lookout area' is historically significant, rare and representative as a residential property in the urban outskirts which has fostered the local arts community.

The Mount Omei 'house/ gallery/ lookout area' has local aesthetic significance for the five buildings set in a bushy landscape with surrounding gardens—all designed, mainly owner-built and largely planted by the Klaphakes. Although simply constructed in inexpensive materials without professional design input, the mid-twentieth century buildings have been thoughtfully proportioned and oriented in relation to each other, the weather and the bushland setting to form an attractive precinct, sometimes nick-named 'Alice's Wonderland'.

Mount Omei has local social significance demonstrated by dozens of positive newspaper articles about art exhibitions and artists' gatherings held here since the 1970s and the demonstrated regard in which the place is held by the nearby Casual Powerhouse Arts Centre and the Liverpool Arts Society. Local regard was also demonstrated in 2024 by questions being asked about Mount Omei's future in the NSW Parliament, followed by the making of an Interim Heritage Order over the place by Liverpool City Council.

4.4. BHHH GRADING OF ELEMENTS OF SIGNIFICANCE

The one-hectare built precinct of Mount Omei including the house/ gallery and lookout areas (as discussed in Section 3.4 and mapped in Image 1.5) which was developed by Alice and Wolf Klaphake in the mid twentieth century, is assessed as being of local heritage significance under all seven NSW Heritage Council criteria. This precinct should be listed on the Liverpool City Council LEP. It is defined by the northern boundary of the property from Leacock Lane to the 40m contour line, along the winding 40m contour line to the southern boundary of the lot, the southern fence-line approximating the previous lot boundary, and the western boundary of the property marked by Leacock Lane.

The eastern and southern areas of Mount Omei (as identified in Section 3.4) are considered to have low-level historical and associational heritage significance. Further archaeological assessment, including consultation with local Aboriginal communities, is required to determine any scientific significance. These other two areas are not recommended for LEP listing at this time.

Within the significant Klaphake built precinct, the two main buildings, which are in generally fair-to-good condition, are of high significance: the house and the former laboratory-gallery building.

Also considered to be of high significance are the gravel pathways and vegetation, especially the mature trees planted by the Klaphakes throughout the precinct. The open garden area near the lookout, with the pond, is also of high significance. The gates marked "Mount Omei" facing Leacock Lane are of high significance.

The three ancillary buildings, the 1946 garage, the 1956 garage and the 1960 studio, are in fair-to-poor condition but are of moderate significance. Other sculptures and landscaping features scattered throughout the property are of moderate significance.

5. CONCLUSIVE SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

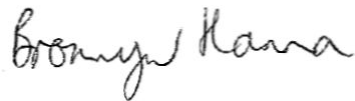
Mount Omei is not heritage listed on the Liverpool City Council LEP 2008, nor is it known to be heritage listed on any NSW Government Section 170 Heritage and Conservation Register.

The 'built precinct' of the Mount Omei property, approximately 1 hectare in extent as indicated on the map in Image 1.5, is assessed as being of local heritage significance.

It is recommended that the 'built precinct' of Mount Omei be added to the Liverpool City Council LEP as an item of local heritage significance.

It is recommended the 'built precinct' of Mount Omei be added to the Section 170 Heritage and Conservation Register associated with NPWS.

It is recommended that the Mount Omei 'built precinct' be retained, repaired, conserved and, if possible, be made available for community and cultural-related purposes.



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ANNEXURE 1—HISTORICAL TIMELINE FOR MOUNT OMEI

Time immemorial	Australia has been inhabited by Aboriginal people for at least 60,000 years. The traditional owners of the land on which Mount Omei is located are the Darug people (NPWS, 2016, ppii).
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The nearby Georges River formed a natural boundary between the lands of the Darug people to the west and north, and the lands of the Tharawal people to the east and south. Mount Omei would have been frequented by both groups of Aboriginal people. Today it is located within the area of the Tharawal Local Aboriginal Land Council (LALC), and adjacent to the area of the Gandangara LALC. It is also an area of interest to the Cubbitch Barta Native Title Claimant Aboriginal Corporation (NPWS, 2016, pp2, 11).

Leacock Regional Park was the subject of an archaeological assessment in 1999. No Aboriginal sites were found within the Mount Omei property at that time. One camp ground was identified within the larger park area, near the Lookout. Mary Dallas archaeologists considered the park has 'considerable Aboriginal value and educational potential'. An Aboriginal heritage management strategy was developed for the known and predicted archaeological resources in the park (Mary Dallas, 1988, 1999, cited in NPWS, 2016).

1788 British colonisation	The First Fleet of the British penal colony arrived in Sydney Harbour, settling at Sydney Cove, about 35km north-east of Mt Omei, and opening up the colonisation of the Australian east coast.
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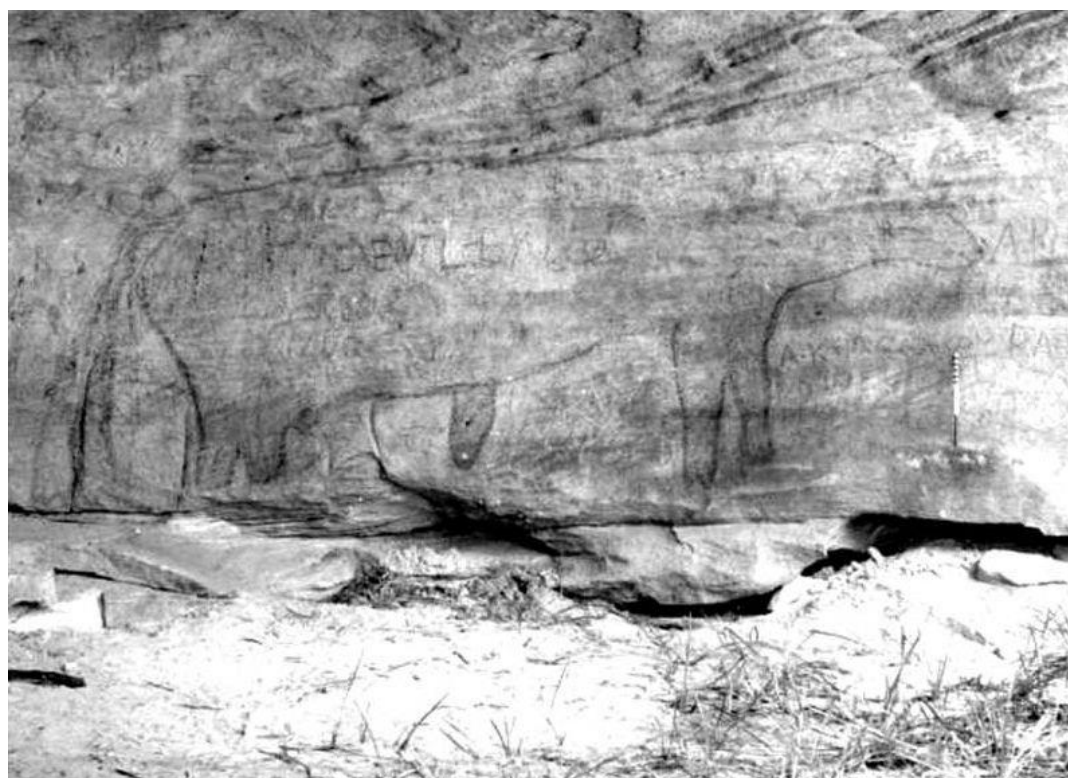


Image A1.1. 'Bull cave' at nearby Minto where a European animal was depicted in traditional Darug style during the early days of the European colonisation of Sydney's south-west.

1810-1920
Glenfield
established
and owned
by Throsbys

Charles Throsby was first granted the land for Glenfield by Lieutenant-Governor Paterson in 1809. However all the government grants bestowed by Paterson's interim administration were reconsidered by Governor Macquarie when he arrived in New South Wales on 1 January 1810. While many grants were withdrawn, the Glenfield grant was formalised as 950 acres (384 hectares), and included the land on which Mount Omei would be located (NSW Lands CTs Vol.1 1816 Fol. 132; Vol.6555 Fol.231; Vol.5888 Fol.220). Throsby established his home at Glenfield, named after the town where he was born in England, and constructed several fine colonial buildings there. His Glenfield Estate, positioned west of the Georges River and bisected by the Great South Road (now Hume Highway) grew to 1130 acres [457 ha] in 1823 (Mayne-Wilson, 2002, p6). Throsby was understood to foster peaceful relations with the traditional owners of the land (Ashley, 2016, p6).

