

May 2024

Cameron's Hill Heritage Study



newcastle.nsw.gov.au



City of
Newcastle

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

City of Newcastle acknowledges with the deepest respect the Custodians of this land, a people who belong to the oldest continuing culture in the world. We recognise their continuing connection to the land and waters, and unique cultural and spiritual relationships to the land, waters, and seas. We are grateful for the rich, diverse, living cultures of Aboriginal people. We recognise the history of truth that acknowledges the impact of invasion and colonisation on Aboriginal people and how this still resonates today. We pay our respect to Elders, past and present, for they hold the memories, the traditions, the cultures, and the aspirations of Aboriginal people.

"Niirun Yalawa on Aboriginal burrei"

We all sit on Aboriginal land.

ENQUIRIES

For information contact:

Strategic Planning

Phone 4974 2000

Published by

City of Newcastle

PO Box 489, Newcastle NSW 2300

Newcastle.nsw.gov.au

© 2024 City of Newcastle

Cover image: Denison Street, Hamilton, NSW, 28 October 1907. Ralph Snowball: Norm Barney Photographic Collection, Cultural Collections at the University of Newcastle, NSW, Australia.

Table of Contents

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY	ii
ENQUIRIES	ii
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	1
CHAPTER ONE – INTRODUCTION	2
1.1 Introduction	2
1.2 Background	2
1.3 Study Area	3
1.4 Newcastle 2040 Community Strategic Plan	3
1.5 Alignment with Newcastle Heritage Strategy 2020-2030	4
1.6 What is a heritage conservation area (HCA)?	5
1.7 Conservation principles	5
1.8 Statutory Context and Heritage Listings	6
1.8.1 Heritage Act 1977	6
1.8.2 Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979	6
1.8.3 Newcastle Local Environmental Plan 2012	6
1.8.4 Newcastle Development Control Plan 2023	8
1.9 Methodology	9
1.9.1 Heritage Assessment Methodology	9
1.9.2 Reference Material	10
CHAPTER TWO – ABORIGINAL AND HISTORICAL CONTEXT	11
2.1 Introduction	11
2.2 Aboriginal Context	11
2.3 Australian Agricultural Company and Mining Expansion	12
2.4 The Borehole	12
2.5 Establishment of Hamilton	17
2.6 Cameron's Hill	20
2.7 Historical summary	24
CHAPTER THREE – SITE ANALYSIS	25
3.1 Description	25
CHAPTER FOUR – SIGNIFICANCE	31
4.1 Introduction	31
4.2 NSW Heritage Assessment Criteria	31
4.3 Comparative Assessment	31
4.4 Assessment of Significance	34
4.4.1 Criterion A—Historical Significance	34
4.4.2 Criterion B—Historical Association	34
4.4.3 Criterion C—Aesthetic Significance	34
4.4.4 Criterion D—Social Significance	35

4.4.5	Criterion E—Research Potential.....	35
4.4.6	Criterion F—Rarity	36
4.4.7	Criterion G—Representativeness.....	36
4.5	Statement of Significance	37
4.6	Desired Future Character Statement	37
4.7	Building contributions	38
4.8	Potential heritage items.....	41
CHAPTER FIVE – RECOMMENDATIONS		42
5.1	Conclusion.....	42
5.2	Recommendations	42

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report assesses the heritage significance of the Cameron's Hill study area and its potential inclusion in Schedule 5 of the *Newcastle Local Environmental Plan 2012* (LEP) as a heritage conservation area (HCA). In 2018 local community members nominated the area as a potential HCA. In 2022 it was a consistent theme in submissions on the draft Broadmeadow Renewal Corridor section of the Newcastle Development Control Plan (DCP).

This report assesses the Cameron's Hill study area as described in the nomination, the appropriateness of its boundaries, and the area's built form and significance. It rates the contribution of its individual built form elements to the streetscape character and heritage significance of the study area.

The heritage study's methodology is based on NSW heritage assessment criteria defined in the *NSW Heritage Act 1977* as found in the heritage assessment guidelines of the NSW Heritage Council. These guidelines are accepted as the standard methodology to assess heritage significance. The principles of the Burra Charter and the approach set out in The Conservation Plan by James Semple Kerr underpin them. The NSW Heritage Council's best practice guidelines "Better Placed: Design Guide for Heritage" were also used.

