

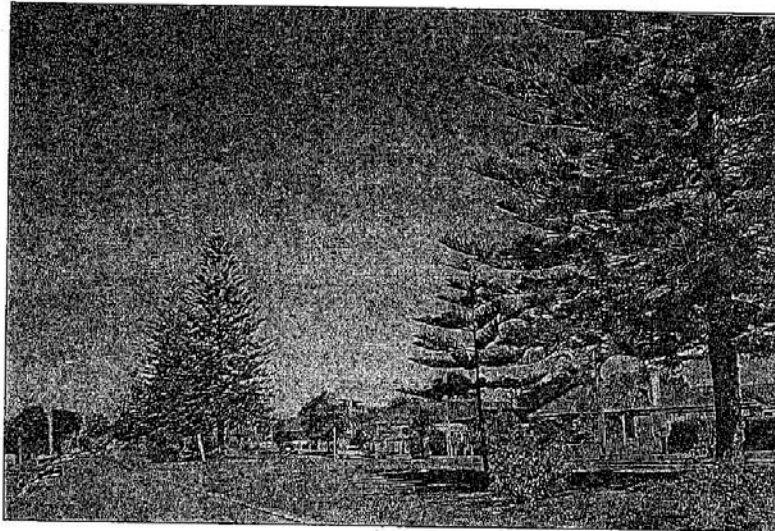
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Local Studies

# **HERITAGE ASSESSMENT REPORT**

for

## **PARKWAY AVENUE HAMILTON SOUTH**



**Prepared for**

**Newcastle City Council**

**by**

**Colin Brady Architecture + Planning**

**in association with**

**Mayne-Wilson & Associates  
Conservation Landscape Architects**

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
<b>1.0 Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 Aims & Objectives	1
1.2 Report Structure	1
1.3 The Study Area	1
1.4 Authorship	1
1.5 Report Limitations	2
1.6 Acknowledgements	2
<b>2.0 Historic Background</b>	<b>2</b>
2.1 The End of the Penal Settlement	3
2.2 The Australian Agricultural Company and Newcastle	4
2.3 Historical Background to the Garden Suburb Movement	5
2.4 Establishment of the Garden Suburb Hamilton	10
<b>3.0 Assessment of Existing Fabric</b>	<b>17</b>
3.1 The Site in Context	17
3.2 Layout and Planting	17
3.3 Condition of the planting	23
3.4 Comparative Analysis	23
<b>4.0 Assessment of Heritage Significance</b>	<b>26</b>
4.1 Basis of Assessment of Heritage Significance	26
4.1.1 Nature of Significance Criteria	26
4.2 Statement of Significance	26
4.2.1 Nature of Significance	27
4.2.1.1 Summary Statement of Cultural Significance	27
4.2.2 Nature of Significance	27
4.2.3 Items of principal significance	29
4.3 Identification of Cultural Heritage Significance	29
4.4 Curtilage	29
<b>5.0 Constraints</b>	<b>29</b>
5.1 Constraints arising from the Statement of Significance	29
5.2 Procedural Constraints	30
5.3 Statutory and other Constraints	30
<b>6.0 Conservation Guidelines</b>	<b>30</b>

## **1.0 Introduction**

Colin Brady Architecture + Planning, in association with Mayne-Wilson & Associates Conservation Landscape Architects, was commissioned by Newcastle City Council to prepare a heritage assessment of Parkway Avenue, Hamilton South. This wide thoroughfare was initiated as an element of the Hamilton Garden Suburb, launched in 1914 by the Australian Agricultural Company on lands owned by the Company since 1829.

### **1.1 Aims & Objectives**

Research and analysis of the history, site, built and landscape fabric of *Parkway Avenue* was to be undertaken in order to evaluate the cultural significance of the site. This would then provide a basis for future management of the Avenue both as a connecting road to Newcastle's eastern beaches and as an integral part of the Garden Suburb and its supporting infrastructure. A broader objective was to recognize and assess the cultural heritage values of the place in the context of its immediate locality, the Hamilton South Conservation Area and its associated historical building fabric. Preliminary assessment of the site was carried out in Studies of the suburb undertaken by Meredith Walker & Associates in 1986 and 1997. These have been referred to in the following assessment and are acknowledged as research documents.

### **1.2 Report Structure**

The report begins with an historical overview of the development of the site, placing it in the context of the development of Newcastle and of the Garden Suburb movement of the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> Centuries. Next, an analysis of the avenue and its associated built fabric is provided, based on the research and site inspection undertaken. Photographs, maps and sketches are used to illustrate the principal characteristics of the place. This is followed by a statement of significance for the place as a whole and landscaping in particular. After that, the particular conservation issues, constraints and opportunities are identified as part of management considerations, and a conservation policy formulated. This is then articulated into specific recommendations.

### **1.3 The Study Area.**

The focus of this assessment is the broad thoroughfare known as *Parkway Avenue* and its immediate curtilage. The Avenue extends from its junction with Tudor Street in the northwest, across the northern extent of Garden Suburb Hamilton, then cranking towards its eastern termination at a broad intersection with Memorial Drive at Bar Beach.

The Location Plan for the place is shown in Figure 1.

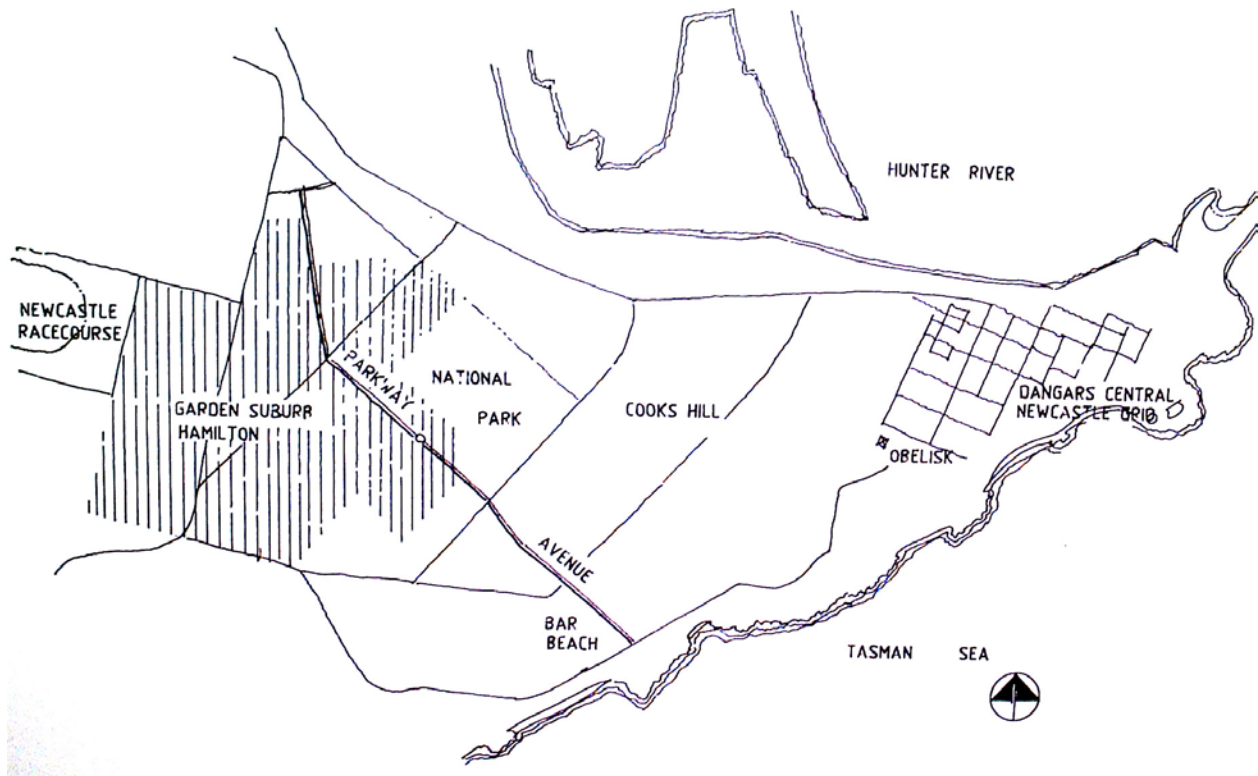


Figure 1 Location Plan showing the relationship of the Garden Suburb to Dangars Central Newcastle Grid Plan of 1823.

#### 1.4 Authorship

This assessment was prepared by Colin Brady Architecture + Planning in association with Mayne-Wilson and Associates.

#### 1.5 Report Limitations

The report has utilized records held within the Local Studies Section of Newcastle Library and records of recent works held in the offices of Newcastle City Council. It is limited to research undertaken by the authors and acknowledged references. It has not sought to obtain works records of Council's streetscape actions since the 1930s, relying instead on pictorial evidence.

#### 1.6 Acknowledgements

The authors wish to acknowledge the detailed research into the Hamilton Garden Suburb undertaken by Meredith Walker and Associates in 1986 and 1997, together with assistance received from the Local Studies section of Newcastle Library.

### 2.0 Historic Background

The first recorded European sighting of Newcastle is a log entry from Captain James Cook's 1770 exploration of the east coast of Australia. On the 10 May 1770 Cook's log records the sighting of a small clump of islands at the bearings of present day Nobby's Head.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Outline history of early Newcastle based upon notes taken from :  
Davies and Cunningham Ltd and Reg C Pegonoski City of Newcastle 1929

Following establishment of the settlement at Sydney Cove in 1788, exploration of the north coast was limited due to inhospitable landforms; however, fishermen extending their voyages north from Broken Bay are thought to have reached Newcastle by 1796.

On 9 September 1797, Lt. John Shortland R.N. of *HMS Reliant* entered the river mouth at Newcastle whilst pursuing the stolen cutter *Cumberland*. Shortland took samples of coal with him to Sydney. Subsequently in 1799 the first export of coal from the colony occurred with the transport of coal by small ships to Sydney and thence by the sailing vessel *Hunter* to Bengal.

In 1801 the brig *Lady Nelson* under Lt. Grant undertook exploration of the harbour and river at Newcastle. At this time the waterway, as with many coastal inlets, was being utilised in the shipment of cedar logs to Sydney. The river was commonly identified with the visible coal deposits, assuming the name of the 'Coal River' later changed to the 'Hunter'. In 1801 Col. Paterson named Nobby's Island 'Coal Island'. Paterson's recommendation of settlement led to Governor King issuing a general order notifying the establishment of a settlement at Coal River (known as King's Town) that year. Following a mutiny stemming from the cruel command of Surgeon Mason, the settlement was abandoned in 1802 and reopened, following reforms by Governor King, in 1804. On March 15, 1804 King named the location Newcastle in the County of Northumberland and appointed Lt. Charles Menzies as Commandant.