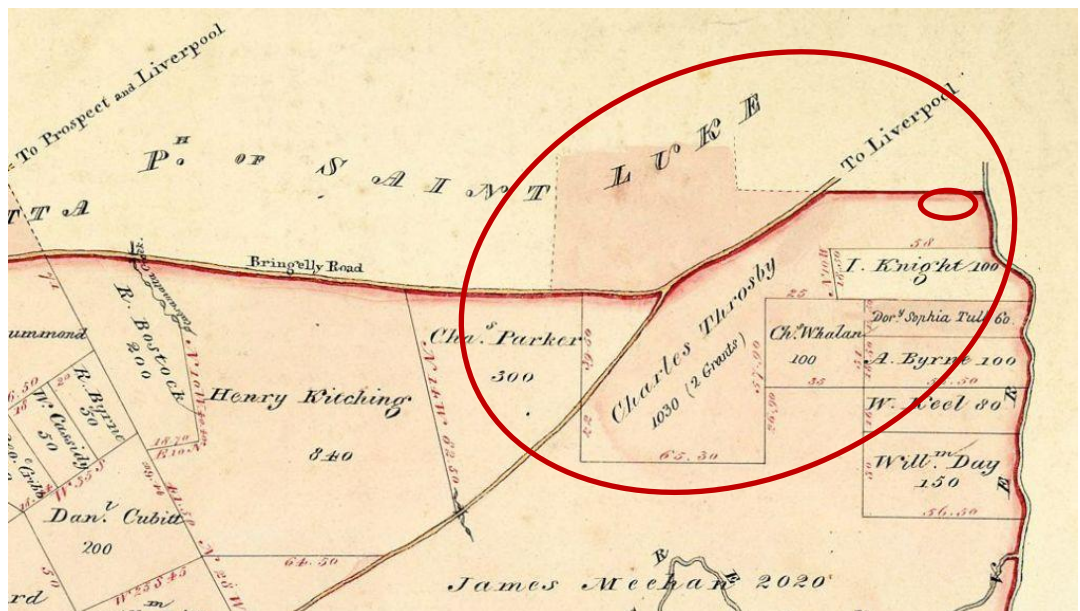


Image A1.2. Extract from Parish of Minto map (undated) showing the early extent of Throsby's Glenfield Estate (950 acres plus 80 acres making 1030 acres [417 ha.]). The grant was known as Portion 272 Parish of St Luke, but the land positioned south of the Great South Road (now Hume Highway) and the Camden Valley Way was actually within the Parish of Minto. The approximate location of Mt Omei is indicated by the smaller oval near the Georges River (NSW Lands HRLV AO 250, annotated by BHHH).

Clive Lucas Stapleton summarised the Glenfield story:

'Glenfield was settled by Dr Charles Throsby, who arrived in New South Wales in 1802 as a surgeon, and went on to lead a varied career in the colony as Assistant Colonial Surgeon, Magistrate, and explorer. Throsby was granted 950 acres (384.45 ha) in 1810 and built the house in 1810-1817. Dr Throsby committed suicide at Glenfield in 1828, aged 51, having experienced increasing financial troubles following a court ruling in favour of his creditors. His nephew, Charles Throsby (the Younger) inherited the Glenfield estate. Following his death in 1854, the estate remained in the Throsby family until 1920. For most of this time, the land was leased to tenants' (Clive Lucas Stapleton, 2007, p3)

The remnant buildings at Glenfield, adjacent to Mt Omei, have been described as 'arguably the most intact representation of a rural farm complex from the Macquarie period that survives in New South Wales' (Clive Lucas Stapleton, 2007, cited in NPWS, 2016, p13).



Image A1.3. The main homestead of Glenfield pictured during an open day after conservation works were completed in 2007 (BHHH, 2007)

1900 Wolf
Klaphake's
early years in
Germany

Wolf Klaphake 'was born on 5 March 1900 in Zeitz, a small town in southeast Germany. . . Wolf's father, Josef Klaphake, was the director of the local abattoir. When Wolf was one year old, his father died. Wolf, his sister Kitty and his mother moved to Leipzig, where Wolf went to school. After a six-month stint with an artillery regiment in Belgium, he returned to Leipzig to attend university. In 1923, he graduated with a doctorate and moved to Berlin to work as a chemist for the Schering-Kahlbaum company' (NAA, 2024). He was not Jewish but after his wife Maria was harrassed by Nazi officials for her work as a sexual psychologist, they decided to emigrate (Neumann, 2003).

1909 Alice
Klaphake's
early years in
Australia

Alice Lardi (m. Klaphake in 1945) was born on 3 February 1909 in Kalgoorlie in Western Australia. The family moved to Perth when she was three. When she was 16 her family moved again, to Victoria, but she stayed on in Perth to study elocution and drama at Trinity College. She moved to Melbourne after graduating in 1926 (CPAC, 2004), where she met and married Trevor Wilton, a theosophist. She was accepted into the Melbourne Repertory Company where she acted in several plays before having her first child. In 1933, after their second child, the family moved to Sydney. By the late 1930s Alice was divorced and living in Minto, near Casula, working as a journalist, writing poetry and pursuing her interests in spiritualism (Ashley, 2016, p11).

1920s
Leacock's
ownership of
Glenfield

In the early 1920s James Freeland Leacock, an innovative dairy farmer and entrepreneur who had married into the Throsby family, purchased 376 acres associated with the Glenfield Estate, including the land where Mount Omei would be built. He converted the land title from Old System into Torrens Title in 1924 (NSW Lands PA 26388). The heritage entry for the SHR listing of Glenfield described Leacock:

'His idealism embraced many interests, ranging from organic farming to Aboriginal rights. He undertook many activities on the farm property

which made Glenfield a meeting place for groups concerned for Australian and international justice and many humanitarian issues. Leacock pursued the establishment of communal living, discussion centres and co-operative farming. The first serious co-operative was the Rural Homes (Glenfield) Co-operative Ltd, formed in 1951. In 1960 the co-operative went into insolvency. In 1970 the Glenfield Goodwill Cooperative Society was registered.' (NSW SHI, sighted 31 May 2024)



Image A1.4. Photo of the homestead building, two-storey barn and landscape at nearby Glenfield in c.1924, around the time it was purchased by James Leacock (Frank walker, courtesy of RAHS, reproduced in Mayne-Wilson, 2002, p13)

The 2016 Plan of Management also noted that 'During his ownership, Leacock established the first Aboriginal heritage museum in Sydney in the 1950s known as the Austro-Asian Cultural Centre' (NPWS, 2016, p13 citing Clive Lucas Stapleton, 2007, p27)

Leacock subdivided and sold off sections of the land throughout his tenure (NSW Lands CTs Vol.4649 Fol.84 and Vol.5838 Fol.227). Ashley notes that although 'Glenfield Farm was reduced over time . . . [it] continued to operate as a farm until around 2003 when it was purchased by the NSW Department of Planning' (Ashley, 2016, p7).

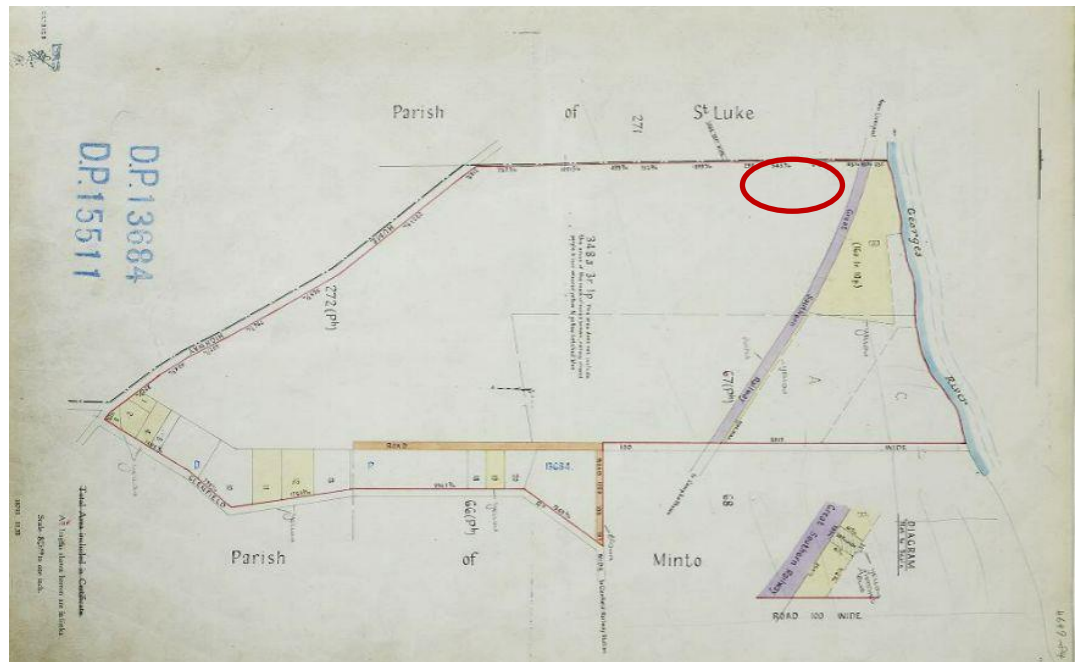


Image A1.5. c.1936 land titles map of James Leacock's Glenfield in 1936, showing the future approximate location of Mount Omei circled in red (NSW Lands CT Vol.4649 Fol.84)