The key findings of the report are that the Cameron's Hill study area:

- meets the threshold for heritage significance under several of the NSW heritage assessment criteria, at a local level.
- should be pursued for listing as an HCA in Schedule 5 of the LEP.
- should be included on the LEP Heritage Maps with the boundaries shown in Figure 1.
- Includes properties identified as potential heritage items that should be investigated and assessed appropriately, for possible inclusion in Schedule 5 of the LEP.

This technical study does not change the LEP to create an HCA or heritage listings. Such changes require a planning proposal to amend the LEP and follow strict legal processes. Similarly, recommended changes to the DCP require a formal, legal process. These processes will be separate projects requiring council approval and public exhibition.

CHAPTER ONE – INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

A HCA is a group of places, often defined by its distinctive architecture, streetscape, and landscape features, which together contribute to our history and cultural identity. The heritage significance of these areas is likely to change over time and with use. These dynamic areas change from development, cultural and social changes to the resident population and use, and from renewal, neglect, and decay. The changes can enhance, maintain, and erode their cultural heritage significance. This is why it is essential to review conservation management strategies, policies and planning framework for these areas to ensure their heritage value is understood, protected and supported for future generations.

This report assesses the potential heritage significance of Cameron's Hill (the study area), presents the study's results, and recommends future management measures. It investigates the study area and whether it should be an HCA in the LEP 2012.

1.2 Background

City of Newcastle (CN) received a community nomination in December 2018 to investigate a local area, known as Cameron's Hill, for its potential as an HCA. The nomination notes that *"Cameron's Hill is a critical piece of Hamilton's story and differs from the other Hamilton HCAs. Cameron's Hill is significant both architecturally and socially. Cameron's Hill is long overdue having heritage protection and is clearly worthy to ensure that its unique architectural character and charm remain into the future."*¹

Draft Section 6.04 of the Newcastle DCP was exhibited between November and December 2022, attracting further support for this nomination. Community submissions indicated strong interest in investigating the area for heritage significance. In response, it was also acknowledged that the area's heritage values would be investigated for conservation, the Broadmeadow renewal corridor boundary was adjusted, and an objective was added for development to be sympathetic to the built form of Cameron's Hill.

Councillors endorsed Notice of Motion 9.4 Protecting and Valuing Newcastle's Heritage on 28 November 2023. It noted CN values the unique heritage and character of its buildings, streetscapes, and landscapes, and Council's commitment to explore Cameron's Hill. This report assesses Cameron's Hill to determine if it reaches the threshold for listing as an HCA. It gives an overview of the historical development of the area, analyses its characteristic built form and significant architectural typology, and assesses its heritage significance. The report classifies buildings in Cameron's Hill study area as 'contributory', 'neutral', or 'non-contributory' according to their contribution to the streetscape character and heritage significance of the area.

¹ A Hinds, N Killin, P Killin (2018), Cameron's Hill HCA Nomination.

1.3 Study Area

The Cameron's Hill study area is shown in **Figure 1**. It is in the Newcastle Local Government Area (LGA) and includes parts of the suburbs of Hamilton and Broadmeadow. It is bounded by Tudor/Belford Streets, Steel Street, Everton Street and Blackall Street. The study area is consistent with the area the community nomination described. It is 300 metres west of the Hamilton Business Centre (Beaumont Street) and 600 metres southeast of Broadmeadow Railway Station. Most of the land is zoned R3 Medium Density Residential, with some land zoned R2 Low Density Residential, and a small pocket in the vicinity of Tudor Street zoned R4 High Density Residential.



Legend

 Cameron's Hill study area

Figure 1: Aerial view of Cameron's Hill with the study area boundary indicated. (Source: CN, 2024)

1.4 Newcastle 2040 Community Strategic Plan

Newcastle 2040 - CN's Community Strategic Plan (CSP) is a shared community vision, developed to inform policies and actions for the city for the next 10+ years. With direct input from the community, it represents what we value in our city and what we want to prioritise.