With the appointment of Governor Macquarie in 1809, Newcastle shared in the improvements and public works instigated throughout the colony. Macquarie saw to the erection of the first jetty at the bottom of Watt Street (then High Street). Erection of Christ Church began in 1817 and finished in 1821 and the breakwater between Nobby's and Allen's Hill was commenced in 1813. In 1810 the second cargo of coal was exported to Sydney, coal being dug out of the side of Allen's Hill. By 1812, three small vessels were in the business of transporting coal to Sydney. In 1813 the settlement had been equipped with a gaol, military barracks, officers quarters, quarter stores and a flag staff and beacon placed on present day Signal Hill.

The principal tunnel of the first coal mine was in 1814 located at the rear of the site later occupied by the Strand Theatre.

In 1821 the first courthouse was completed on the site of the later Public Works Building, and Mr Platt, the first 'free selector', took up land at the "Folly", now Mayfield. By that year, Newcastle incorporated seven streets and 84 houses – 13 Government houses and 71 convict huts, all requiring to be white washed in a settlement of over 900 persons, ruled by martial law. The earliest free settlers, having relocated from Hexham, lived in tents near Honeysuckle Creek.

## **2.1 The End of the Penal Settlement.**

In 1822 negotiations saw the removal of the convict settlement from Newcastle to Port Macquarie. The relocation was based upon Newcastle being insufficiently isolated, the coal industry small, and agriculture not sufficiently developed to warrant employment of large numbers of men. Despite relocation of the penal settlement, Newcastle retained a large gaol housing convicts employed on construction of the breakwater and road making.

The surveyor, M. Dangar, was in 1823 commissioned to lay out the town. Dangar's town survey formalised the colonial grid pattern remaining within central Newcastle. With the river open to free settlement, over 600 000 acres had been purchased by the end of the year.

1825 saw construction of the first hospital on the site of the later Royal Newcastle Hospital.

## 2.2 The Australian Agricultural Company and Newcastle

In April 1824 the first meeting of a persons interested in a company for the development and improvement of lands in the Colony of New South Wales was held in the London offices of John Macarthur Jnr. a London barrister and son of the pioneer of the Australian wool industry John Macarthur. The Australian Agricultural (A.A.) Company was duly established with a capital of 1 million pounds and a government grant of 1 million acres, selected by its New South Wales agents and an allotment of convict labour not to exceed 1400 men.

Robert Dawson the first agent for the A.A. Company arrived in New South Wales on November 15, 1825. That year a tract of land extending from Port Stephens to the Manning River had been selected for agricultural purposes. The following year the British Government requested the Company urgently take over its coal mining operations in the Newcastle district. The Company agreed to take over, manage and develop the poorly run mines. In return the Company in 1829, received an additional 2000 acres of land in Newcastle.

Land to the east of Brown Street and the Terrace was reserved for the Government township. This action concentrated the future growth of Newcastle within the street plan resulting from Dangar's survey set out of 1823. Whilst Dangar's set-out retained the grid plan inherent in colonial settlements, streets to the west and south developed on more pragmatic principles of later 19<sup>th</sup> century and early 20<sup>th</sup> century planning philosophies.

Improved links with Sydney came with the advent of steam power. In 1831 the steamers *Sophia Ann* and *Tamar* began a daily service to and from Sydney and Morpeth. Prior to this, Sydney had to be reached by small sailing ship or a long inland journey via Maitland, the Bulga, Kurrajong and Richmond or Windsor. Improved transport brought a short burst of growth to Newcastle, but from 1836, the centre of importance on the Hunter changed to Morpeth with Newcastle merely a port of call en route. In 1847 Newcastle first served as a port for coal vessels using a loading stage there to expedite movement of coal to Sydney.

From 1850, Newcastle's population rapidly increased due to the opening of new mines. Growth remained retarded due to industrial strikes. By 1853 the Bank of New South Wales had established the first banking concern in Newcastle. A District Council was formed in 1854. Also proposed that year was the demolition of Nobby's, a move later vetoed. The first volunteer fire brigade, volunteer infantry and artillery were formed in 1855.

By 1856 the first Parliamentary election had been held with three members returned. Civic developments of that year included the establishment of a Chamber of Commerce, which in turn secured 35 acres at the top of Watt Street as public recreation grounds. Within these grounds was erected an obelisk both employed as a navigational aid for ships entering the river and as a memorial to civic development. Its prominence gained added identity with the growth of settlement to the west. The white spire defined the otherwise tucked away location of Newcastle to all outer areas.

In 1857 the Great Northern Railway was opened for traffic. The opening of the railways marked the beginning of new developments including the establishment of new coalfields both in close proximity to the town and further into the Hunter Valley. With expansion of the port, beginning with dredging of the harbour in 1859 and building of the foreshore Dyke in the early 1860's, Newcastle steadily linked itself with the agricultural and wool producing areas in the north and northwest of New South Wales.

Commercial and town development continued, a telegraph link being established with Sydney in 1860. In 1862 the outer breakwater was commenced and the first public school built in Tyrrell Street. The principal shopping street of Newcastle in the 1860's was Watt Street. Formerly named High Street and running down to the original pier, this was the earliest formed street in the settlement. As with many of Newcastle's central streets, the thoroughfare took its name from a pioneer of the steam age. As Newcastle grew and industrial functions began to compete with the export of coal, the area about the Customs House and *The Great Northern Hotel* was progressively infilled with warehouses, railway sheds and later automobile service buildings. This pattern of residual lands about established structures and town centres remaining as raw sand hills or open industrial space was a defining aspect of Newcastle until well into the 20<sup>th</sup> Century.

### 2.3 Historical Background to the Garden Suburb Movement

The concept of the Garden Suburb emerged in early 20<sup>th</sup> Century Australia as a local response to the Garden City Movement that had evolved in both England and the United States during the later 19<sup>th</sup> Century. At its core was a compilation of innovative marketing and social benevolence. These forces were realised as an amalgam of landscape and town planning, cemented by architecture derived from the Picturesque period of English Georgian Architecture. Its inception was essentially a marketing concept for new estates seeking individuality within the new regime of suburbia produced by the expanded rail and tram networks of the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century.

The Picturesque movement in English Georgian Architecture beginning in the 1770's had, by the early 19<sup>th</sup> Century, extended its concepts to the provision of worker housing. Thus at Blaise, near Bristol, John Nash, in 1811, built a model village of thatched and gabled cottages around a green. Then, in 1839, at Edensor, near Chatsworth, Joseph Paxton and John Robertson built for the Duke of Devonshire another estate village – 'an odd medley of styles but also commodious and comfortable'.<sup>2</sup> Such precedents would lie largely ignored through the Victorian Age where planning was considered a contradiction of Victorian individualism, better expressed as capitalism at its most extreme. However, the social reformist Ebenezer Howard, in 1889, proposed the idea of the Garden City in his publication *Tomorrow: A Peaceful Path to Real Reform*. Howard suggested that the solution to late Victorian urban problems of density and undesirable row housing was a series of new towns. These would counteract the pull of the cities by offering all the amenities of urban life as well as the pleasures of living in a balanced semi rural community. Each Garden City was to be defined in size and surrounded by a belt of agricultural land sufficient to feed the predetermined maximum population. Howard's vision of houses set in gardens in the countryside was firmly tied to the practicalities of the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century. with each Garden City connected by fast railway.<sup>3</sup>

Howard's ideals were brought to reality through the work of socialist architects Barry Parker and Raymond Unwin. From northern England, Parker and Unwin had already successfully completed social housing estates when they were asked, in 1903, to compete in a limited competition for design of a new town at Letchworth. Here Howard's disciples had purchased 3826 acres of land adjacent to the Great Northern Railway. Drawing on experience gained from the design of a workers estate at New Earswick for the chocolate magnate Joseph Rowntree in 1901, Parker and Unwin brought rationalization to the Letchworth design – see Figure 1a. Densities varied with location and function. Formal avenues focus on the town centre and the associated railway.

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<sup>2</sup> Robert Furneaux Jordan. *Victorian Architecture*. P.55. Penguin London 1966.

<sup>3</sup> Peter Davey. *Arts and Crafts Architecture*. Pp.182-183. Phaidon. London 1995





Figure 1a Aerial view of Parker and Unwin's town plan for Letchworth of 1903.



The avenue was common to large manufacturing towns like Leeds and Birmingham in the 1890's but through Parker and Unwin's planning, its amenities became accessible to relatively poor people. Streets edged with broad belts of grass, planted with flowering trees, footpaths, low hedges and setback residences with front and rear yards typified development at Letchworth. Street layouts revealed a love of vistas, axes and order so strongly advocated by fellow Arts and Crafts architect, Edward Prior, and exponents of the City Beautiful movement. Integral to the design was the use of house designs prepared by Parker and Unwin or other architects. The need for integrated housing design had been established in the partners' New Earswick project, where modified house designs had enabled optimum access to sunlight for houses still attached in terrace form.

Parker and Unwin would continue their association until 1914. In 1909, Sir Edward Lutyens, then England's most prominent architect, observed, "There is a boom coming for Garden Cities."<sup>4</sup>

On the opposite side of the world where cities were few and far between, the message was equally heeded. Whilst devoid of population, Australia, at the turn of the century lacked not for concentration. The explosion of suburban growth fostered by radiating rail and tram networks saw the new nation's fledgling cities rapidly turning to suburban conglomerations lacking much of the dense central core of their European and North American antecedents. Even by the 1890's both Melbourne and Sydney covered more area than any British or American city except Chicago.<sup>5</sup> Australian architects still trained in England and the emerging Federation Style, dominating construction of the period, drew heavily upon English and American precedents. It was but a short step to introduce the Garden City, albeit reduced to the Garden Suburb and initially aimed at promoting real estate sales rather than providing relief to the working class.

In 1905 entrepreneur Richard Stanton was actively promoting the Haberfield Garden Suburb in Sydney's inner west, whilst slightly further west, iron magnate George Hoskins had established The Apian Way, a *cul de sac* of substantial freestanding residences in the Federation style set out in the manner of a Garden Suburb. Its almost private enclave mirrored similar developments in North America and a close association of the Garden Suburb in Australia with the bungalow residence. Walter Burley Griffin's nine acre *Trier Centre* housing estate of 1911 in Chicago had placed housing in a setting free of front fences, with footpaths separated from the roadway by a three foot evergreen plantation. This was to be the nature strip of the future, with the street as a public garden, which in Griffin's view was a true democratic village.<sup>6</sup>

Relocating to Australia, after winning the design competition for Canberra, Griffin went on to design many Australian garden suburbs using the same principles, but only in his house designs at Castlecrag, in Sydney, was he able to give them a three dimensional form. Other architects were more successful in achieving commissions incorporating both town planning and residential design during the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century. It remains a legacy of Parker and Unwin's achievements that this combined approach, for a brief period, gained some acceptance in town planning. Most garden suburb developments, however, relied upon covenants to achieve a desired standard of development.