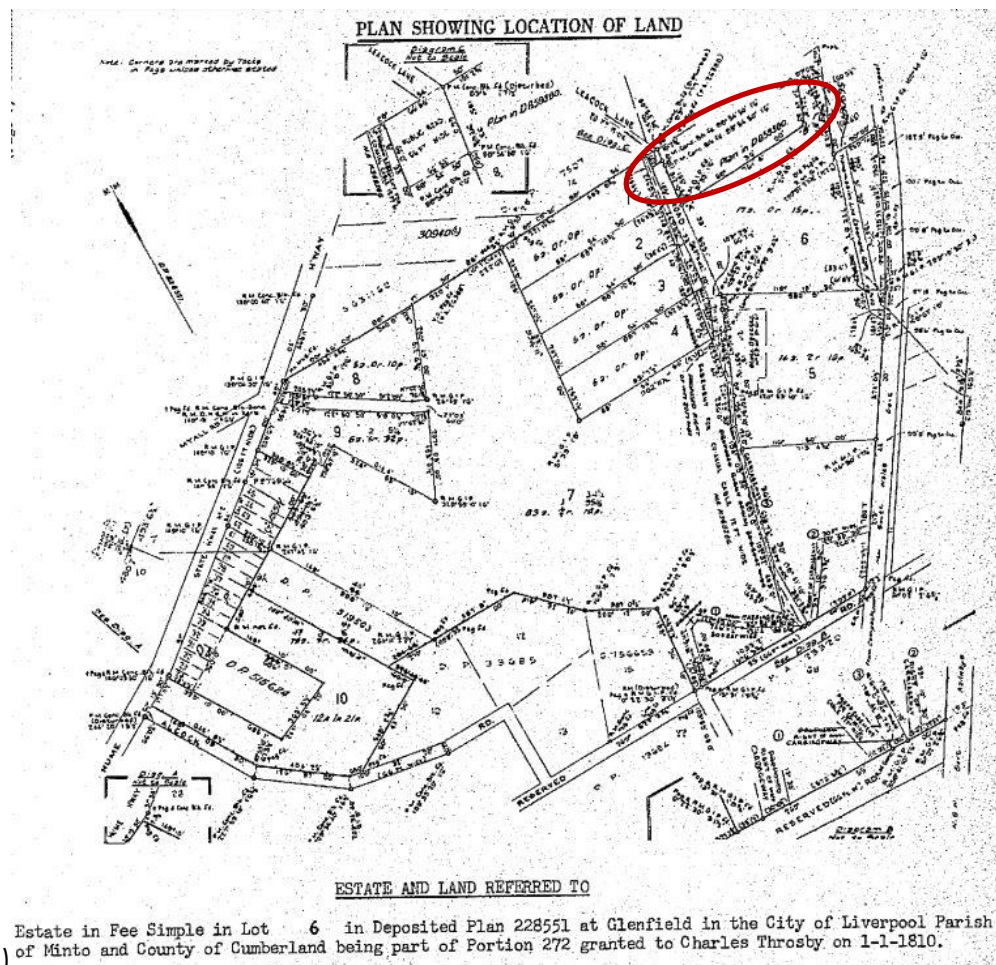


Image A1.7. c.1969 land titles map showing numerous subdivisions under Leacock's period of ownership, including the Mount Omei subdivision in the north-eastern corner (NSW Lands CT Vol.11213 Fol.17)

1935-1945
Wolf
Klaphake's
early years in
Australia



Wolf Klaphake emigrated from Germany to Australia with his first wife Maria in October 1935. They arrived in Melbourne but had moved to Sydney by 1936. An experienced industrial chemist with a PhD, Wolf had been developing his own inventions in Germany. In 1933, he sold an invention to I.G. Farben, then one of the world's largest chemical corporations, earning him a substantial fee (Neumann, 2003). He also had a design for a 'dew condenser' that he hoped to build in the Australian desert, but the design proved too expensive. Maria Klaphake was also a doctor who specialised in mental health. In Australia Wolf worked first as a consultant chemist, and then for Industrial Microbiology Pty Ltd—a company which he had set up to fund his own research (NAA, 2024; The Sun, 17/10/1935 p46 via Trove).

Image A1.6. Wolf and Maria Klaphake were interviewed and photographed by the local press around the time of their arrival, for example, in this brief article entitled "Water maker" (Labor Daily 18/10/1935 p8, via Trove).

During World War II Wolf was interned as an 'enemy alien' for four years (1940-1944) while Maria was interned for one year (1942-43). Australian security services found evidence of his having joined the Nazi party as he was leaving Germany—he later explained he joined only to enable him to access his finances abroad, and that he had no interest in Nazism. 'In spite of his internment, which he considered grossly unjust, Klaphake decided to remain in Australia. He applied for naturalisation soon after his release. Klaphake's application was granted, and he was naturalised in September 1946.' (Neumann, 2003; NAA, 2024)

Image A1.7.
Wolf
Klaphake's
internment
document held
by the National
Archives of
Australia (NAA,
2024).

Maria Klaphake died on 2 March 1945, aged 41, from complications arising from an infection (Ashley, 2016, p9). 'Her husband claimed that his internment was to blame for her death. Maria and Wolf's marriage was no longer a happy one in the final years of her life, but she remained a loyal supporter of her husband to the end.' (NAA, 2024)

1945-1967
Klaphakes
purchase
and
construct
Mount Omei
buildings

According to her son Van, at some stage Alice was running a cafe in Kings Cross with her sister when she met Wolf, presumably in early 1945 after Wolf was released. Alice's two children from her first marriage, Rosemary and Don, were almost grown when Alice and Wolf married in November 1945 and settled in Minto (Ashley, 2016, p12). Two more children were born soon afterwards: Van in 1947 and Zita in 1949.

Perhaps because Wolf was not yet naturalised, it was Alice who purchased the block of land for £245 at Casula which would become Mount Omei, on 8 July 1946 (NSW Lands Dealing D859380). The sale of Mount Omei was formalised in 1948 with the following details: James Leacock sold 6 acres, 23 ¼ perches [2.48 ha] from his Glenfield Estate to Alice Gertrude Klaphake, wife of Wolf Klaphake (NSW Lands CT Vol.5888 Fol.220, dealing D859380).

Even before the purchase was recorded, in December 1945, 'Dr Klaphake' was calling for tenders for the 'erection of a fibro cottage at Casula—plans and spec' (*Construction*, 5/12/1945 p9 via Trove).

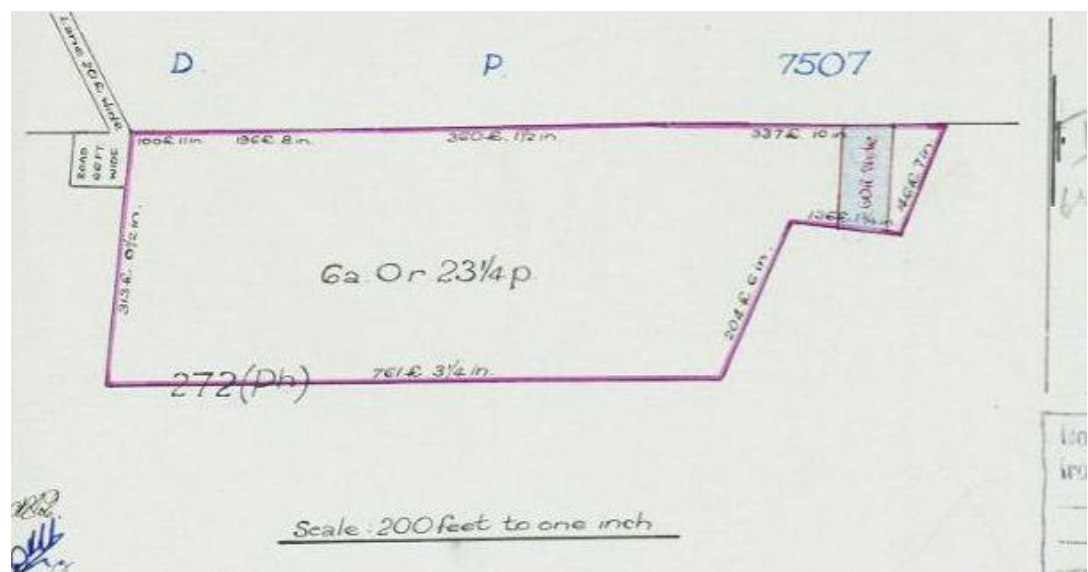


Image A1.8. Map of land purchased by Alice Klaphake from James Leacock in 1946 (NSW Lands CT Vol.5888 Fol.220 via HLRV)

Geoff Ashley discussed the Klaphakes' story about being inspired to buy the Mount Omei property in 1946 after seeing it from the train:

'[The Leacock Regional Park Plan of Management] notes Alice Klaphake saying that she and Wolf saw this land from the train and the next weekend went there and negotiated purchase . . . [Nonetheless] it is possible that there is an historical connection between James Leacock's idealism associated with the co-operative and social justice movements and the Klaphakes who were clearly themselves interested

in “alternative” approaches to land management. It is quite possible that there is an historical relationship between the Klaphake acquisition and the social beliefs of the owner of Glenfield’ (Ashley, 2016, p7).

They named the property ‘Mount Omei’. ‘Omei’ literally means ‘raised eyebrow’ in Chinese and the property was probably named after the sacred Buddhist mountain, Emei Shan, in Sichuan province, China (Neumann, 2003). Wolf had an understanding of 15 languages and was a keen student of Chinese language and culture (Ashley, 2016, p9; NAA, 2024).