The CSP outlines four key themes to guide the implementation of this vision (see Figure 2). This project aligns with the objectives of these themes, and contributes to "enriched neighbourhoods and places" (Theme 1.1), as well as "trust and transparency" (Theme 4.2).

Through the CSP, the community has expressed its aspiration to protect local heritage places moving towards 2040. Overall, CN aims to ensure we identify, care for, celebrate and appropriately manage the significant aspects of the city's heritage on behalf of residents and visitors. The intention is to ensure decisions about heritage places are made with due regard to heritage significance, and that we strengthen or better appreciate heritage significance.

1. Liveable	2. Sustainable	3. Creative	4. Achieving Together
<p>1.1 Enriched neighbourhoods and places</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1.1 Coast spaces 1.1.2 Well-designed places 1.1.3 Protected heritage places <p>1.2 Connected and fair communities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1.2.1 Connected communities 1.2.2 Inclusive communities 1.2.3 Equitable communities 1.2.4 Healthy communities <p>1.3 Safe, active and linked movement across the city</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1.3.1 Connected cycleways and pedestrian networks 1.3.2 Road networks 1.3.3 Managed parking 1.3.4 Effective public transport <p>1.4 Innovative and connected city</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1.4.1 Emerging technologies 1.4.2 Digital inclusion and social innovation 	<p>2.1 Action on climate change</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2.1.1 Towards net zero emissions 2.1.2 Know and share our climate risk 2.1.3 Resilient urban and natural areas <p>2.2 Nature-based solutions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2.2.1 Regenerative natural systems 2.2.2 Expand the urban forest 2.2.3 Achieve a water sensitive city <p>2.3 Circular economy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2.3.1 Design out waste 2.3.2 Localised supply chain and sustainable procurement 	<p>3.1 Vibrant and creative city</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3.1.1 Vibrant events 3.1.2 Bold and challenging programs 3.1.3 Tourism and visitor economy 3.1.4 Vibrant night-time economy <p>3.2 Opportunities in jobs, learning and innovation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3.2.1 Inclusive opportunities 3.2.2 Skilled people and businesses 3.2.3 Innovative people and businesses <p>3.3 Celebrating culture</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3.3.1 Nurture cultural and creative practitioners 3.3.2 Promote Newcastle as a major arts and cultural destination 3.3.3 Culture in everyday life <p>3.4 City-shaping partnerships</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3.4.1 Optimise city opportunities 3.4.2 Advocacy and partnership 	<p>4.1 Inclusive and integrated planning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4.1.1 Financial sustainability 4.1.2 Integrated planning and reporting 4.1.3 Aligned and engaged workforce <p>4.2 Trust and transparency</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4.2.1 Genuine engagement 4.2.2 Shared information and celebration of success 4.2.3 Trusted customer experience <p>4.3 Collaborative and innovative approach</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4.3.1 Collaborative organisation 4.3.2 Innovation and continuous improvement 4.3.3 Data-driven decision-making and insights

Figure 2: Newcastle 2040 Community Strategic Plan themes and objectives. (Source: CN, Newcastle 2040 CSP)

1.5 Alignment with Newcastle Heritage Strategy 2020-2030

CN's Heritage Strategy is a strategic framework to guide the management of heritage matters in the Newcastle LGA over the next ten years. It draws from the Newcastle 2030 Community Strategic Plan 2018-2028 (CSP) (CN, 2018) and Newcastle's Heritage Policy 2013 (updated 2022). Consultation told us the Newcastle community has strongly expressed its aspiration that moving towards 2030+, local heritage will be valued, enhanced and celebrated.

The Heritage Strategy provides a framework to achieve this vision and meet our statutory obligations and community expectations for regulating and managing local heritage. It aligns with the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals and New Urban Agenda, the Hunter Regional Plan 2041, Greater Newcastle Metropolitan Plan 2036 and contemporary heritage guidelines for local government required by the NSW Heritage Council.

The Heritage Strategy identifies actions and services that align with CN's Heritage Policy, best practice, legislative responsibilities and community expectations. It identifies the vision statement for heritage, sets out the context, identifies the core themes/priorities and the objectives, outcomes, and measures of these themes.