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<sup>4</sup> Op cit. p.181

<sup>5</sup> Graeme Butler. The California Bungalow in Australia. P36 Lothian . Melbourne 1992

<sup>6</sup> Ibid. p31

Best known of the garden suburbs after Richard Stanton's Haberfield was the Dacey Garden Suburb – see Figure 1b. Situated 8 kilometres south of Sydney, the city's second garden suburb was conceived as part of a public housing initiative by NSW's first Labour Government.<sup>7</sup> Initially planned by the State's Department of Public Works, the suburb was formally laid out in 1913 by Architect John Sulman, with Hennessy and Fitzgerald, following English Garden City principles (with 'Parisian style' avenues). S.G. Thorpe, for architects Peddle Thorpe, won the competition for design of houses, using brick or concrete with tile or slate roofs (subsequently altered to corrugated iron for economy). By 1915, one thousand people lived in the suburb with residents obliged to maintain communal gardens.

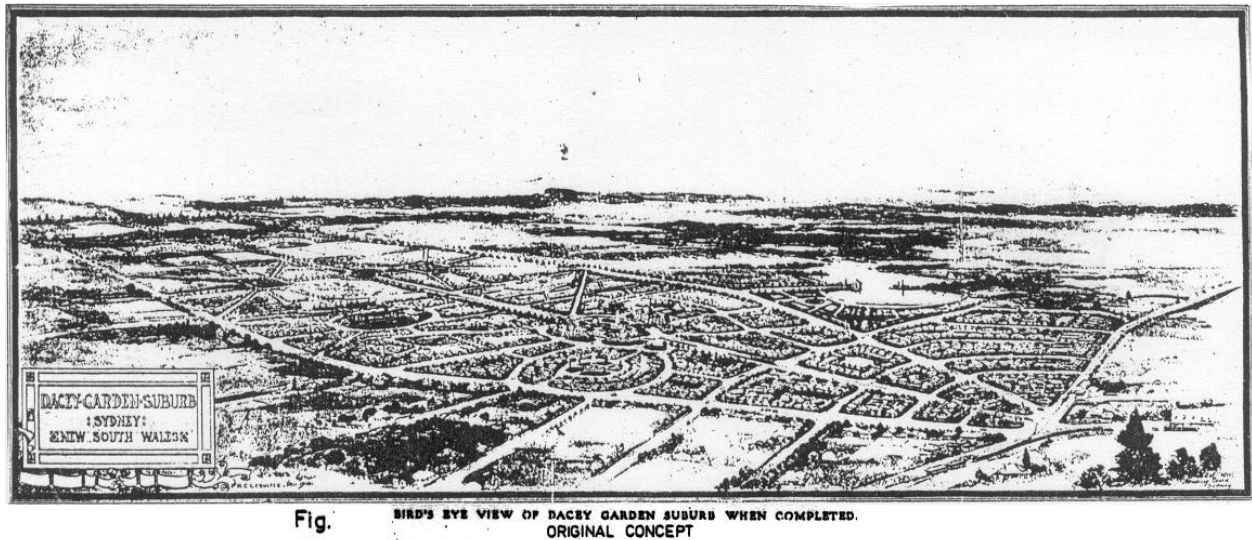


Figure 1b Aerial perspective of Sulman and Hennessy plan for Dacey Garden Suburb Sydney 1913

Through to the time of its abandonment in 1924, the State-established Housing Board initiated ten estates in addition to the Daceyville Extension estates (subsequent stages of the Dacey Garden Suburb). In addition to metropolitan projects at Auburn, Bunnerong, Gladesville, Marrickville and Matraville, the Board extended its operations to other parts of the State including Forbes, Orange, Wollongong and Stockton. The Stockton scheme, the largest outside the Sydney metropolitan area, was conceived in response to housing shortages associated with establishment of the State Dockyard and BHP steelworks. Initially proposed to house dockyard employees in 450 cottages on 70 acres of land, the treatment of roads, footpaths, and open spaces was to be 'in accordance with modern ... village planning in England 'with garden conditions being imposed'. Rejected by the Public Works Committee in 1915, the scheme was revived under political pressure from senior minister Fitzgerald in the Holman Government of 1918. Fitzgerald argued that industrial stability would flow from a housing and town planning scheme inspired by the Garden City movement. The scheme, set out to a plan prepared by architect Foggit (see Figure 1d), was opened in 1919 in part of today's suburb of Corroba. 60 cottages were sold by the end of 1920, when the building programme was terminated.

<sup>7</sup> Robert Freestone. Model communities: the garden movement in Australia. Robert Freestone 1989.

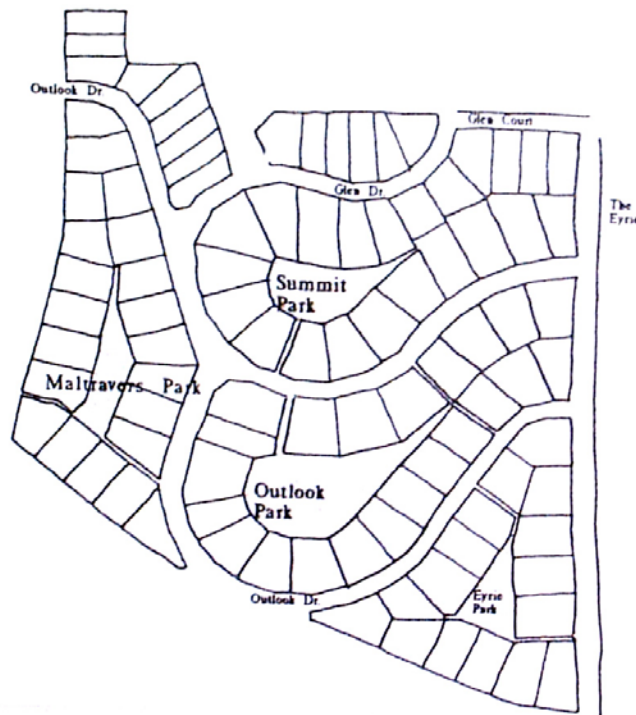


Figure 1c Walter Burley Griffin's plan for Mount Eagle Estate Victoria 1914.

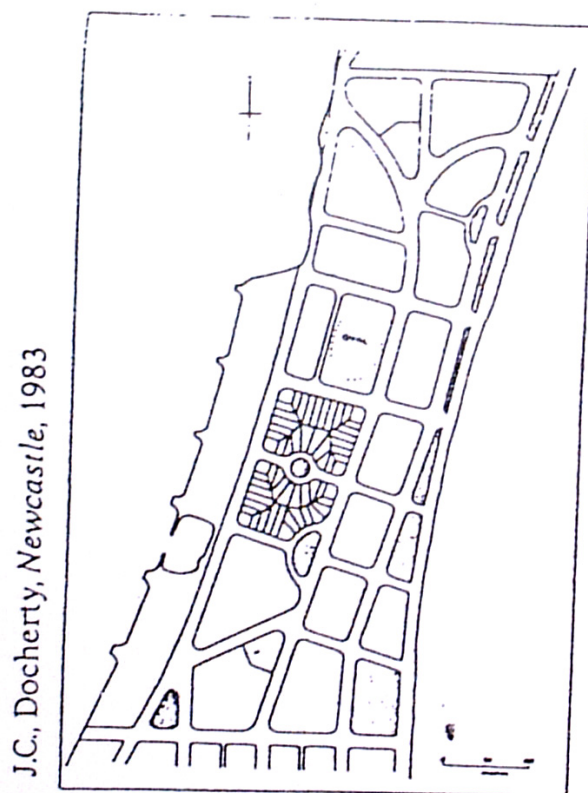


Figure 1d W. Foggit's layout for a garden suburb at Stockton, 1919.

## 2.4 Establishment of the Garden Suburb Hamilton

At the time of the Stockton development's conception, a privately conceived garden suburb was also being established in Newcastle. On the opposite side of the Hunter River, to the south of Dangar's central grid plan, stood an extensive area of sand wastes dominated by pit workings of the AA Company's mines and linked with connecting tramways. Whilst partially occupied by low impact land use including a racetrack and golf course, the core area of the AA Company's 2000 acre land grant from 1829, adjacent to central Newcastle, remained open ground.

The AA Company had mined beneath the area from 1831 to 1916. Despite lease and sale of land to enable establishment of townships including Cooks Hill, The Junction and Pit Town (Hamilton), by 1910, the areas of low lying ground extending from the sea to Borehole No. 2 Pit remained undeveloped.<sup>8</sup>

In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the development of the south coast coal mines with their superior steaming coal, and the progressive move from coal to gas as a form of domestic heating, saw the demand for coal decline. The AA Company focused on its original objective of rural land use and, still controlled from England, had placed little emphasis upon the development of the open lands so close to the centre of Newcastle. Land sales had been pragmatic and uncoordinated.

Meredith Walker's report<sup>9</sup> records that about this time, c. 1910, the AA Company's assistant surveyor, Worters Pulver, had a great interest in town planning. In 1913, on succeeding Arnold Elliot as Chief Surveyor, Pulver persuaded the company to engage Sydney architects and planners Sulman and Hennessy to prepare a plan for the redevelopment of the Newcastle lands. At this time, John Sulman had retired from architectural practice to concentrate upon town planning and, as previously noted, was engaged in planning of the Dacey Garden Estate and also the Roseberry Industrial Estate for Richard Stanton, the developer of the Haberfield model suburb.

Being low and swampy, much of the land proposed for estate development required considerable drainage. Despite this, the new Garden Suburb was promoted in posters for the first land sale on May 30 1914, as having all roads made, with gas, water and sewerage available. Served by train and tram, the Garden Suburb was described as a triumph of town planning, with ample public recreation grounds, gardens, bathing beaches and imposing tree planted avenues. All lands had been subdivided and planned by John Sulman and John Hennessy. The poster showed Parkway Avenue formed on the northern side of the first subdivision of 85 lots. The lots were identified in an associated newspaper advertisement as fronting Gordon Avenue, the Hamilton Road, Veda, Minola, Dumaresq, Lawson, Alexander and Beckett Streets. Two artistically designed brick residences to the design of Newcastle architect F.G. Castleden. were completed in time for the first sale in May 1914. The cottages were located on the western side of Gordon Avenue at the corners of Dumaresq and Kemp Streets. Two further cottages, constructed in weatherboard, were erected opposite one and other at the intersection of Gordon Avenue and Glebe Road, marking the entrance to the Garden Suburb from the south. The promotional brochure<sup>10</sup> outlined the proposed treatment of the main Avenues – Stewart, Gordon and Parkway – *lined with trees and marked by pillars of characteristic design, the aesthetic effect of which cannot be over estimated.* Records would suggest that this treatment was initially limited, with pillars only erected in Gordon Avenue and subsequently relocated to Learmonth Park.