‘Wolf Klaphake was gifted, eccentric, naive, intelligent, stubborn, charming, withdrawn, romantic, uncommunicative, generous, intense, exuberant, repressed, depressed. There is little doubt that he was extraordinarily talented’ (NAA, 2024).

Alice’s friend Lenore Rays, who married the sculptor Tom Bass, remembered Alice from their early years in Minto:

‘She was a journalist really, but she had two young children to rear . . . we were both interested in art in one form or another . . . She was beautiful, charismatic, charming. A very interesting person . . . an activist . . . We were the original drop-out community . . . we were seen as strange birds, weird bohemians. Tom was a sculptor, I had been a commercial artist and writing poetry and Alice was . . . interested in poetry. Local people couldn’t understand us at all but it gave us a lot of freedom.’ (Ashley, 2016, p11)

According to their son Van Klaphake, Wolf and Alice built the laboratory (later gallery) building first, in 1946, where they lived until the house was constructed in 1947-48 (Ashley, 2016, pp27, 29). They also constructed two sheds and a workshop during these early years before 1960. The buildings were all single story, modest vernacular buildings constructed with brick foundations, timber framing, fibro cladding and AC roofing (since replaced by corrugated iron roofing). They were largely designed and built by contract builders and Wolf with some input by Alice (Ashley, 2016, pp 29, 41, 43). A Concil report of 1957 notes the construction of garage addition with iron roof for Klaphake with “self” as the builder, costing just £150 (LCC Minutes, 2/7/1957, p2)

Wolf used the laboratory to continue working independently as a consultant chemist. ‘His business brought him neither riches nor fame. In the years before he died in 1967, he made a living by manufacturing toilet cleaner in his laboratory’ (NAA, 2024).

Wolf Klaphake died of cancer on 5 September 1967, in 1967, aged 67. He has been memorialised ‘through a 53 minute radio play/ documentary, *A Doubtful Character* (Neumann, 2003), a detailed biographical expose of official records about him held by the Australian National Archives in their online ‘Uncommon Lives’ series, and an entry in the *Encyclopedia of Australian Science Biographical* (Ashley, 2016, NAA, 2024, Neumann, 2003)

1972

Ashley reports that Alice considered selling Mount Omei after Wolf's death but by the time some interested buyers were found, several years later, she had decided to stay on (Ashley, 2016, p17). Instead, in 1972 Alice Klaphake purchased another acre or so of Glenfield land, then owned by the Rural Homes (Glenfield) Cooperative Ltd, enlarging Mount Omei to its current extent of 7 acres 3 roods (2.84 ha) and creating the current Lot 17 in DP 554086 (NSW Lands CT Vol.11816 Fol.132).

PLAN SHOWING LOCATION OF LAND

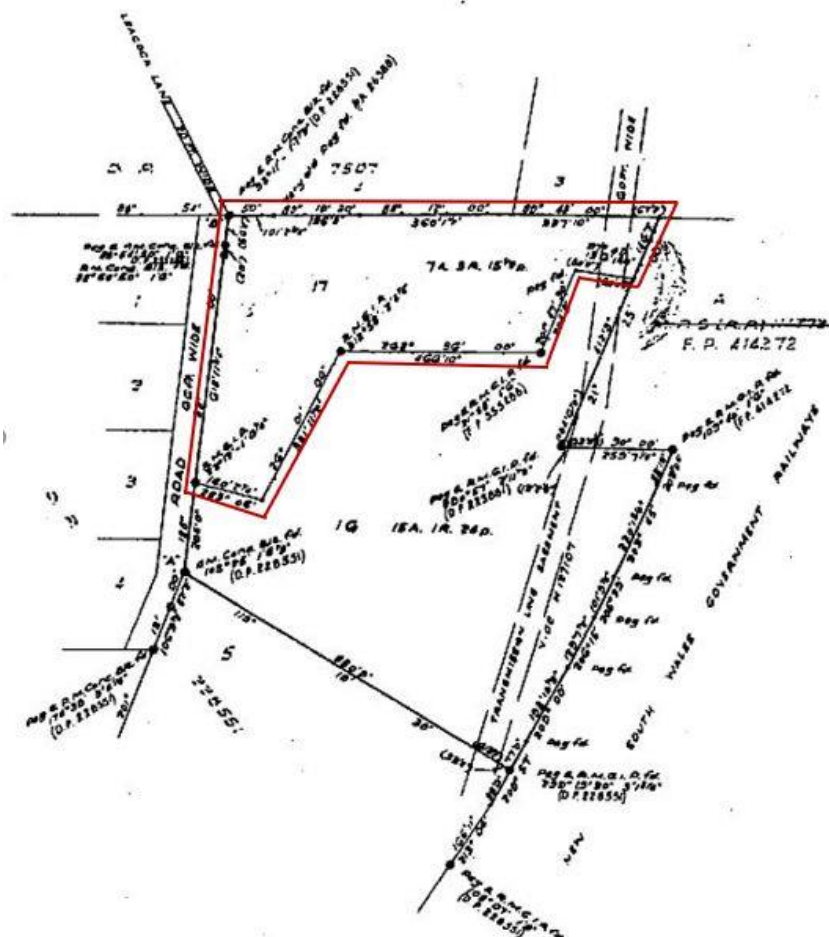


Image A1.9.
1971 land
titles map
showing Alice
Klaphake's
Lot 17 DP
554086,
enlarged with
land added
to its south-
western
corner (NSW
Lands CT
Vol.11816
Fol.132, with
Lot 17
outlined in
red by BHHH).

1976

In 1976, Alice opened her private gallery specialising in 'modern art' in the former laboratory building at Mount Omei. 'After Wolf's death, his widow, an accomplished artist, turned his laboratory into an art gallery. Mount Omei had a second life: as the centre of the art scene in Sydney's southwest' (NAA, 2024).

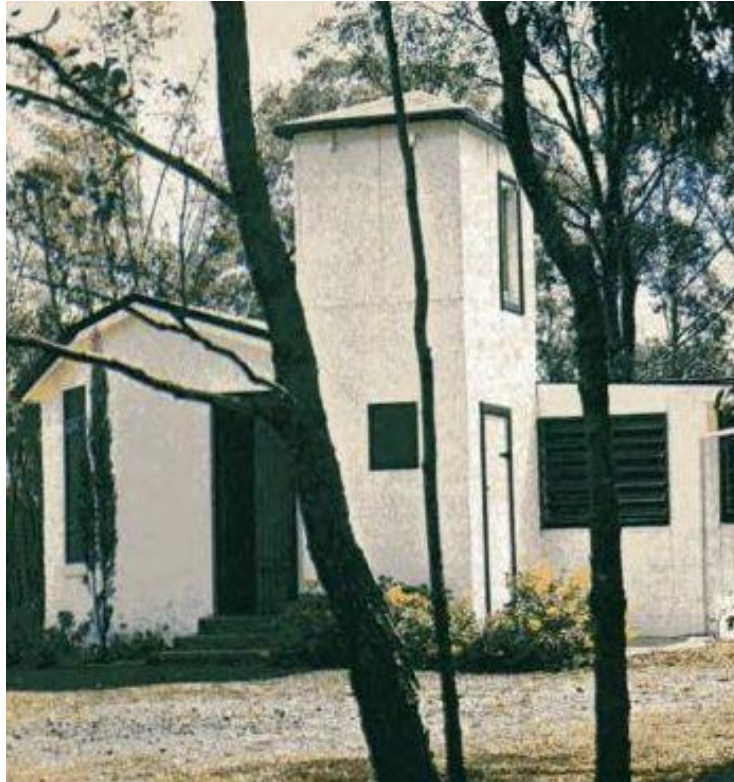


Image A1.10. 1976 Womens Weekly photo of the gallery building: 'The Moorish look came from hiding the water tank behind a miniature tower'. (*Australian Women's Weekly*, 17/11/1976, p69, from Ashley, 2016 Annexure B newsclippings).

While Alice had maintained an interest in theatre, it was painting and sculpture that became her focus during the 1960s and 1970s.



Image A1.11. Alice Klaphake, *Delos Remembered*, oil on board, 16 x 20cm, painting donated by solicitor John Marsden to the Campbelltown Arts Centre in 2006 (#2006.54) (Ashley, 2016, p16).