This study delivers on the following Newcastle Heritage Strategy 2020-2030 priorities:

Priority 1 Enhancing our community's knowledge of and regard for local heritage items and places.

-
- Priority 2 CN will protect and conserve the City's heritage places for the benefit of everyone.*
- Priority 3 CN will protect the integrity of heritage places by ensuring consistent and sympathetic uses, physical and aesthetic treatments and outstanding interpretations.*
- Priority 4 Newcastle's significant heritage places are a unique historical resource and represent an asset for the continuing educational, cultural and economic enrichment of the region. CN will invest in the promotion and care of these assets as part of the city's economic and cultural development.*

1.6 What is a heritage conservation area (HCA)?

An HCA is an area of land recognised for its collective nature of buildings and elements that contribute to an overall heritage significance valued by the community and worth protecting. More than a collection of heritage items, it can include a group of buildings, landscape or whole suburbs with heritage values that give it a distinct identity. Their significance is often associated with the underlying land subdivision, street pattern, arrangement of lots, and a predominance of buildings that share common periods of development, historical associations, materials, form and scale.

An HCA is determined by examining its heritage significance and identifying the special characteristics that make up that significance. The area must meet at least one of the seven Heritage Council of NSW criteria for assessing significance to consider its protection under the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (EP&A Act).

The LEP governs the development permitted in an area. HCAs are recognised and protected at the local government level when listed in the LEP's heritage schedule, with the Minister's approval. Most development on land in HCAs need a development application or complying development certificate as they are unlikely to meet the requirements for exempt development.

1.7 Conservation principles

Managing HCA change is underpinned by the principles and processes of the Australia International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) Charter for Conservation of Places of Cultural Significance (The Burra Charter).² The Burra Charter is the best practice standard to guide heritage conservation practitioners in managing change to heritage places in Australia. This assessment uses the following Burra Charter approaches where change should be:

- based on an understanding of the heritage significance of the place
- guided by the heritage significance of the item, site, streetscape and/or area

² *The Burra Charter: The Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance*, Australia ICOMOS, 2013. ISBN 0 9578528 4 3

- managed in accordance with an appropriate conservation policy.

A key principle is that the sum of the parts is equally important as the individual features themselves and explains why the cumulative impact of change is an important consideration. This is often not well understood. Where buildings positively reinforce the character of an HCA, they need to be retained to conserve the significance of the HCA.

1.8 Statutory Context and Heritage Listings

In NSW, places of heritage significance are afforded statutory protection under the following legislation:

- the *Heritage Act 1977* (NSW) (the Heritage Act);
- the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974* (NSW) (the NPWS Act);
- the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (NSW) (the EP&A Act).

1.8.1 Heritage Act 1977

The State Heritage Register (SHR) was established under Section 22 of the *Heritage Act 1977*. The NSW Government administers and regulates the list of identified heritage items determined to be of significance to the people of NSW. The study area has one heritage item listed on the SHR:

- 'Australian Agricultural Company Mine Manager's House' (SHR #01992), 195 Denison Street Hamilton

1.8.2 Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979

The NSW Government administers and regulates the EP&A Act jointly with local government. It provides for environmental planning instruments to guide the process of development and land use. The EP&A Act provides for the protection of local heritage items and conservation areas by listing them in LEPs and state environmental planning policies (SEPPs) providing local councils with the framework for planning decisions.

1.8.3 Newcastle Local Environmental Plan 2012

The LEP is the main planning tool to ensure development is carried out appropriately for our communities. The *Standard Instrument-Principal Local Environmental Plan*, Part 5, Section 5.10 directs provisions and establishes consent requirements for development in HCAs. CN must consider this assessment framework when assessing a development application in an HCA or for land listed as a heritage item.

The objectives of Clause 5.10 of the LEP are:

- a) *to conserve the environmental heritage of the CN;*
- b) *to conserve the heritage significance of heritage items and heritage conservation areas, including associated fabric, setting and views;*

- c) *to conserve archaeological sites;*
d) *to conserve Aboriginal objects and Aboriginal places of heritage significance.*

An amendment to the LEP, approved by the Minister is needed for any changes to HCAs and heritage item listings such as boundary adjustments, re-naming, removal, or creation of a new HCA or heritage item listing.