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<sup>8</sup> Meredith Walker & Assoc. 1986. *Hamilton East Conservation Study*. Prepared for Newcastle Council, p. 9.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid, p.10

<sup>10</sup> AA Company brochure 1914.

Despite recorded discrepancies between promotion and reality, the transformation of natural swamp and sand dunes to form level building blocks was considered a substantial engineering undertaking at the time, with a small rail system employed to redistribute sand fill. Deficiencies in the actual development of the estate were in part offset by higher than average site preparations. Whilst sewerage was not generally available until 1919, the provision of formed roads, together with gas, electricity and water, exceeded the standards then required for new subdivisions. In addition, covenants applied to land sales ensured a degree of quality and consistency in residential construction. The initial sale resulted in forty nine of eighty five allotments purchased, with a further five sold in June and July, then sporadic sales through to the following year.

The second sale of lands in the Garden Suburb took place in the southern entrance to the suburb 'west of Gordon Avenue from Glebe Road to Harle Street, followed by land west of Learmonth Park'. After these initial sales, Walker found that the development of the suburb proceeded 'progressively inwards, ... with the land in the middle (alongside Jenner Parade and Parkway Avenue) being the last to be developed.'<sup>11</sup> Development proceeded in a piecemeal fashion, probably dictated by a combination of the Company's circumstances, demand for land, and availability of connection to the sewer. A plan mapping the chronological location of land sales also suggests that the utilization of existing infrastructure including earlier established residential areas, impacted upon the location of land releases.

Due partly to the AA Company wanting to keep its options open as to detailed subdivision and land use, land sales were generally limited to groups of around 10-20 lots. Before release for sale, small subdivisions were submitted for approval with the inclusion of sewer, water, electricity, and road construction. Whilst it is recorded that some of the lots offered in the first land sale, including the two demonstration houses, were not sewered, correlation of early land sales with a 1922 map showing the extent of sewered lands in Hamilton East shows a close concentration of land releases in the existing sewered areas. Low lying areas, particularly along the route of Parkway Avenue, remained largely open land. These areas (arrowed red) are evident in the aerial photograph taken shortly before 1929, in Figure 2 below.

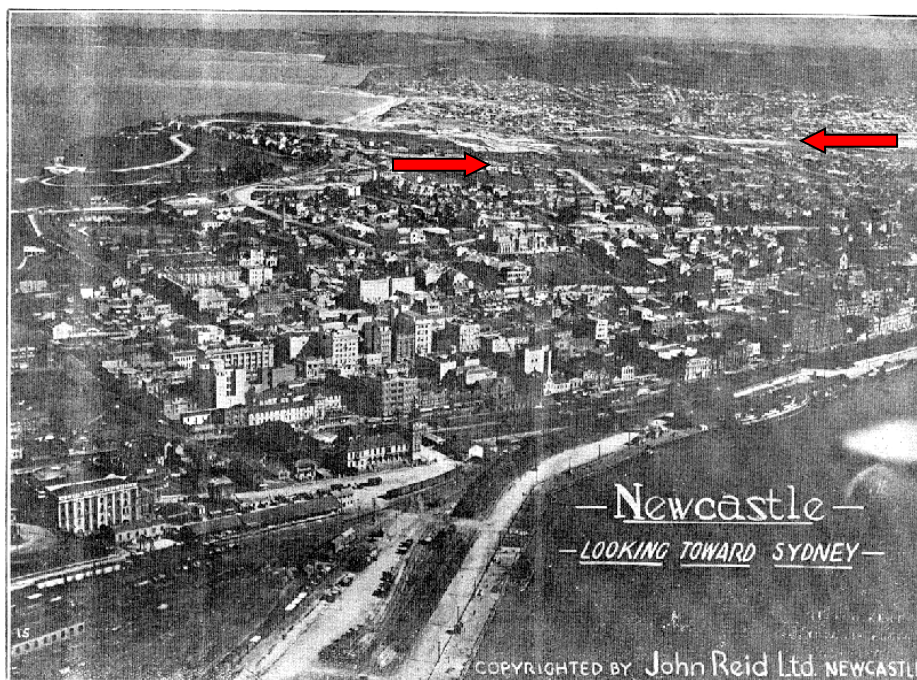


Fig. 2 Newcastle 1929 aerial photograph.

<sup>11</sup> Walker Meredith. Garden Suburb Hamilton – Southern Area Study.



The progressive release of lots in small numbers compounded a feature common to the development of Australian Garden Suburbs. Development repeatedly bore a pattern of initial detailed planning and cohesion, followed by release of small areas constructed to a high standard and set within a broad framework of outline infrastructure. Subsequent land releases and completion of the setting to the standard initially envisioned would then be subject to the vagaries of the market and the attitude of the controlling authorities over extended periods. Hence as with Dacey Garden Suburb and many of Walter Burley Griffin's designs, the final result would at best be a simplified realisation of the initial proposal.

Historical documentation of the development of the Garden Suburb Hamilton and in particular of Parkway Avenue reveals an all too common example of this process. In the initial promotional plan, Parkway Avenue is indicated as a grand thoroughfare of generous width and detail. In addition to providing a link to the ocean beaches, Parkway Avenue provided Griffin's "street as a public garden". Countering this were the expansive sand wastes and low lying ground between the initial stages of development and the rise of Cook's Hill to the east. These are clearly evident as late as 1929, as depicted in the aerial photograph above. In reality, whilst roads sewer, water and electricity were generally provided for the compact land releases, the overall framework, which contained the subdivisions, appears to have also been constructed in piecemeal fashion.

John Sulman's outline notes regarding the proposed subdivision initially identify the opportunity in the layout of blocks between Kemp and Dumaresq Streets "for a parkway avenue two chains in width, which it is suggested should be planted with trees and grassed in the centre and thus forming a striking feature of the estate."<sup>12</sup> At the outset, Parkway Avenue is shown on the northern boundary of the first land releases. Comparison of this plan with the overall suburb reveals that the Avenue would have only needed to extend as far as the intersection of Stewart Avenue to fulfil the requirements of the proposed land sales. Reference to the 1922 plan, detailing the extent of unsewered areas in the suburb, indicates that Parkway Avenue had, by that time only extended as far as Minola Street, only two blocks from its short and narrow extent prior to commencement of the suburb. Lands to the east appear to have been held in reserve; as recommended by Sulman:

"the treatment of the gully and water channel with the surrounding low land to the eastern end of the site we leave for further consideration."<sup>13</sup>

Prior to establishment of the Garden Suburb, much of the low lying land, up to the route of the Newcastle Colliery Railway, had been utilized for Chinese market gardens, a feature common to similar lands in low lying areas of Sydney and Wollongong at the time. A further portion of the north-eastern lands had been leased to the Newcastle Cricket Club. Following a request from Newcastle and Hamilton Councils that lands in the original holding be provided for open space, the AA Company allocated the low-lying, north-east lands to Council as a major park. The area was initially designated as Sneddon Park and subsequently National Park. The lands required many years of substantial effort in land filling by the Council to reach a suitable standard for recreational use.

Sulman had, in his notes on the proposed layout of the garden suburb, identified the need for a school within the development. His recommendation of a location a little north of the stormwater drain towards the western side of the subdivision was not followed. In 1925 a site in Parkway Avenue, between National Park and Smith Street, was selected but then developed as the Newcastle Girls High School.

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<sup>12</sup> Walker Meredith Garden Suburb Hamilton – Southern Area Study. P.16.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

An alternate site to the south of the stormwater channel, close to Sulman's original location was subsequently allocated to a primary school in 1927. Further non-residential development in Parkway Avenue occurred with the establishment of a Marist Brothers High School and a large ambulance station at the northwestern intersection with Denison Street.

Whether Parkway Avenue extended further than indicated on the sewer map of 1922 has not been established. A hand-drawn extension of the eastern route of Parkway Avenue on this plan suggests that the Avenue was initially developed inwards from both ends. This has been verified in discussions with historians undertaking research in the area. An aerial photograph of Newcastle, taken shortly before 1929 – see Figure 2 - shows an area of sand and low planting extending along the low depression to the south of the City. Areas further to the south and the racecourse to the west are well developed. The routes of road and rail links are evident as they cross the low lying area.

The completion of the Avenue route across the low lying areas about the central drainage canal would appear to have been undertaken when Newcastle Girls High School was established. The school site, allocated in 1925, is designated as a high school in a September 1928 sale notice. The notice, seen in Figure 3 below, shows the Avenue completed in the vicinity of the high school and extending east past the tramline along Union Street. The notice also indicates lands further east in Kemp Street as having been sold.

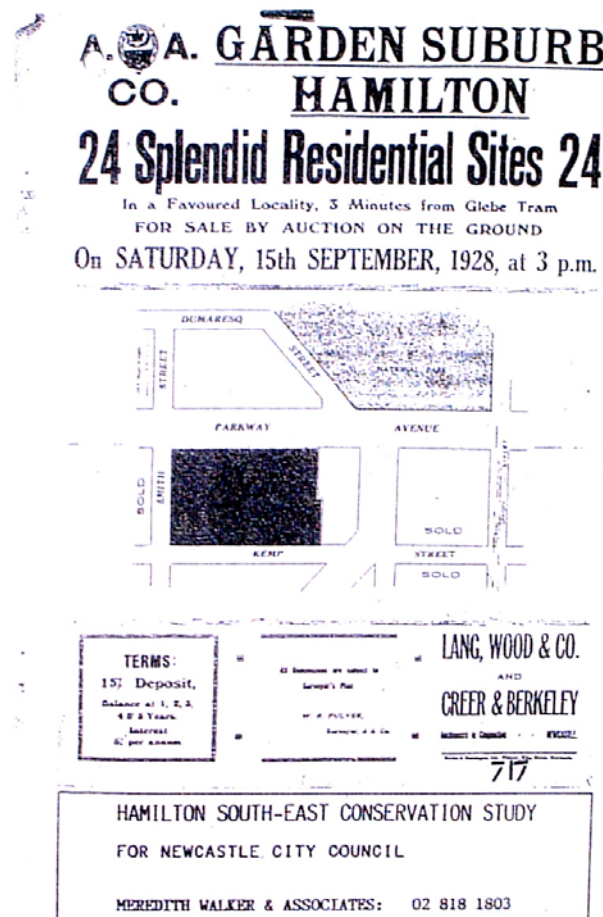


Figure 3 September 1928 Sale Notice for Lands in Parkway Avenue.