Geoff Ashley describes the creative milieu around Alice in the mid 1970s:

'Alice . . . was interested in the arts generally through her poetry and . . . through friendships with artist such as Lenore Rays and Margo Lewers and their sculptor husbands Tom Bass and Gerald Lewers. Margo Lewers introduced Alice to John Olsen and persuaded her to take up painting classes with him . . . Alice also joined a group of women (including her friend Margaret Whitlam) in a Workers Educational Association study group on modern art. . . Alice made connections with the artists who established themselves at Wedderburn near Campbelltown . . . Van Klapthake said that Alice started painting at 55 years old, that is in 1961. An article in the *Australian Women's Weekly* quotes Alice as saying that she first received a commission for a mural for a hotel in Terrigal "after which commissions started pouring in and Alice's hobby became a full-time occupation" [*Australian Women's Weekly*, 17/11/1976, p69]. In 1975 Alice won the Camden Art Prize. According to the *Women's Weekly* article Alice was hung in "collections in England, Greece and the United States" . . . Some of the work of Alice was purchased by Campbelltown solicitor John Marsden who later donated his collection to the Campbelltown Arts Centre who now hold three of Alice's works' (Ashley, 20165, pp15-16)

The *Women's Weekly* interviewed Alice in 1976, who explained her reasons for developing the gallery:

'There is a tremendous interest in the arts and crafts in this outer western area [of Sydney]. Camden, Campbelltown and Liverpool have their art festivals each year—and for six consecutive years we have promoted the Liverpool Art Prize. With so much going on I felt that there was a need for a permanent showplace—where developing artists could also show their work at a cost that wouldn't hamper that development. Many lent a hand with the new gallery. Margo Lewers, Carl Plate and Arpad Kinka, then occupying the Power Bequest Studio in Paris, were among those represented in the opening exhibition in September 1976.' (*Women's Weekly*, 17/11/1976, p69)

The Mount Omei Modern Gallery became an important focus of artistic activity in Liverpool for the next decade or so.

'Dubbed "Alice's Wonderland" by locals the Modern Gallery became a gathering place for local artists and crafts people. Alice was 67 by the time she opened the gallery but she relished the hard work and role of the gallery as a bushland oasis for friends and visitors. She was feisty, energetic and flamboyant . . . 'The Gallery' was a huge success, partly because of Alice's extrovert nature and ability to connect with people, but also because of the quality of the artists she showed. Artists such as the sculptor Tom Bass and painters such as Elisabeth Cummings exhibited there. From this small space a hugely important and influential group of people showcased and developed their work . . . [Prominent Australian artist Lloyd] Rees opened a show there . . . [where he] likened the Gallery in terms of its character to the Chapelle

du Rosaire in France designed by artist Henri Matisse' (Ashley, 2016, pp17-18).

- 1979 In 1979 Alice Klaphake sold the Mount Omei property to the NSW Government agency, Planning & Environment Commission, for \$90,000 (NSW Lands CT Vol.11816 Fol.132, R265258). Since 1979 Alice Klaphake and then Van Klaphake . . . maintained a permissive occupancy of the site (Ashley, 2016, p22).
- 1984 Alice Klaphake closed down her modern gallery at Mount Omei, at the age of 75, presumably with retirement in mind. Shows have been held there occasionally since then (for example as reported in the *Champion*, 9/10/1985; Knight, 2016; and *Liverpool Leader*, 21/6/2017, 7/3/2018, 20/6/2018)
- 1980s opening of art galleries in the western suburbs In 1981 the Penrith Regional Gallery and Lewers Bequest became the first local government-run gallery in Western Sydney, as a result of the gifting of their family home by Alice Klaphake's friends Margo and Gerard Lewers. In 1988 the Campbelltown Bicentennial Gallery came into operation, followed in 1994 by Casula Powerhouse Arts Centre (CPAC), located near Mount Omei (Ashley, 2016, p22).
- 1997 The Mount Omei property was transferred within the NSW Government's property portfolio to the National Parks & Wildlife Service (NPWS), on 11 March 1997. Following several land acquisitions by the NSW Government in the area, Leacock Regional Park, including the Mt Omei property, was reserved as a new regional park on 5 September 1997 (Ashley, 2016, pp21-22).
- 2001 The Casula Powerhouse Arts Centre built an amphitheatre on the banks of the George River and named it the Alice Klaphake Amphitheatre. The dedication sheet on the day stated:
'In naming this amphitheatre after Alice Klaphake, the communities of Liverpool recognise both her love of the theatre from an early age and her enormous contribution to the region's visual arts. The Alice Klaphake Amphitheatre will be a venue that celebrates and embraces all forms of the performing and visual arts, just as Alice did and continues do so in her life' (quoted in Ashley, 2016, p21)



Image A1.12. Photo of the Alice Klaphake Amphitheatre at the Casula Powerhouse Arts Centre (Ashley, 2016, p23)

2003
Glenfield
purchased
by the NSW
Government
/ Casula
Powerhouse
proposes
managing
Mount Omei

Glenfield operated as a farm until around 2003 when it was purchased by the NSW Department of Planning (as the Planning & Environment Commission had become named) (NPWS, 2016, p13).

Also in 2003, the Casula Powerhouse Arts Centre proposed that it be given management of the Mount Omei property:

'as an education resource focussed on alternative spiritualism and science growing from the interests of Alice and Wolf. The proposal was that the site remain in ownership of OEH [NPWS] but be leased free of charge to CPAC. Apparently the model was similar to the arrangements for the Collingwood House Precinct and the Liverpool Regional Museum and based on the idea of a Georges River Cultural Corridor extending from Liverpool CBD that would encompass the Mount Omei site.' (Ashley, 2016, p22 quoting Kon Gouriotis personal communication).

2004-2024
Van
Klaphake

After Alice Klaphake's death in 2004, the nearby Casula Powerhouse Arts Centre held a memorial service in her honour (CPAC, 2004). Van Klaphake has continued to live at Mount Omei since then under permissive occupancy agreements with NPWS (Ashley, 2016, pp1, 22).

Van Klaphake grew up at Mount Omei from the late 1940s to the late 1960s, which instigated his life-long interest in nature. This started with bird watching and was followed by his collation as a young man of an outstanding butterfly collection. He has planted many of the trees at Mount Omei, mostly Western Australian varieties. Later in life he has become an expert in Australian botany and self-published a series of authoritative books on native flora, focusing on eucalypts, sedges, grasses and rainforest species. Van also makes botanical drawings and has carved figures of native birds from timbers on site, sometimes included in Mount Omei gallery exhibitions (Ashley, 2016, pp13, 22).



Image A1.13. Bird carving by Van Klaphake (BHHH, 2024)

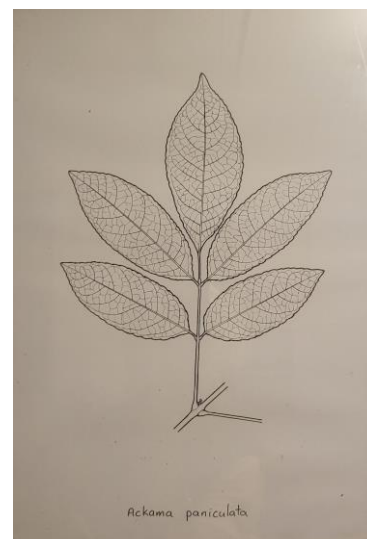


Image A1.14. Botanical drawing by Van Klaphake (BHHH, 2024)

2007

The most recent subdivision of the Glenfield Estate occurred in 2007 to create two allotments. Lot 1 DP 1126484, a one-hectare parcel containing

the Glenfield Farm buildings, was transferred to the Historic Houses Trust of NSW to restore the buildings and then sell into private ownership, accomplished in 2011. Lot 2, comprising over four hectares, was transferred to NPWS as an extension to Leacock Regional Park.

- 2012-2016 NPWS released a draft Plan of Management for Leacock Regional Park which noted that Mount Omei was not heritage listed anywhere but that it had been recognised as 'potential heritage item' on the 'Historic Heritage Information Management System' of the government agency. The draft plan recommended that Mount Omei undergo heritage assessment, and if found to be significant, to have a 'Heritage Action Statement' prepared for it to guide its future management and works (NPWS, 2012, pp14, 15). By the time the Plan of Management was finalised in 2016, no heritage assessment had yet been undertaken.
- 2016 In late 2016 Geoff Ashley was commissioned by NPWS to provide a built heritage assessment of the Mount Omei property. The report concluded that the place was of local heritage significance under all seven heritage criteria (historical, historical associations, aesthetic, social, scientific, rarity and representativeness), and that the property should be retained for community related purposes (Ashley Built Heritage, 2016, p43; Liverpool Council, 2022; see Annexure 3 for the report's conclusions and recommendations in full).
- 2022 A Liverpool Council ordinary meeting on 14 December 2022 noted the heritage significance for Mount Omei as established in the Ashley Built Heritage report (2016) and resolved to write to NPWS reiterating the local significance of Mount Omei and seeking clarification of its intentions for the buildings there.
- March 2024 On 19 March 2024 the NSW Member of Parliament for Liverpool, Charishma Kaliyanda, discussed the conservation of Mount Omei in the NSW Parliament's Legislative Assembly where she told the Legislative Assembly that NPWS had initiated proceedings to evict the tenant, Van Klaphake:
- 'Back in 2016, when concerns were first raised about the future of Mount Omei, artists, friends and others who have benefitted from its legacy came together to rally in support. They organised exhibitions onsite and ran a campaign to demand answers from the previous Government, but none were forthcoming. In response to the outpouring of community concern for the property, my colleague the member for Leppington, a former Liverpool councillor himself, moved a motion at an ordinary meeting of Liverpool City Council in late December 2022 to note the heritage significance of Mount Omei and request that the council write to the National Parks and Wildlife Service to seek clarification on its intentions for the buildings on the site. Some 15 months have passed since that motion was unanimously passed and correspondence was sent from Liverpool City Council to the National Parks and Wildlife Service. However, the council is yet to receive any correspondence from the service. In response to recent developments, Councillor Karress Rhodes moved an urgency motion to impose an interim heritage order on the site to avoid any possible demolition, sale

or disposal of the site until the council's concerns have been addressed. I was proud to have joined those in favour of the motion in a vote of seven to three.' (Hansard, 19 March 2024).