Schedule 5 of the LEP lists HCAs and heritage items. They are also identified in accompanying heritage maps. CN has eight HCAs:

- Cooks Hill
- Hamilton South 'Garden Suburb'
- Hamilton Business Centre
- The Hill
- Newcastle East
- Newcastle City Centre
- Hamilton Residential Precinct
- Glebe Road 'Federation Cottages'

While Cameron's Hill is not a listed HCA in the LEP, it includes one item of state significance and six items of local heritage significance listed in the LEP (refer to **Table 1**).

Table 1: State and local heritage items located in the study area.

Item name	Address	Lot/DP	Significance	Listing details
Fire Station - Hamilton	9 Belford Street, Broadmeadow	Lot 1 DP 77912	Local	LEP Item #38
Hotel Bennett	146 Denison Street, Hamilton	Lot 1 DP 1046949	Local	LEP Item #124
St Peters Anglican Church	148 Denison Street, Hamilton	Lot 2 DP 1132328	Local	LEP Item #125
Australian Agricultural Company Mine Manager's House	195 Denison Street, Hamilton	Lot 211 DP 1122139 Lot 212 DP 1122139 Lot 3 DP 153592	State	SHR #01992 LEP Item #126
AA Company House	195A Denison Street, Hamilton	Lot 211, DP 1122139	Local	LEP Item #701
AA Company House	197 Denison Street, Hamilton	Lot 3, DP 153592	Local	LEP Item #702

Hamilton Public School	1A Dixon Street, Hamilton	Lot 2 DP 809375	Local	LEP Item #127 Dept. of Education Section 170 Register #5065627
------------------------	---------------------------	-----------------	-------	---



Legend

 Cameron's Hill study area	 Item - Aboriginal	 Item - Archaeological
 Item - General	 Item - Landscape	

Figure 3 Extract from LEP Heritage Map with the study area outlined in red. (Source: CN, 2024)

1.8.4 Newcastle Development Control Plan 2023

The Newcastle DCP 2023 supports the LEP with planning and design guidance for development and modification applications. It includes heritage provisions in Part E. The Heritage Technical Manual supplements this with information for assessing development applications in HCAs. It includes Contributory Buildings Maps ranking the contribution of buildings to streetscape character and heritage significance for each HCA.

1.9 Methodology

This report used the NSW Government's assessing heritage significance guidelines³ and the criteria defined in the *NSW Heritage Act 1977* to assess heritage significance. It also used the NSW Heritage Council and Government Architect NSW best practice guidelines⁴ and the principles in the Burra Charter and the approach set out in The Conservation Plan by James Semple Kerr⁵. The terminology in this report is consistent with that used in the Burra Charter.

Preparing this assessment involved the following steps:

- review previous heritage studies, heritage reports, and existing heritage listings for the study area;
- collate of background historical information and documentation, including early maps subdivision plans and historic photos;
- fieldwork, involving inspections of built form and landscape, public domain and streetscapes for the study area (undertaken by CN in March 2024);
- assess the heritage significance of the study area; and
- undertake a preliminary visual assessment of each building's contribution to the streetscape character and heritage significance of the study area (fieldwork undertaken by CN in March 2024).

1.9.1 Heritage Assessment Methodology

The heritage significance assessment drew on the Burra Charter's principles and the methodology provided in the assessing heritage significance guidelines. The guidelines provide a detailed process to assess heritage significance using criteria developed by the Heritage Council of NSW. This adopts specific heritage assessment criteria pertinent to the Heritage Act. A heritage item or HCA is of state or local significance if it meets one or more of the seven criteria for assessment outlined in Table 2.

Table 2: Criteria for assessing heritage significance in NSW.

Criterion (a) (Historic significance)	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)
Criterion (b) (Historical 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).