The release of lands in this previously low lying area would further suggest that the extensive works associated with the construction of concrete channels for the existing stormwater drains were completed by this date. The detailing of balustrades in the centre of Parkway Avenue supports this. These retain Inter - War Classicist styling, common to engineering and coastal sites developed in the 1920's. Construction of the open channels represented a major change to Sulman's original plan but also reflected an adherence to the principles of his approach. The route of the channel with its splayed return to the northeast forms a symmetrical reflection of the route taken by Dumaresq Street from Parkway Avenue to Stewart Avenue. Whilst offset from Sulman's original three avenues, the parallel plan form provides a tartan effect of secondary streets also framing regular grids of housing – see Figure 4.

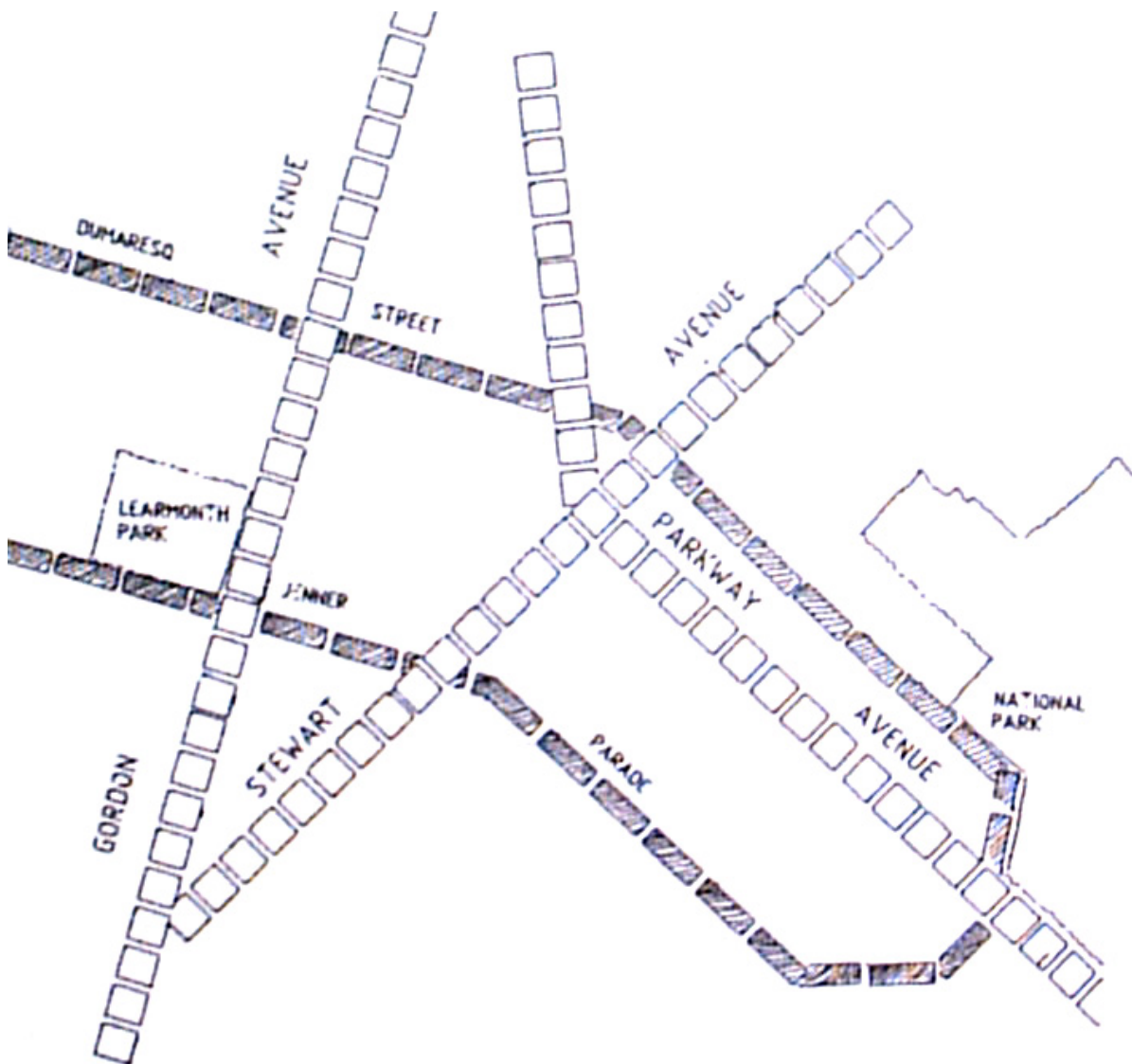
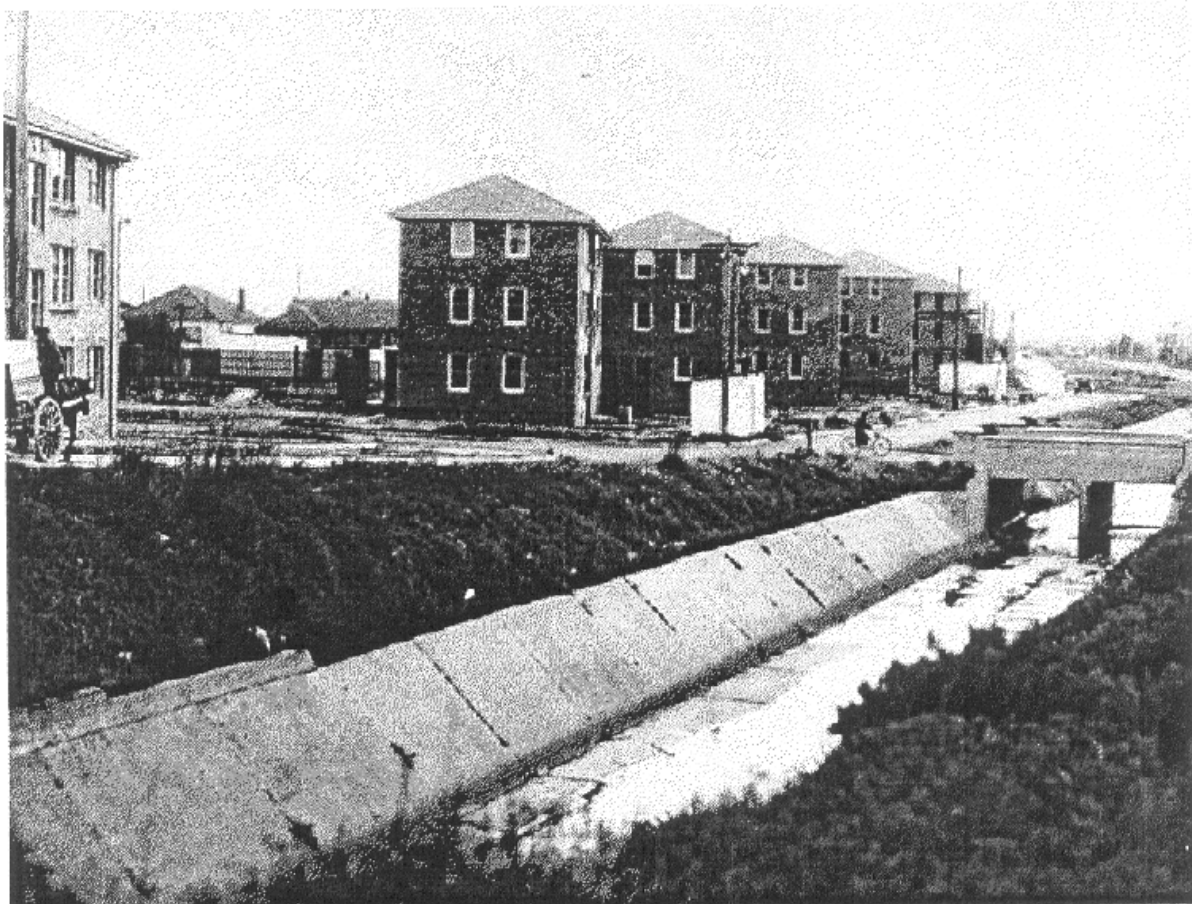


Figure 4 Tartan overlay of Sulman's principal axes and the secondary pattern of Jenner Parade and Dumaresq Street aligned with the repetitive grid block plans.

Photographs taken shortly after World War 2 show the consolidated form of Parkway Avenue. Images of the construction of Housing Commission Flats to the south east side of Parkway Avenue south of National Park – see Figure 5 below - show the drainage canals running through a barren setting of grassed medians and negligible planting.



C:\PICLIBS\PUBLIC\jpeg\NPL10400\10400623.jpg

Fig. 5 – Late 1940s construction of Housing Commission flats in Parkway Avenue, south of National Park.

Other photographs of the YWCA building being constructed in Parkway Avenue in 1950 indicate the post war origins of the Functionalist Style buildings remaining at the northern end of Parkway Avenue.

Whilst Parkway Avenue was billed from the outset as a link of the Garden Suburb to the bathing beaches to the east, documentary evidence suggests that any implication this would immediately extend the street as public garden to the Cooks Hill area would have been premature. An aerial photograph of 1950 and shots taken during a flood from 1948 – seen in Figures 6, 7 & 8 - clearly show the avenue in a raw state some thirty six years after the first land sales in the Garden Suburb.



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Figs. 6 and 7 taken in 1948 show two rows of young Canary Island Palms along the median strip but no street trees in the verge. Photo courtesy of Newcastle City Library.



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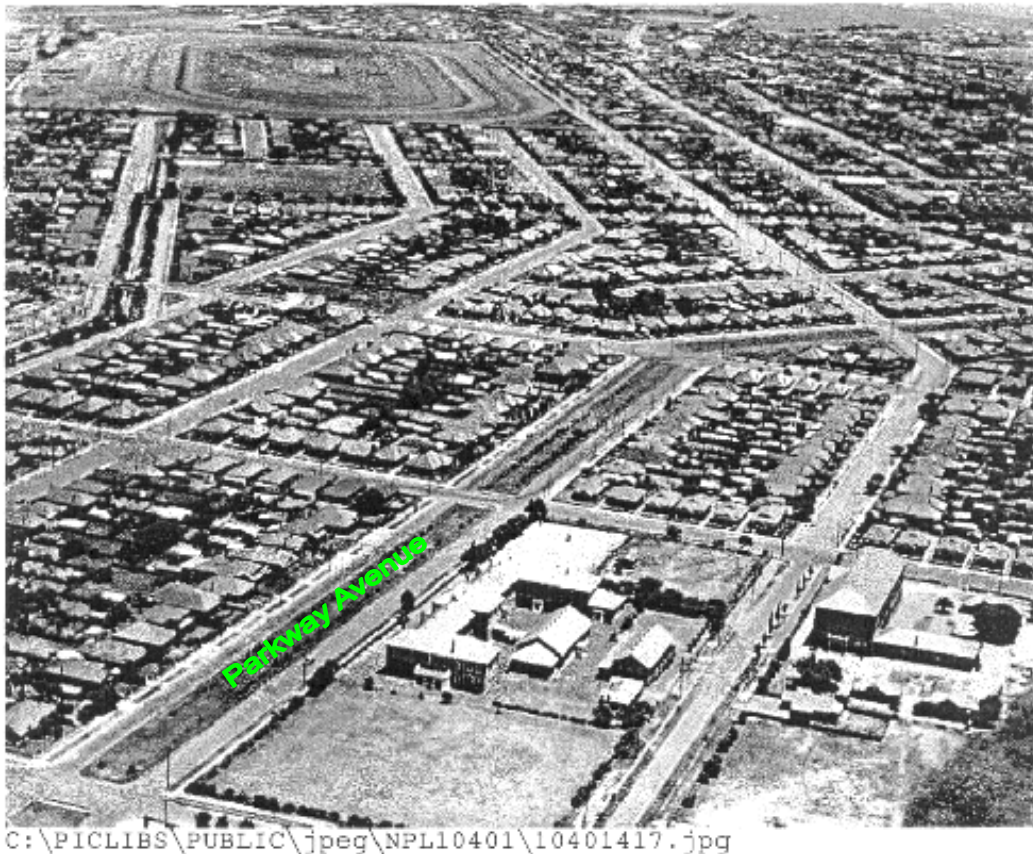


Fig. 8 This aerial photograph, taken in 1950, shows Parkway Avenue running from bottom left and exiting towards top right of the image. Note the Girls High School at the centre, with Brush Box along part of its Parkway Avenue frontage, and two rows of plantings (Canary Island Palms) along the edge of the central median strip. Photo courtesy Newcastle City Library.