On 22 March 2024 Liverpool Council made an Interim Heritage Order for six months on the Mount Omei property. Liverpool Council's gazettal outlined the background to the order, explaining that 'the eviction will leave the property vacant, and due to its isolated location, will likely become the target of vandalism and potentially arson' (*NSW Government Gazette*, 22 March 2024).

The March-April 2024 edition of the Liverpool Arts Society Newsletter ran a three page story about the threat to Mount Omei, calling for the Modern Art Gallery to be saved, stating: 'Mount Omei is, and should remain, a heritage Artspace and Reserve for the people of NSW' (LASN, 2024, p6)

ANNEXURE 2—DESCRIPTION—IMAGES

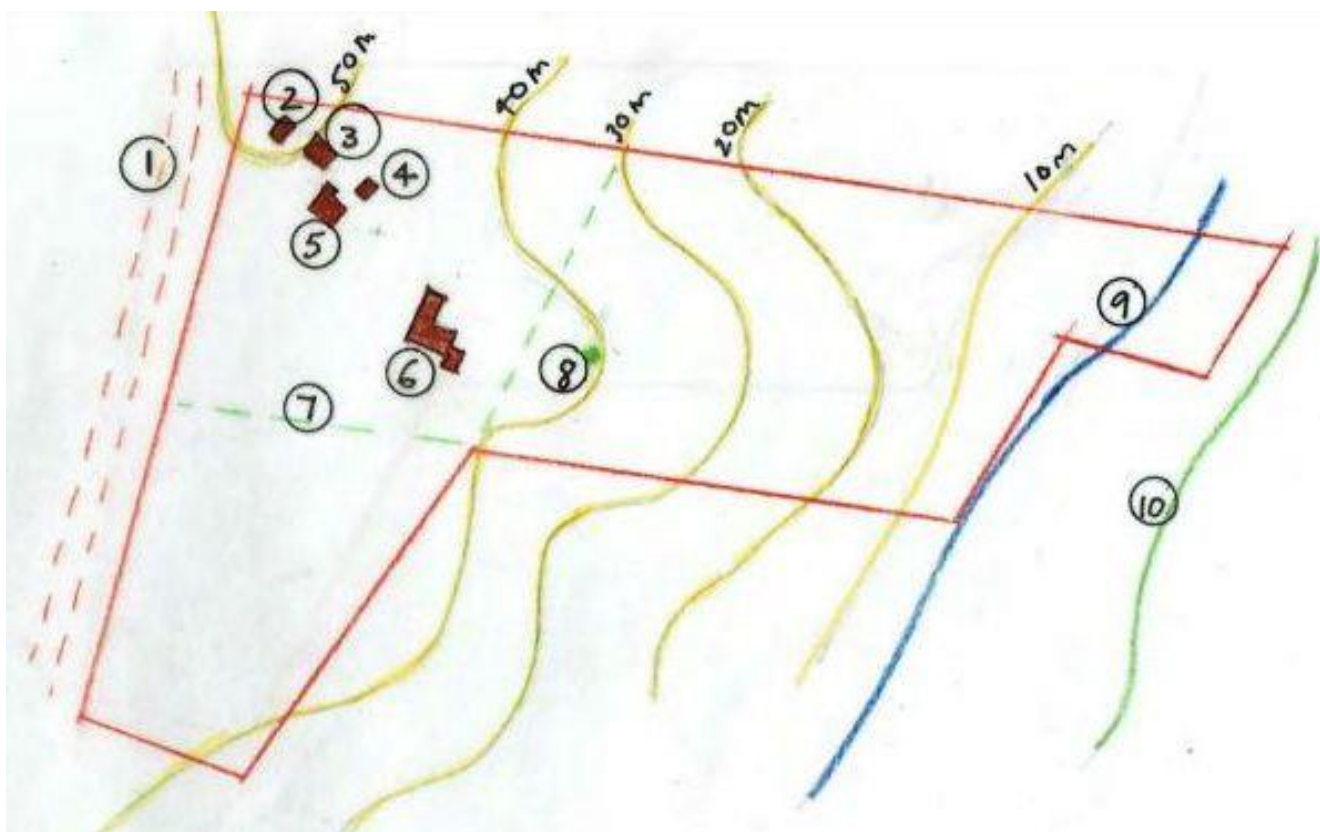


Image A2.1. Site plan of the Mount Omei property, drawn by Geoff Ashley, 2016. Key: 1) Leacocks Lane entrance to Mount Omei 2) 1959 Garage 3) 1946 Garage/ studio 4) 1960 Workshop 5) 1946 Former laboratory-gallery 6) 1947-48 House 7) Fencing around house precinct 8) Pond overlooking slopes 9) Glenfield Creek 10) Path/cycleway (Ashley, 2016, p25 and Annexure A).



Image A2.2 Entrance to the Mount Omei property from the suburban Leacocks Lane, bordered by Eucalytus trees and the All Saints Catholic Senior College to the north (at left) (BHHH, 20243).



Image A2.3. Steel entrance gates to the Mount Omei property near '1' in site plan, showing bushy landscaping and the blank western façade of the former laboratory/ gallery building (no. '5' on the Ashley site map at Image 1.1) (BHHH, 2024).

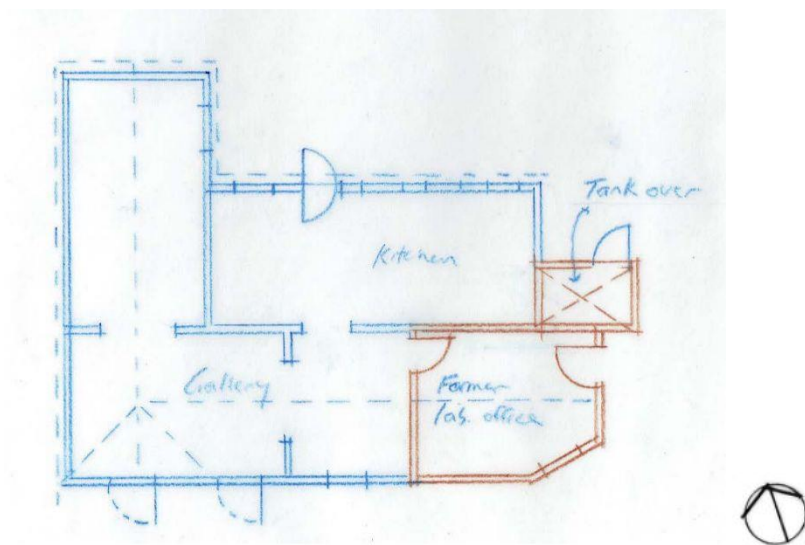


Image A2.4. Mount Omei's former laboratory/ gallery floorplan sketched by Geoff Ashley (2016, p28) (no. '5' in site plan in Image 1.1).



Image A2.5. Eastern (entrance) façade of the former laboratory/ gallery building at Mount Omei (*Daily Telegraph*, 4 March 2024).



Image A2.6. Eastern side of the former laboratory / gallery building (BHHH, 2024).



Image A2.7. South elevation of the former laboratory/ gallery building (BHHH, 2024).



Image A2.8. Southern entry to former gallery building showing brick construction painted white, with frames, grills and signage painted black (BHHH, 2024)



Image A2.9. Mount Omei gallery interior pictured at a 2016 reopening of the venue (Ashley, 2016, p23).



Image A2.10. Former gallery interior showing kitchen & sitting room on the north side of the building (BHHH, 2024)



Image A2.13. Interior photo of the lounge area of the Mount Omei house with corner window (Ashley, 2016, p31).



Image A2.14. Interior photo of the house's kitchen (Ashley, 2016, p31).

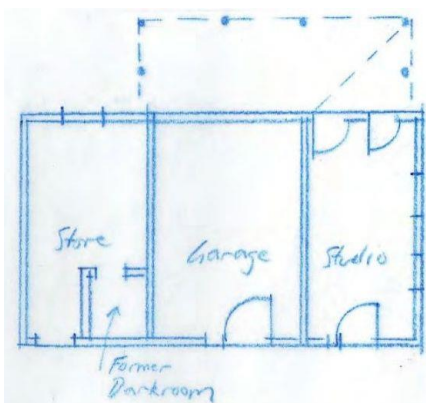


Image A2.15. Floorplan of garage built 1956, sketched by Geoff Ashley (2016, p32).



Image A2.16. Garage built in 1946 showing broken fibro sheeting next to the door opening at left ('3' in site plan in Image 1.1) (BHHH, 2024).

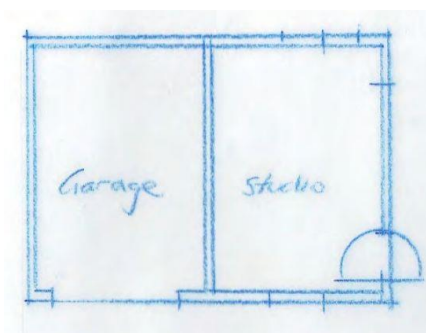


Image A2.17. Floorplan of 1956 garage sketched by Geoff Ashley (2016, p32).