³ NSW Department of Planning and Environment June 2023, *Assessing heritage significance: Guidelines for assessing places and objects against the Heritage Council of NSW criteria*, ISBN 978 1 923018 53 2

⁴ Heritage Council of NSW and Government Architect NSW, May 2018, *Better Placed: Design Guide for Heritage: Implementing the Better Placed policy for heritage buildings, sites and precincts*, ISBN 978 0 6483700 4 8

⁵ James Semple Kerr, 2013, *Conservation Plan: A guide to the preparation of conservation plans for places of European cultural significance, The Seventh Edition*, ISBN 1 86364 026 6

Criterion (c) (Aesthetic/creative/ technical achievement)	An item is important in demonstrating aesthetic characteristics and/or a high degree of creative or technical achievement in NSW (or the local area).
Criterion (d) (Social, cultural, and spiritual)	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.
Criterion (e) (Research potential)	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).
Criterion (f) (Rare)	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).
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).

1.9.2 Reference Material

The background material reviewed for this report is listed below in Table 3.

Table 3: Reference and Background Material.

<p>Previous Heritage Studies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sutera Architects 1997, <i>Newcastle City Wide Heritage Study 1996-97</i> • Ecotecture 2005, <i>Review of Potential Heritage Items</i> • Newcastle City Council 2016, <i>Review of HCAs</i>
<p>Site-specific reports</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EJE Heritage 2015, <i>Former Australian Agricultural Company Mine Manager's House—Conservation Management Plan</i> • Carste Studio 2017, <i>Proposed Redevelopment and Adaptive Reuse, Former Broadmeadow Fire Station—Statement of Heritage Impact</i>, report prepared for Curious Practice • EJE Heritage 2022, <i>Hamilton Public School—Statement of Heritage Impact</i>, report prepared for NSW Department of Education • John Carr Heritage Design 2019, "Heritage Strategy for the Proposed Alterations & Fitout to St Peters Hall"
<p>Other resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A. Hinds, N. Killin & P. Killin 2018, <i>Nomination of Cameron's Hill HCA</i> • B. Maitland & D. Stafford 1997, <i>Architecture Newcastle</i> • L. Reedman 2008, <i>Early Architects of the Hunter Region</i> • R. Cotton 2014, <i>Hidden Hamilton: Uncovering stories of Hamilton, NSW</i> • R. Cotton, 'Hidden Hamilton' blog, accessed online: https://hiddenhamilton.blogspot.com/ • Umwelt 2023, <i>Broadmeadow Regionally Significant Growth Area Heritage Study</i>. • CN, <i>Newcastle Heritage Strategy 2020-2030</i> • Newcastle Museum, <i>Muloobinba Map: A tour of the Aboriginal stories and objects in Newcastle Museum</i>

CHAPTER TWO – ABORIGINAL AND HISTORICAL CONTEXT

2.1 Introduction

This section provides an overview of the historical background of the Cameron's Hill study area. It is based on secondary sources, listed in Table 3 above.

2.2 Aboriginal Context

The Traditional Custodians of this land are a people who belong to the oldest continuing culture in the world. They have a continuing connection to the land and waters, and unique cultural and spiritual relationships to the land, waters and seas situated within the Newcastle LGA. From the southern extremities of Lake Macquarie (awaba) to the Hunter River (coquun) in the north, it is known that their heritage and cultural ties date back tens of thousands of years on this land (Burrai). Traditionally, this and surrounding lands were made up of numerous Nurras, family clan group areas. Each Nurra had ceremonial, story and marriage obligations. Forming binding relationships between peoples of this language group, and strengthened ties with neighbouring language groups. They gathered on regular occasions to pay respect to the Dreaming Spirits, the country and each other, through ceremony, song and dance. This maintained the Lore, continuously passing it on.

Before Europeans arrived, the Hamilton area was known as Ahwar-tah Bulboolba, 'flat it is, Wallaby place'. It consisted of sand flats covered in tea tree scrub providing an abundance of wildlife for hunting. Water came from Styx Creek to the west and Cottage Creek to the east.⁶

Evidence of continuous and extensive Aboriginal occupation of inner Newcastle is reflected in recent archaeological records. Aboriginal objects have been uncovered and documented throughout inner Newcastle in multiple sites, including (but not limited to) Broadmeadow Locomotive Depot, Newcastle Interchange, the Store Building, and other sites in Newcastle West.