### 3.0 Assessment of Existing Fabric

#### 3.1 The Site in Context

As indicated above, the greater part of the study area is located in a low-lying, sandy area to the south-west of the city of Newcastle, much of which had been mined, and the central sector of which had to be drained before it could be subdivided and used for housing. The land to the east of the study area rises up toward the sandstone escarpment of the coastal edge, in the suburb of Cooks Hill. Parkway Avenue makes three substantial character changes over its length, and is marked by abrupt changes of angle as it proceeds from west to east.

#### 3.2 Layout and Planting

The western end of Parkway Avenue commenced at Tudor Street and at the time of the launching of the Garden Suburb in 1914, ended at the (then) recently installed tramway, which ran along Union Street to Newcastle city. Its extension eastward to Bar Beach occurred decades later, at which time its original width and character was continued. However, the land east of Union Street was never part of the Garden Suburb as planned in 1913-14 by John Sulman and John Hennessy. The eastern progress of the Avenue represented the promised extension of the garden 'parkway' to the seaside behind the suburb. Meredith Walker<sup>14</sup> has noted that in general, the Garden Suburb developed progressively 'inward' from the first sales in the north and from the

<sup>14</sup> Walker, op.cit.

sales in the south, with the land in the middle (alongside Jenner and Parkway Avenue) being the last areas to be developed.

John Sulman's final design for Parkway Avenue was for it to be 132 ft. (just over 40 metres) wide. Sulman wished street verges (which included the footpath) to be 16 ft. (4.88m.) wide, but in implementation it was limited to 12 ft (3.66m.), in conformity with Council standards. The median strip for Parkway Avenue was established at approximately 65 feet (20 metres) wide, and it was expected that plantings of handsome trees would be planted in this strip.

Today, Parkway Avenue between Tudor Street and Hamilton/Denison Street is only a normal suburban road, its carriageway c.10m wide, but it gains its expansive Garden Suburb form once it crosses those two streets and heads eastwards, towards Bar Beach.

According to a sketch by Sulman<sup>15</sup> (see Figure 9 below), trees in sections of Stewart and Gordon Avenues were to be planted in the proposed 16 ft. (4.88m) wide verge, fairly close to the kerb. They were to be planted half a chain (10m.) apart. Specifications for Parkway Avenue are not available, but it would appear that the distances between plantings there conformed to that general rule.

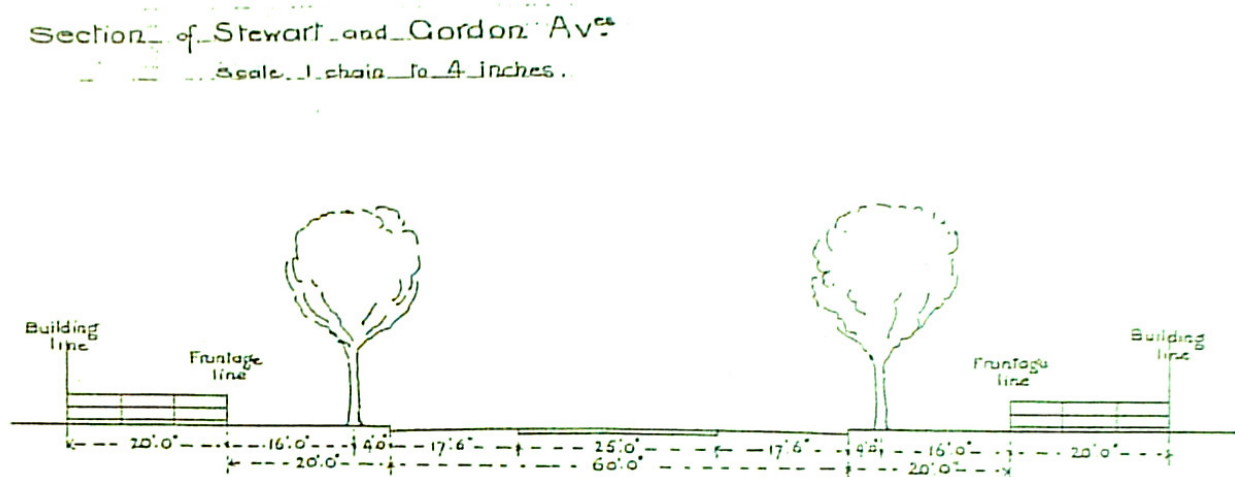


Fig. 9 J. Sulman, Section of Stewart and Gordon Aves. [Reduced scale]

Ref. 131/15/330 Australian Agricultural Company Correspondence, Noel Butlin Archive, ANU

This sketch accompanied a letter 26 February, 1913 to Colonel Ranclaud, A.A.Co. Sulman recommended that trees be planted half chain (33 ft / 10.m) apart, fitted to the dimensions "if the tree will not subdivide exactly to half chain distances apart from road to road along Gordon Avenue, they will of course have to be fitted in as nearly to that dimension as appropriate".

Early photographs show that it took some time for Parkway Avenue to be planted. The images above indicate that sections of it were not planted at all, and that Canary Island Palms (*Phoenix canariensis*) were only planted along the sides of the central median strip in the late 1930s or early 1940s, leaving an empty grassed strip down the middle. The verges – between the footpath and the kerb of the roadway – had very little planting, mainly a few low shrubs.

<sup>15</sup> Reproduced in Walker, op. cit., p.39

At some time, probably in the late 1950s or early 1960s, the Phoenix Palms were removed from the edges of the median strip. The reason for this is not known. In their place, a single row of Norfolk Island Pines (*Araucaria heterophylla*) was planted down the *centre* of this median strip. The largest and most stately of these Pines appear to be approximately 40 years old. In NSW generally, plantings of Norfolk Island Pines were made in sandy coastal areas and along seaside promenades in the 1920s – 30s when it was fashionable to use these stately trees in municipal plantings. It is likely that, because of the proven success of these plantings in thriving in poor sandy coastal soils, and their impressive visual form, it was decided to plant them in Parkway Avenue in lieu of the Phoenix Palms.

At the eastern end of Parkway Avenue, however, there are no Norfolk Island Pines. The tree plantings between Darby Street and Memorial Drive – see Figures L1 to L3 – are relatively recent, and are not doing well, despite their being species (New Zealand Christmas Tree (*Metrosideros excelsa*) and Norfolk Is. Hibiscus (*Lagunaria patersonii*)) which are suitable for poor, sandy coastal soils and traditionally grow well there. However, perhaps the fact that this eastern end of the Avenue was constructed in what were the rear sand dunes behind Bar Beach explains why even these hardy coastal trees remain stunted. It is not known why Norfolk Island Pines were not planted in this final section of Parkway Avenue – unless they, too, had failed there, and had been replaced with the alternative species mentioned above.

There are only four trees in the centre of the median strip between Memorial Drive and Light Street, five between Light Street and Brooks Street, and five between Brooks St. and Darby Street. The first Norfolk Is. Pines only appear at the toe of the western end of the median strip at the unusually-shaped (a squashed circle) roundabout at Darby Street. These are quite recent plantings, between about 7 - 15 years old. From there on, the Pines predominate. Surprisingly, for an avenue that had its genesis in the Garden Suburb ethos, there are still hardly any trees in the grass verge between the footpaths and the carriageway – see Figures L1, L2, L4 – L6. For example, between Memorial Drive and Brooks Street there are only two, one of any age and size being the *Metrosideros* seen in the far right of Figure L4. Even this latter is in poor condition, although this is evident only on the western side of the canopy. In most of Parkway Avenue down to Union St. (and indeed beyond) there are very few street trees in the verge, as Figures L5 & L6 show. There are also remarkably few trees within the front gardens of the houses.



Fig. L1 Recent, but stunted, tree plantings in the Parkway Avenue median strip between Memorial Drive and Darby St. MWA, July 2002.



Fig. L2 An example of the housing on the southern side of the eastern end of Parkway Avenue. The absence of tall Norfolk Island Pines results in a fairly hard, rather bare landscape in which the power poles are dominant. MWA 2002





Fig. L3 Recent plantings between Darby St. and Memorial Drive. These have a stunted, shrubby form and are not doing well. MWA, July 2002.



Fig. L4 One of the few trees, a *Metrosideros*, (arrowed) within the grass verge between the footpath and the carriage drive. MWA, July 2002.



Fig. L5 Although there are Pine plantings in the median strip, there are no street trees in the verges. Note the presence of the bed of clipped hibiscus at intervals along each side of the Pines. MWA, July 2002.



Fig. L6 The predominantly unplanted verges of Parkway Avenue. MWA, July 2002.

Between Darby Street and Dawson Street the plantings are exclusively Norfolk Is. Pines. For example, there are 8 mature Pines along the centre of the median strip, plus four fairly recent ones (c. 7-8 years old). The mature Pines range in ages from about 12 years through about 30 to 40 years, although their precise ages would need to be verified by either documentary, pictorial, or possibly oral sources. This pattern is repeated thereafter for most of the length of Parkway Avenue, down to Hamilton Street, although it is interrupted by the large drainage canal between Farquar St/Jenner Parade and Corette Streets – see Figures L7 & L8.



Fig. L7 The drainage canal along the Parkway Avenue median strip, just to the south of National Park. MWA, July 2002.



Fig. L8 The drainage canal (at right) between Farquar St. and Jenner Parade. MWA, July 2002.