Image A2.18. Garage built in 1956 ('2' in site plan in Image 1.1) (BHHH, 2024).

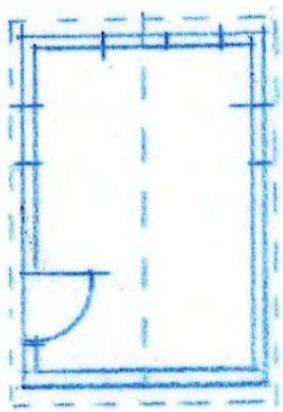


Image A2.19. Floorplan of workshop sketched by Geoff Ashley (2016, p32).



Image A2.20. Workshop – studio built 1960 ('4' in site plan in Image 1.1) (BHHH, 2024).



Image A.2.21. The two shed dating from 1946 is in poor condition (BHHH, 2024).



Image A2.22. Sculpture in the gardens near the former laboratory / gallery (BHHH, 2024).



Image A2.23. Toadstool outdoor seating group positioned near the house (BHHH, 2024)



Image A2.24. Fallen branch balanced over the garden tap (BHHH. 2024)



Image A2.25. Southern gate in fencing around the house and gallery precinct, leading out to views over the slope towards the Georges River (BHHH, 2024)



Image A2.26. View of the bushland slope towards the railway line, cycling path and Georges River, on the eastern side of the Mount Omei property (BHHH, 2024).

ANNEXURE 3—EXTRACTS FROM ASHLEY BUILT HERITAGE REPORT

Ashley Built Heritage, 2016: 'Mount Omei, Leacock Regional Park, Heritage Assessment', unpublished report prepared for National Parks & Wildlife Service, Office of Environment & Heritage, NSW. Digital copy held by Liverpool City Council. Excerpting:

- Assessment of Significance;
- Explanation of 'Option 2'; and
- Conclusions and Recommended Actions.

Application of NSW Heritage Criteria

Criterion (a) Historical

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).

Mount Omei provides important evidence of a pattern of Australian and NSW history around WWII associated with the experience of migrants and internees. Wolf Klaphake, who established Mount Omei with his second wife Alice, was a pre War migrant from Germany who spent much of the War interned in camps in three different states. His personal history and experiences have been featured in a series by the National Archives of Australia. With a scientific background in chemistry, Wolf Klaphake was drawn to migrate to Australia because of his interest in environmental issues such as water conservation and this was an interest reflected in the plantings and modifications that he undertook at Mount Omei from 1946 to his death in 1967.

The history of Mount Omei and the people associated with it provides evidence of a nontypical pattern of urban development history where people with alternate ideas, such as artists, were attracted to live in the peri-urban hinterland away from Sydney's metropolis, prior to later Post-War suburban expansion. Alice Klaphake (then Wilton) and her friends Lenore Rays and Tom Bass who were living at Minto, Margo and Gerald Lewers living on the banks of the Nepean near Penrith, and the Wedderburn artist cooperative established by Barbara and Nick Romalis, as well as Alice and Wolf themselves moving to Casula, all demonstrate a process where people with alternate ideas, were attracted to live in what at the time were rural areas on the outskirts of metropolitan Sydney. Although it has not been demonstrated in research for this project, there is the potential for a connection with the alternate tenure arrangements established by James Leacock at Glenfield Farm that may have attracted the Klaphakes. Mount Omei is historically important for its role in the development of the arts in the western Sydney region generally, and particularly around Liverpool. The Modern Art Gallery established at Mount Omei by Alice Klaphake, that operated between 1976 and 1984 is important as the first non-government art gallery in south-western Sydney. The Modern Art Gallery had an important role in providing an outlet for local artists who entered local competitions, such as the Camden and Liverpool Art Prizes. Alice Klaphake was also associated with earlier 'outliers' of the arts scene in western Sydney, such as Margo Lewers and also Lenore Rays and Tom Bass at Minto in the late 1930s and early 1940s. The role and importance of places such as the Modern Art Gallery is reflected in the later establishment of regional Council supported facilities such as Casula Powerhouse Arts Centre and regional arts centres run by the Councils of Penrith and Campbelltown.

The Mount Omei site contains remains that reflect an earlier historic phase of development associated with the Glenfield Farm property prior to its subdivision and purchase by the Klaphakes.

The site provides evidence of all of these historic patterns including occupation by members of the Klaphake family from 1946 to the present, the landscape changes by both Wolf and Van

Klaphake as well as five buildings and other structures modified for different uses, such as that made to the original laboratory to create an art gallery.

Inclusion guideline satisfied:

- shows evidence of a significant human activity
- is associated with a significant activity or historical phase

Criterion (b) Association

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 Mount Omei site is significant for its association with Wolf, Alice and Van Klaphake. Wolf Klaphake was a very interesting and highly intelligent migrant and scientist whose biography (focusing on this internment during WWII) is published by the Australian National Archives. Alice Klaphake was an artist who won the Camden Art Prize in 1975 (with works held in the Campbelltown Arts Centre Gallery) and as a gallery owner was the inspiration to local artists for a decade or more. Van Klaphake is well known for his publications on the native flora in NSW. Mount Omei is associated with important individuals and artists involved in the regional development of arts in the western Sydney, including the artist Margo Lewers and her sculptor husband Gerald Lewers at Penrith, Barbara and Nick Romalis at Wedderburn near Campbelltown and artists Lenore Rays and sculptor Tom Bass of Minto. Artist Elisabeth Cumming who exhibited at the Mount Omei gallery is a well-known practicing member of Wedderburn group.

The Modern Art Gallery at Mount Omei provided an important venue for local and regional artists to show their work outside the periodic art competitions run by Councils such as those run by Camden and Liverpool Councils. The artists associated the Modern Art Gallery at Mount Omei include: Bob Baker, Juanita Bailey, James Baker, Lenore Bass, Fonika Booth, Frederic Braat, Joan Brassil, Elisabeth Cummings, Rayond Coles, Gray Dunreath-Cooper, Greg Fawley, Philip Grienke, Hanna Juskovic, Arpad Kinka, Darryl Lock, Lorraine Maggs, Colleen Shaliapin, Robyn Smith, Brian Stratton, Robert Sugden and Georgina Worth.

Three of the artists who exhibited at the Modern Art Gallery won the Liverpool Art Prize: Margo Lewers, Carl Plate and Arpad Kinka. Many of the artists who showed at the Modern Art Gallery such as Brian Stratton and Greg Fawley also had a role in teaching in the arts at local institutions such as the Liverpool TAFE and in the NSW Dept of Education and schools in the area.

Inclusion guideline satisfied:

- shows evidence of a significant human occupation
- is associated with a significant event, person, or group of persons

Criterion (c) Aesthetic

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

Mount Omei has significant aesthetic characteristics associated with its landscape character that combine built and modified landscape elements. Together they have aesthetic qualities and form an unusual and pleasing sense of place in a dramatic landscape setting. Owner designed, and mostly owner built, the structures on site while reflecting typical construction materials do strongly reflect the interests and ideas of the Klaphake family.

The aesthetic character of the Mount Omei landscape was well reported in documents, such as newspaper articles during the period when the Modern Art Gallery operated with the overall site dubbed 'Alice's Wonderland' in response to its 'fairy-tale' landscape qualities. The aesthetic qualities of the place have ongoing importance to a number of artists and others associated with the place.

Inclusion guideline satisfied:

- is aesthetically distinctive
- exemplifies a particular taste, style or technology

Criterion (d) Social

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.

Mount Omei has social significance at a local level for many artists, former artists and arts administrators for its history and strong sense of place. Many individual artists and others who knew of Alice Klaphake and her art gallery have a strong sense of personal association with both Alice and the place. This reflects a contemporary social value in addition to the historic values noted here.

Alice herself was a strong personality who both charmed and influenced many, including non-artists who say that they were influenced by her and her life philosophies, such as local resident and former NSW State Minister Craig Knowles and Campbelltown solicitor John Marsden.

The social significance of Alice and her gallery at Mount Omei is reflected by the acquisition of the Klaphake collection at the Casula Powerhouse Arts Centre (CPAC), the Amphitheatre named after Alice and the plan, not yet implemented, to use Mount Omei as a local arts centre as part of a Georges River cultural route/network. While Alice Klaphake was not directly involved in the establishment of the Casula Powerhouse in the mid-1990s the role she and her gallery had in supporting local and regional arts led eventually to Liverpool Council, with the assistance of the NSW Government in establishing CPAC.

Inclusion guideline satisfied:

- is important for its associations with an identifiable group
- is important to a community's sense of place

Criterion (e) Scientific

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).

There is some research potential for the pre-Mount Omei period of history in the remains on this site associated with the pastoral operations of Glenfield Farm (in-ground water tanks, dams and fences). There is also some research potential in relation to Post-War land cooperatives established by the Glenfield Farm owner James Leacock (for which the Klaphakes may have been involved).

Inclusion guideline satisfied:

- has the potential to yield new or further substantial scientific and/or archaeological information
- provides evidence of past human cultures that is unavailable elsewhere

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).