Large numbers of clan groups are known to have lived along the river and coast, around the wetlands and hinterlands. Living a settled life managing and farming their lands according to their cultural and family obligations and the Lore, carefully moving with the seasons and for ceremonial necessities.

The local Traditional Custodians relationship and connection with the land was one of the most fundamental aspects of traditional life. Burrai is looked upon as the Mother, nurturing and providing the essential necessities for all to survive. It is why the people considered themselves children of the land, bound to it eternally in gratitude and thanks for it is the lifeblood of existence. Country was cared for by moving with the eight traditional seasons to

⁶ Newcastle Museum, *Muloobinba Map: A tour of the Aboriginal stories and objects in Newcastle Museum*

not exhaust the resources of the particular area. This is a managing practice that was given to the people in the Dreaming to ensure the sustainability of the land for all those that followed.

The local traditional language is a saltwater language which is specific to Country. It identifies the geographical location, the relationships and connection to Country.

Today, the Traditional Custodians proudly and actively identify with, promote and protect their Lore, beliefs and languages through connection to Country and each other and are now filling important cultural and modern-day roles in the study area.⁷

2.3 Australian Agricultural Company and Mining Expansion

The Australian Agricultural Company (AACo) is one of the oldest companies in Australia, and the first formed by Royal Charter. The company's original objective was the 'cultivation and improvement of wastelands in the Colony of New South Wales and for other purposes relating thereto'. The principal aim was the production of fine wool, and 'cultivating the vine, olive, flax and other productions now imported [to the United Kingdom] from the shores of the Mediterranean.'⁸

By 1825, the AACo's interests broadened to mining as they negotiated with the government to secure the right to mine approximately 2000 acres of coal-bearing land near Newcastle. Part of these negotiations included securing a monopoly on coal mining in the area and 'what might nowadays be described as a fixed term privatisation of coal resources.'⁹ This significantly advantaged AACo in pursuing its interests. In 1831, they opened the 'A' Pit, Australia's first planned and capitalised colliery, near the intersection of Brown and Church Streets in present-day The Hill. The workforce included convict miners and free labourers. The 'B' and 'C' Pits were collieries, and were established in 1837 and 1842.

The AACo relinquished its mining monopoly in the area in 1847 in return for the right to subdivide and sell its estates. Around this time mining activity increased with competitors such as the Scottish Australian Coal Mining Company, the J & A Brown firm, and the Waratah Mining Company having leases in the surrounding area.¹⁰

2.4 The Borehole

In the late 1840s, the AACo explored land west of their Newcastle estate, including locations around what is now Cooks Hill. Test bores west of this on a low hill found a rich workable coal seam, soon known as the Borehole seam, and the hill as 'Borehole Hill'. This site, on Borehole

⁷ Extract adapted from pp.5-12 of the Heritage Strategy 2020-2030, written by a traditional knowledge holder of the local community.

⁸ EJE Heritage 2015, *Conservation Management Plan—Former Australian Agricultural Company Mine Manager's House*.

⁹ EJE Heritage (2015).

¹⁰ Umwelt 2023, *Broadmeadow Regionally Significant Growth Area Heritage Study*.

Hill above the surrounding flat land, was where the 'D' Pit was opened in 1849. The AACo Mine Manager's House Conservation Management Plan described it as follows:

The steam winding engine from the A Pit was relocated to the new mine, enabling full skips to be raised to the surface for loading into tramway wagons, and empty ones to be returned underground... The colliery structures, including the timber poppet head, were constructed using local materials. Bricks will have been made using clay from nearby brick pits and fired in an on-site clamp kiln, while shingles will have been cut from the timber interspersed between surrounding tea-tree and geebung scrub.¹¹

James Lindsay was the first overman of the 'D' Pit. The overman's house was constructed west of the 'D' Pit on elevated land overlooking the mine operations (refer to Error! Reference source not found.4).



Figure 4: AACo Mine Manager's House, Denison Street. (Source: EJE Heritage)

In contrast, a series of small slab huts (refer to **Figure 5**) were constructed lower down the hill along a track connecting the 'D' Pit to Maitland Road. This track followed the general alignment of what is now Denison Street (refer to **Figure 6**). As the population of the small locality grew, the emerging village became known as The Borehole after the nearby mine.