The interruption of the median plantings between Farquar Streets and Union/Corlette Street created by the central canal (which drains the former swampy land on which National Park was built) means that no median tree plantings occur in this section of Parkway Avenue. However, as Figure L8 shows, this did not deter thick plantings along the median strip of Farquar Street, which includes Norfolk Island Pines, a mature Cook Island Pine, and Kaffir Plum.

The Kaffir Plum trees are also planted on the eastern side of the drainage canal that abuts the western edge of National Park, as shown in Figure L9. These handsome trees provide a welcome softening to an otherwise rather bleak section of Parkway Avenue, albeit to the side.

An addition in several sections of median strip are two beds of red Hibiscus shrubs, one on each side of the centre spine of trees – see Figure L5. These beds of Hibiscus, in the shape of clipped hedging, are in varying degrees of health, many in poor condition, with some currently being removed.

Further west along Parkway Avenue are continuing rows of Norfolk Island Pines, many of them stately and mature, approximately 40 years old. At some intersections, Cook Is. Pines have been used to provide something of an exclamation mark, as shown in Figure L12.



Fig. L9 The Kaffir Plums (at left) along the edge of the drainage canal. Parkway Avenue runs across the bridge seen at centre. MWA, July '02.



Fig. L11 The consistent line of Norfolk Island Pines along the centre of the median strip in this section of Parkway Avenue. MWA, July 2002.



Fig. L10 The central Norfolk Island Pines of Parkway Avenue, opposite the southern boundary to Newcastle High School. Arrowed are Cook Island Pines at median strip intersections. MWA, July 2002.



Fig. L12 A Cook Island Pine (at left) marking the end of a section of the central street tree plantings at an intersection along Parkway Avenue. MWA, July 2002.



Notable along this section of Parkway Avenue, on the southern boundary of the Newcastle High School is a row of mature Hills Fig (*Ficus hillii*) and Brush Box (*Lophostemon confertus*) trees, which almost match in height the Norfolk Island Pines but have considerably broader and denser canopies. As Figure L10 shows, they more than compensate for the lack of verge or front yard plantings on the opposite side of the street. Although this creates a somewhat lopsided effect to the street, it does add to the 'green' Garden Suburb feeling and partly screens a large institutional building (the High School) which, if unscreened, would have allowed hard built form to have a disproportionately high ratio in this part of Parkway Avenue. It should be noted that the Brush Box appear as well-established trees in the aerial photograph taken in 1950.

The central plantings of Norfolk Island Pines in the median strip continue all the way down Parkway Avenue – see Figures L11 & L12 - to its intersection with Hamilton/Denison Streets, as shown in Figure L13. While many of these trees are of the same age as those in the central sector of Parkway Avenue, some are more recent infill plantings. There are also some gaps that have not been filled yet. In this westerly section there are also remnant Hibiscus shrubs, some singly, some in a bed, leaving a somewhat 'spotty' visual effect (Figure L11). Again, there are very few shrubs or trees in the verge, there being only a sprinkling of Norfolk Is. Hibiscus on the northern verge, just east of Denison Street (see extreme left of Figure L13 and centre of Figure L14.)

Figure L14 also shows the junction of Parkway Avenue with Denison Street and the type of housing that was built there at the outset of the Garden Suburb, although several buildings have since been modified. Note the sprinkling of Norfolk Island Hibiscus within the verge, in which the power poles are far more dominant.

Of the cross-streets, Stewart Avenue was one which once also had a median strip, consistent with the design intent of Sulman and Hennessy's Garden Suburb plan. However, as Stewart Avenue also became a section of the Pacific Highway and its traffic density increased, the median strip was removed, and its central plantings of trees with it. (All that remains are some stately plantings of Camphor Laurels and Norfolk Island Pines on its eastern side, for some distance up Hamilton/Denison Street – see Figure L15). It is likely for this reason that local residents have made it known that they do not want this to occur to Parkway Avenue, which some see as having the potential to become a direct route to the beach and the city, bypassing the present congestion where the Pacific Highway meets the city proper.



Fig. L13 Intersection of Parkway Avenue with Denison/Hamilton Streets. MWA, July 2002.



Fig. L14 Scattered plantings of Norfolk Island Hibiscus are visible in the verge at the centre of this photograph. MWA, July 2002.



Fig. L15 Stewart Avenue after the median strip has been removed. Plantings on the right are Camphor Laurels and beyond them a few Norfolk Island Pines. MWA, July 2002.

### 3.3 Condition of the planting

As indicated above, the condition of the plantings within the median strips is variable. Generally, the Norfolk Island Pines appear to be in good condition, and a consistent effort has been made to replace those that have failed in the past. However, the trees at the eastern end of Parkway Avenue are in poor condition, and warrant replacement, desirably with Norfolk Island Pines in order to maintain the continuity of plantings throughout the Avenue. However, some remediation of the soil in that sector may be required to produce optimum conditions for growth. The condition of the beds of red Hibiscus is very variable, and some appear to have passed their 'use-by' date or succumbed to insect or scale infections. They should not be automatically replaced, and careful thought needs to be given to the recommendations in section 6 below.

### 3.4 Comparative Analysis

Although median strips with a variety of plantings (but particularly Paper Barks, Figs and Eucalypts) are to be found in numerous Newcastle Streets, none reach the grand proportions of Parkway Avenue. This is because the latter was conceived in the context of the major arterial avenues that Sulman used in his layout for his Garden Suburb of Daceyville near Sydney, and Walter Burley Griffin for his design of the core of Canberra, particularly the so-called parliamentary triangle. These are depicted in the Figures L16, L17 and L18 below.



Figure L16 Melbourne Avenue, Canberra, viewed from the western side of Parliament House. Note the three lines of tree plantings within the central median. Photo: MWA, August 2002



Figure L17 Kings Avenue, Canberra, one of the three grand avenues Walter Burley Griffin designed for the Parliamentary Triangle. Note the scale of the mature trees in both verge and median.

Photo: MWA, August 2002



Figure L18 The grand, spacious central median strip of Limestone Avenue in Canberra, with two-lane carriageways on either side.

However, the plantings within now require some supplementation.

Photo: MWA, August 2002

While Kings Avenue, Melbourne Avenue, Limestone Avenue, Northbourne Avenue and many other avenues in Canberra all have similar median strips with grand plantings, a more immediate suburban comparison comes to mind with Blair Street in North Bondi in Sydney. This, as shown in Figures L19 to L22, also has a central median strip, though of narrower width than that of Parkway Avenue. For most of its length it also lacks major tree plantings along the centre of that strip. In summer there are beds of bright Cannas in those beds, but they may lie fallow for months, and being virtually bare, lack visual appeal. As in Parkway Avenue, there is also very little planting along the verge, just an isolated gnarled tree here and there. The only superior quality of Blair Street over Parkway Avenue is that the power poles have been put underground, and the good quality street lights provide a little of the vertical quality which the Norfolk Island Pines provide in Parkway Avenue.





Fig. L19 Looking east up Blair Street from its junction with Glenayr Avenue to the sewerage outlet pipe in the distance (arrowed). MWA, July 2002.



Fig. L21 View of the southern side of Blair Street, with the central bare median strip, in the block between Glenayr Avenue and Mitchell Street. MWA, July 2002.



Fig. L20 Looking east along the central – eastern sector of Blair Street, showing the currently bare median strip, ablaze in summer with massed beds of Cannas. MWA, July 2002.



Fig. L22 View west along Blair Street, showing the few trees in the median strip (arrowed) at the intersection with Warners Avenue. MWA, July 2002



## 4.0 Assessment of Heritage Significance

### 4.1 Basis of Assessment of Heritage Significance

To determine the heritage significance of the site it is necessary to identify, discuss and assess the significance of all the components present and then the contribution which they make collectively to it. This process will allow for the analysis of the site's manifold values. These criteria are part of the system of assessment which is centred on the *Burra Charter* of Australia ICOMOS. The Burra Charter principles are important to the assessment, conservation and management of sites and relics. The assessment of heritage significance is enshrined through legislation in the *NSW Heritage Act 1977* (as amended in 1999) and implemented through the *NSW Heritage Manual* and the *Archaeological Assessment Guidelines*. The revised guidelines, *Assessing Heritage Significance*, issued in 2001, have been used in the following assessment.

#### 4.1.1 Nature of Significance Criteria

The various categories of heritage values and the degree of such values are appraised according to the following criteria:<sup>16</sup>

- Criterion (a):** importance in the course, or pattern, of NSW's or the local area's cultural or natural history;
- Criterion (b):** strong or special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in the cultural or natural history of NSW or the local area;
- Criterion (c):** importance in demonstrating aesthetic characteristics and/or a high degree of creative or technical achievement in NSW or the local area;
- Criterion (d):** strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group in NSW or the local area for social, cultural or spiritual reasons;
- Criterion (e):** potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of NSW's or the local area's cultural or natural history;
- Criterion (f):** possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of the cultural or natural history of NSW or the local area;
- Criterion (g):** importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of NSW's or the local area's cultural or natural places or environments.

To be assessed as having heritage significance, an item or place must:

- meet at least one or more of the nature of significance criteria; and
- retain the integrity of its key attributes.

Items may also be ranked according to their heritage significance as having:

- Local Significance
- State Significance

It should be noted that different components of a place may make a different relative contribution to its heritage value. Loss of integrity or condition may diminish significance, although continuing maintenance and repair does not usually diminish significance: rather, it may maintain or possibly enhance it.

### 4.2 Statement of Significance

#### Historical Themes:

##### *State Heritage Inventory Themes*

(a) Land tenure/closer settlement

##### *Local Themes*

Subdivisions of original grants  
(grant to Australian Agricultural Co.)

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<sup>16</sup> NSW Heritage Assessment Criteria, as adopted from April 1999.

(b) Mining	Coal mining throughout study area
(c) Townships (including streetscapes)	Garden Suburb
(d) Housing	Specially designed cottages
(e) Environment – natural & modified	Land clearing, gardens and plantings.
(f) Persons	Worters Pulver of the AA Company; John Sulman & John Hennesy

#### 4.2.1 Nature of Significance

##### 4.2.1.1 Summary Statement of Cultural Significance

Parkway Avenue of the Garden Suburb Hamilton, Newcastle, has historical significance for demonstrating one of the earliest adoptions (1913-14) in Australia of aspects of the Garden Suburb town planning approach. It has strong associations with the Australian Agricultural Company, which for nearly a century had mined coal on land south of Newcastle city and which engaged eminent architect and town planner John Sulman to plan the subdivision of that land in accordance with Garden City principles espoused by English architects Parker and Unwin, American Walter Burley Griffin. Although it contains only some of its planned aesthetic characteristics, it is held in high esteem by the local community, some of whom regard it as potentially endangered by anticipated needs to accommodate increased traffic flows. It is concluded to be of local significance.