Mount Omei has rarity significance as the first private art gallery to operate in southwestern Sydney. The varying uses of buildings on site at different periods (such as the laboratory converted to an art gallery) is also of interest but are not in themselves rare.

Inclusion guideline satisfied:

- shows rare evidence of a significant human activity important to a community

Criterion (g) Representative

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 area's: cultural or natural places; or cultural or natural environments.)

Mount Omei is representative of places associated with the development of the Post-War arts scene in western Sydney and in particular around Liverpool. It is also representative of the small number of places associated with alternative lifestyles in western Sydney in the Post-War period.

Inclusion guideline satisfied:

- has the principal characteristics of an important class or group of items
- has attributes typical of a particular way of life, philosophy, custom, significant process, design, technique or activity
- is a significant variation to a class of items

Statement of Significance

The Mount Omei site, Lot 17 Leacock's Lane Casula within Leacock Regional Park has historical, historical associations, aesthetic, social and scientific (research potential) significance at a local level, for the Liverpool LGA.

The historic significance of the site relates to themes of social change and migration around WWII, associations with 'alternative' people who chose to settle in rural areas of western Sydney and the important role of the Modern Art Gallery in the establishment of the western Sydney arts scene.

The particular associations of the site include Wolf and Alice Klaphake and their son Van; for differing reasons but all connected to the site. Other associations include regionally important persons in the regional arts history, Margo and Gerald Lewers, Lenore and Tom Bass and Barbara and Nick Romalis. There are many other local and regional artists associated with the Modern Art Gallery at Mount Omei including Elisabeth Cummings and Joan Brassil of the Wedderburn Group of artists.

Mount Omei presents a landscape quality that is a combination of structures, purpose design by the Klaphake family within an open grassed setting with large eucalypt and other trees planted by the Klaphakes set within a broader setting that includes some Cumberland woodland remnant species, all perched high above the Georges River with dramatic views to the city of Sydney to the east.

A key aspect of the significance of Mount Omei are the contemporary individual and community feelings of connection to Alice Klaphake and with the place itself.

There is some archaeological potential in the water storage remains of Glenfield Farm that predates Mount Omei. There is some historic research potential associated with the alternative tenure arrangements established by the Glenfield Farm owner James Leacock around the time that the Klaphakes purchased Mount Omei.

Mount Omei has rarity value at a local level representing the first private art gallery in south-western Sydney. It also has representative value for arts cultural places generally and Post-War places associated with different cultural approaches.

Level of significance

While some aspects of the history and associations of Mount Omei in relation to the arts scene and Alice Klaphakes connection to artists at Penrith and Campbelltown are regional in their scope, it is concluded that the place is of strong local significance for its association with the local arts scene and its particular site character.

Within the heritage values identified it is considered that the historic importance relating to the development of the western Sydney arts and the contemporary social values associated with that history and Alice Klaphake herself are the strongest.

Graded elements of significance

The site as a whole is significant and all parts of Lot 17 show some aspects of this significance. The House is of High significance as the thoughtfully designed family hub and represents the family ownership of the site that compliments the Gallery.

The Gallery is of High significance for its direct association with the arts history and also its use by Wolf as a laboratory.

The Sheds are of Moderate significance and while early and used for similar uses to the House and Gallery at different times they do not express the historic and social values of the House and Gallery. Of the sheds, the older central one with two skillion roofs is the more significant. Other key aspects of significance include the tree plantings by Wolf and Van Klaphake, the entry gate and the views to the city and the open spaces enclosed by trees – including the former U-shaped enclosure east of the house shown on the 1952 air photo.

(Ashley, 2016, pp39-44)

Option 2 — Community use for arts and environmental sustainability

This preferred option would see some form of arrangement entered into by NPWS with an entity that would operate a facility at Mount Omei associated with the two key heritage aspects associated with Mount Omei: environmental research/sustainability and local arts programs and activities. This entity would lease the House and the Gallery.

This option has a good fit with three of the specific management objectives in the PoM 2014 noted above in Section 6.2 relating to historic heritage conservation, regional cycleway and attractions and maximising community interest and involvement.

This use would have a good fit with the environmental objectives of NPWS and would bring a good community connection appropriate for a Regional Park, with a separate entity with a strong and clearly defined charter for this use, in a good position to manage the property. Such an entity that could well be connected to or responsible to, a government agency and its community roles, such as Liverpool Council.

In addition to there being a clear demonstration through this project of social heritage value through a local community association, there has also been separate community activism 'to save Mount Omei'. It is recommended that an expression of interest process be undertaken to give the community an opportunity to 'step up' and actively participate in establishing an entity and governance arrangements to allow such a future use to take place. The EOI process would itself be a project where an independent facilitator ran an EOI process and liaised with various stakeholder organisations.

Through informal discussion with staff at the Casula Powerhouse Arts Centre, it appears that the idea of a Georges River Cultural Corridor, while not being actively pursued is still seen as a good idea. While CPAC is a very good institution, it is a large fixed structure and making broader cultural landscape and cultural tourism connections to cultural places along the Georges River such as Glenfield House, Mount Omei, CPAC, the Liverpool Regional Museum and Collingwood House, linked by landscapes such as Leacock Regional Park, provides an attractive future opportunity.

While the proposal from the early 2000s from CPAC to the NSW Government to take over Mount Omei via a lease from NPWS is not active it still remains relevant – especially in relation to the broader Georges River Cultural Corridor and the regional pathway connection identified in the current Leacock Regional Park PoM.

Liverpool Council is very aware of the currently underutilised cultural and recreation opportunity that the Georges River corridor provides and clearly Leacock Regional Park is a key part of the equation to allow this to happen.

Without concluding on a specific future use for the Mount Omei buildings there still appears to be a need for 'independent spaces' 'artist run spaces' that is similar to the theme that was championed by Alice Klaphake.

In recommending that a community based arts/environment entity have the future role in the use and conservation of the Mount Omei site it recognises the strong association that Van Klaphake has with Mount Omei is acknowledged. However, ultimately it is the historical connection to the development of the western Sydney arts scene and the associated contemporary social values with that history that are the most important reasons for local heritage significance and therefore where the best use connected to heritage values lies. While the arts history is the critical aspect of its heritage value, a use that has strong focus on environmental issues would be a highly appropriate reflection of the environmental interests of the Klaphakes that is reflected in the landscape and buildings at Mount Omei.

Mount Omei as a place sums up key objectives of NPWS relating to the environment and culture. The work of Wolf, and Van more recently, in planting trees and to care and sustain this former pastoral landscape together with the work of Alice Klaphake in the local arts scene, seem highly appropriate for NPWS to seek to conserve and provide for a similar future.

Mount Omei as a publicly accessible site and with some form of public use would link well with Glenfield Farm and CPAC and historically it has a connection with both of these places.

The ideal use would see the conservation of all site structures, for example, sheds as artist studios, the gallery as a gallery and meeting place and house and as temporary artist residence (or the gallery as a residence with the House as the gallery/meeting rooms).

If all sheds were not retained in the implementation of a future use then the older central shed that has skillion is the more interesting structure (including use by Wolf as a darkroom) and should be retained as a priority.

(Ashley, 2016, pp49-50)

Conclusions and Recommended Actions

Conclusion

The significance assessment undertaken in this report finds that the Mount Omei property, Lot 17, Leacock's Lane, Casula is locally significant to the Liverpool LGA primarily for its historic and social significance in the development of the western Sydney arts scene and association with Wolf and Alice Klaphake. The existing cultural landscape comprised of House and Gallery, sheds, tree plantings open spaces and dramatic views across the Georges River valley reflect that important history and also association with Wolf and Alice Klaphake, both of whom are historically locally important.

The five buildings and cultural plantings on site should be retained and conserved. Of the two management options discussed, Option 2 [see below] is preferred where an entity is established to use the place for environmental sustainability and arts programs (such as an artist in residence program) and that an expression of interest project with a business plan component be undertaken to give the local community, in association with an agency such as Liverpool Council / CPAC the opportunity to 'step-up' to assist in the conservation of this site.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are made for the short-term actions that should be undertaken to assist the site use and conservation:

- Provide this report to Van Klaphake and indicate the preferred outcome of this report that a community entity manages the site into the future within Leacock Regional Park and that until arrangements are finalised that he can continue the tenancy arrangements, if he chooses.

-
- Undertake a full site survey of the property including plant surveys to work out significant plantings and weeds etc.
 - Prepare and implement an urgent works buildings repair program to address the condition issues noted in this report, including termites, dry rot, rain water management in gutters, downpipes and drains, earth building up around structures, urgent timber repair and painting.
 - Establish a project to seek community expressions of interest in the use, conservation and management of Mount Omei for uses associated with the history of the site, including environmental research and sustainable conservation and local arts activities including opportunities for local artist run spaces.
 - The EOI project should include stakeholder consultation to help develop and refine the offer and a business case component to establish governance and funding requirements. The project would ideally be under the auspices of a government agency who would have a lease/licence with OEH for the site use.
 - There would be the need for formal tender lease process after the EOI if an entity is created to manage the place. • Undertake a physical investigation of the site for remains associated with Glenfield Farm as noted in this report.
 - Undertaken historic research on James Leacock and the co-operative history.
- (Ashley, 2016, pp50-51)