##### 4.2.2 Nature of Significance

*i. An item's importance in the course, or pattern, of NSW's cultural or natural history.*

The site has importance in demonstrating aspects of the application of the Garden Suburb concept evolved as a town planning approach in Australia during the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century and derived from English and American concepts of the Garden City. The site retains additional significance as an element of one of the earliest Garden Suburbs to be commenced in Australia being contemporary with the Sulman designed Dacey Gardens in Sydney.

The site has importance for its association with the coal industry in NSW first established in Newcastle in the late 18<sup>th</sup> Century and expanded to the area encompassing the route of Parkway Avenue by the Australian Agricultural Company from 1829.

*ii. An item's 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.*

The site has strong associations with the Australian Agricultural Company and its innovative Chief Surveyor Worters Pulver, who in 1913 instigated the commission of architect John Sulman as planner of the proposed Garden Suburb.

The site reflects the influence of notable architects of the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century upon the planning of suburban growth. Architects directly associated with the Parkway Avenue form include English architects Parker and Unwin, American Walter Burley Griffin and Australian John Sulman.

*iii. An item's importance in demonstrating particular aesthetic characteristics valued by a community or cultural group.*

The form of Parkway Avenue demonstrates the aesthetic concepts of John Sulman applied to the setout and detailing of Garden Suburbs. Whilst much of the Avenue's detail and extent is from later periods of development, the underlying planning concept remains as the defining aspect of the Avenue.

*iv. An item's strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons.*

Parkway Avenue is highly regarded by residents of the Garden Suburb Hamilton East as a significant element of a defined and quality suburban composition of streets landscape and buildings.

*v. An item's importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period.*

The site contains retains limited detailing supportive of the original aesthetic and planning concept but retains its overall structure based upon the Sulman concept plan.

*vi. An item's potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of NSW's cultural or natural history.*

Parkway Avenue retains evidence in its plan form of the Garden Suburb movement which represented a new approach to suburban expansion in New South Wales during the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century. The site has potential for yielding archaeological information relating to the coal mining industry of Newcastle

*vii. An item's possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of NSW's cultural or natural history.*

The incidence of Garden Suburbs in New South Wales remains relatively limited by virtue of limited commencement and the erratic economic history of New South Wales prior to the Second World War. The remaining examples of the Garden Suburb and their traffic routes are subject to mounting pressure by the increased ownership of motor vehicles and the concentration of traffic in established areas of the state. These potential impacts represent a potential source of danger to the conservation of remnant detailing to Parkway Avenue.

*viii. An item's importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of NSW's*  
*- cultural or natural places;*  
*- or cultural or natural environments*

Parkway Avenue demonstrates the defining characteristics of grand avenues conceived as a binding framework to the Garden Suburb form. It may be compared favourably with remaining examples at Dacey Gardens and Canberra.

*Level of significance:* It is concluded that Parkway Avenue is of Local Significance by virtue of its aesthetic form, scale and remnant detailing. The Avenue also retains high levels of local significance by virtue of its role in mid 20<sup>th</sup> Century Newcastle society and its continuous function as a link to Newcastle's eastern beaches from the late 1920's. The potential exists for

archaeological significance of a local level due to the sites location over an area of continuous 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> Century coal mining.

#### **4.2.3 Items of principal significance**

From the above analysis of the site and setting, it was assessed that the principal heritage values (or cultural significance) resides in:

- The form, continuity and alignment of Parkway Avenue both within the Hamilton South Conservation Area and beyond as a historically planned link with the ocean beaches to the east.
- The relationship of existing building frontages to the Avenue both within and beyond the Conservation Area.
- The relationship of the Avenue to the more closely set out cross streets forming the residential components of Garden Suburb Hamilton.
- The relationship of the Avenue to the main cross streets of Cooks Hill.
- The continuous pattern of planting albeit of later introduction.

#### **4.3 Identification of Cultural Heritage Significance**

The vegetation and landscaping within the main western extent of Parkway Avenue is included within Council's Draft Development Control Plan for Hamilton South Conservation Area.

#### **4.4 Curtilage**

Although an avenue is rarely conceived in terms of requiring a curtilage, it is recommended that all land between the front facades of the buildings addressing it, and including front gardens, footpaths, verges, carriageways and central median strip with plantings be included within a curtilage, so that its original Garden Suburb avenue form can be retained.

The extent of the Avenue to the east of the Conservation Area should be considered as part of the visual curtilage to the Conservation Area. The eastern extent is a continuation of visual form and spatial links which enhance the aesthetic character of Parkway Avenue as a core component of the originating design for the Garden Suburb.

### **5.0 Constraints**

#### **5.1 Constraints arising from the Statement of Significance**

These may be cited as follows:

- The essential townscape character of the Avenue should be maintained with acknowledgement of the transition from a setting of bungalow style residences within the Conservation Area to the 'moderne' and late art deco character of residences and flats defining the Cooks Hill extension of the Avenue.
- No activity or works should be allowed that would have a substantial detrimental effect on the significant architectural and streetscape qualities of the Avenue.
- No activity or works should be allowed that would confuse the original form and intended relationship of the Avenue to the Garden Suburb or its visual and functional linkage to the eastern beaches.
- Unsympathetic planting such as recently introduced Norfolk Island Hibiscus and road works that detract from the significance of the Avenue (at this stage predominantly excessive signage at roundabouts) should be removed. These should be clearly identified within a Landscape Management Study of the Parkway.
- Any demolition, alteration or repair to existing fabric should have regard for the culturally significant features of the avenue.



- The maximum amount of original fabric possible should be retained in maintenance of the Avenue.
- No new work which would destroy a potential archaeological resource should take place.
- Any new construction, services or activities should be carefully designed and integrated having regard to the significant features of the place and its character as a landscaped avenue.

## 5.2 Procedural Constraints

- As built and moveable elements within the Avenue are of local cultural significance, all alterations and changes should be carried out in accordance with the Australian ICOMOS Burra Charter. The latter advocates a cautious approach to change, its motto being: “do as much as necessary to care for the place and to make it useable, but otherwise change it as little as possible so that its cultural significance is retained”.
- The existing fabric and planting of the Avenue should be thoroughly recorded before any further disturbance takes place. (This process is partly complete but requires compilation and clear identification)

## 5.3 Statutory and other Constraints

- The Avenue is partly included in the Hamilton South Garden Suburb Conservation Area, which is subject to the heritage provisions of Newcastle City Council’s Local Environment Plan and the draft Development Control Plan for Hamilton South Garden Suburb.
- The Avenue is subject to current Roads and Traffic Authority controls covering the design and alteration of roadways in NSW
- The Avenue is subject to Newcastle City Council’s LEP controlling the pruning and removal of tree planting. This constraint applies to the extension of Parkway Avenue beyond the Conservation Area and serves to protect the contributory character of planting in this area of visual curtilage.
- A range of other regulatory authorities have ordinances which enable access and disturbance such water, electricity and telecommunication suppliers.

## 6.0 Conservation Guidelines

As Parkway Avenue is identified as an integral element in the Garden Suburb Hamilton South. The Avenue warrants preservation both in its own right and as a contributory element to the area identified within Council’s Draft Development Control Plan as Hamilton South Conservation Area.

It should be noted that the defining aspects of Parkway Avenue extend beyond the boundaries of the Conservation Area, most notably eastward beyond Union Street up through the suburb of Cooks Hill to Bar Beach, and to a lesser extent as a narrow traffic route linking the Parkway to Tudor Street beyond Denison Street to the west. Both these areas have distinct character. The eastern extent of Parkway Avenue typifies streetscapes of the immediate pre and Post World War 2 period. Large residences of Functionalist Style are emphasised by open street frontages low fence lines and planting limited to manicured lawns. At the opposite or western end Parkway Avenue continues as a narrowed traffic way with a streetscape largely reflective of the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century and demonstrating the form of close spaced small residential forms the Garden Suburb promised to replace. These areas providing an historic hierarchy of residential development over

the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, should be recognised as part of the visual curtilage to the Conservation Area.

To conserve and enhance the significance of Parkway Avenue the following procedures are recommended.

1. Progressive nurturing and infill of existing planting to better reflect the Sulman concept of the Avenue as a citizen's park.

2. Considerations for enhancement of planting could include-

- If no change is intended to the widths of the existing verges and grassed central medians, outer planting of a significant scale to the latter could be provided, creating central planted areas more closely resembling 'parkways' as opposed to broad medians with a central planting line.
- Provision of verge planting to fully establish a distinct avenue character. To achieve this successfully, it would be preferable to widen the verge to 5 metres (16 ft.) as proposed by Sulman in 1913. However, it could be achieved within the existing verge, if trees of an appropriately modest scale were selected.
- In the event that it was decided to widen the verge, such a widening would need to be balanced by a limited narrowing of the central median, so that each carriageway would still be sufficient for two lanes of vehicles. Should that occur, the central planting of the median could be retained, as at present.
- Encouragement of planting within the front garden boundaries of properties facing the Avenue. At present, with the exception of the Newcastle High School and National Park frontages, there is a noted lack of tree planting within properties facing the Avenue.
- Screen planting to the open canals adjacent to the southern boundary of National Park with Parkway Avenue. Planting should be based upon that introduced to Jenner Parade.
- Extension of planting policies to sections of the Avenue beyond the Garden Suburb, particularly the rise up Cooks Hill and to the west approaching Denison Street. This should desirably include the replacement of the failing *Metrosideros* and *Lagunaria* species by the Norfolk Island Pines. It is possible that remedial action may be required to achieve soil conditions conducive to good growth.

3. Hard landscaping and street furniture have a strong impact upon the appearance of the Avenue and its interpretation. Consideration should be given to the following as means of enhancing the cohesive nature of Parkway Avenue:

- Provision of uniform street signage, street furniture and kerb detailing over the length of the Avenue.
- Extension of signage, street furniture and kerb detailing to the other principal avenues of the Sulman Plan, namely Stewart and Gordon Avenues.
- Introduction of Sulman's proposed entry pylons to principal intersections along the Avenue in order to identify specific precincts. This would enhance or replace existing signage such as the Cook's Hill signs to the eastern extent of the Parkway.
- The location of electrical/light posts relative to tree planting should be carefully considered, with the goal of minimising the visual impact of posts in the long vistas to east and west and at intersection points. Underground cabling would, of course, achieve an optimal aesthetic outcome.

4. Proposed Controls for the extension or replacement of existing structures in Parkway Avenue should also acknowledge variations in scale and height of buildings along the Avenue. The maintenance of transparency between residences (i.e. the alternating solid/void pattern), the establishment of supportive screen planting to the front of larger institutional buildings and the Park, and the framing of residences by mature landscaping are factors affecting the relationship of buildings to the Avenue that should be acknowledged in the Draft Development Control Plan.