¹¹ EJE Heritage (2015).



Figure 5: Typical Slab Hut, NSW (date unknown). (Source: Scanned from the original glass negative taken by Ralph Snowball. It is part of the Norm Barney Photographic Collection, held by Cultural Collections at the University of Newcastle, NSW, Australia)

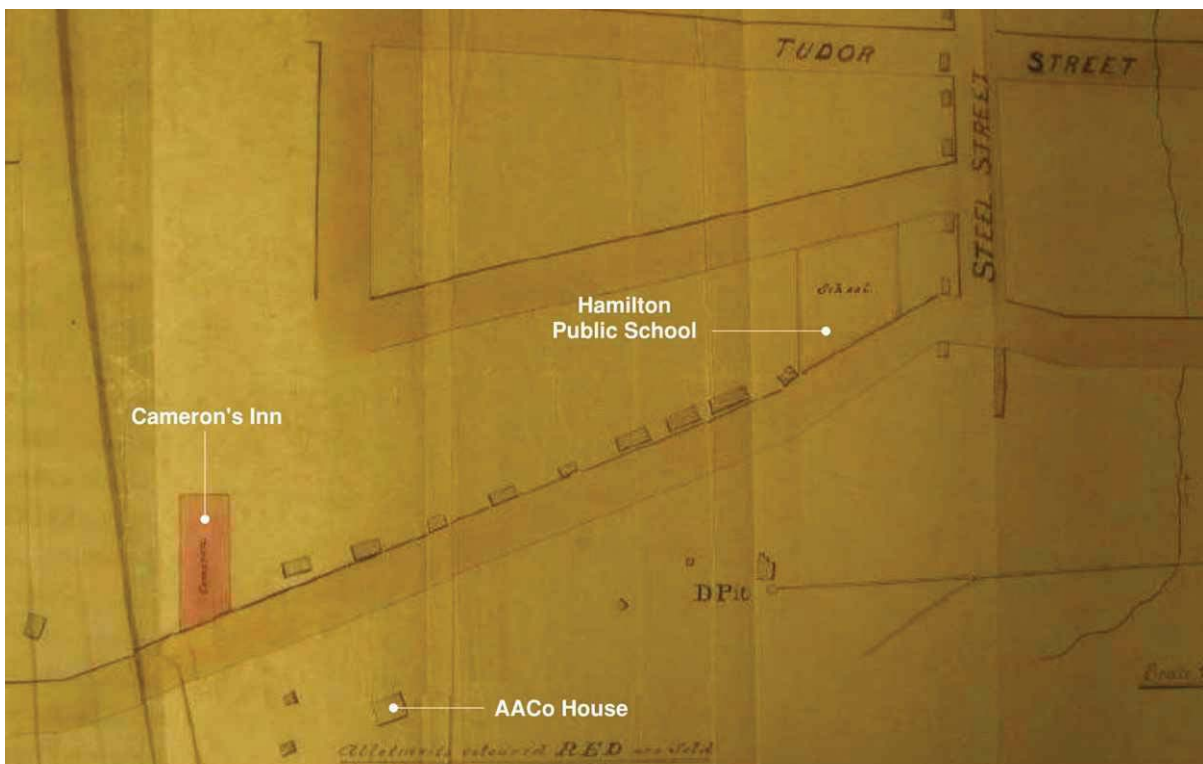


Figure 6: Detail from a map of the study area, showing The Borehole village along present-day Denison Street. Note James Cameron's Inn at left. (Source: AA Company Despatches, 10 February 1858; via EJE Heritage, 'Conservation Management Plan—Former AA Company Mine Managers House', 2015, annotated by CN)

During the 1850s, the AACo continued to expand with new collieries to the west and south of the Borehole. This brought new houses and businesses to the area. As the population expanded, the settlements required community facilities. In 1858, Pit Town School opened on

Denison Street opposite the 'D' Pit. The school site was later expanded to Tudor Street and renamed Hamilton Public School (See **Figure 7**).¹²

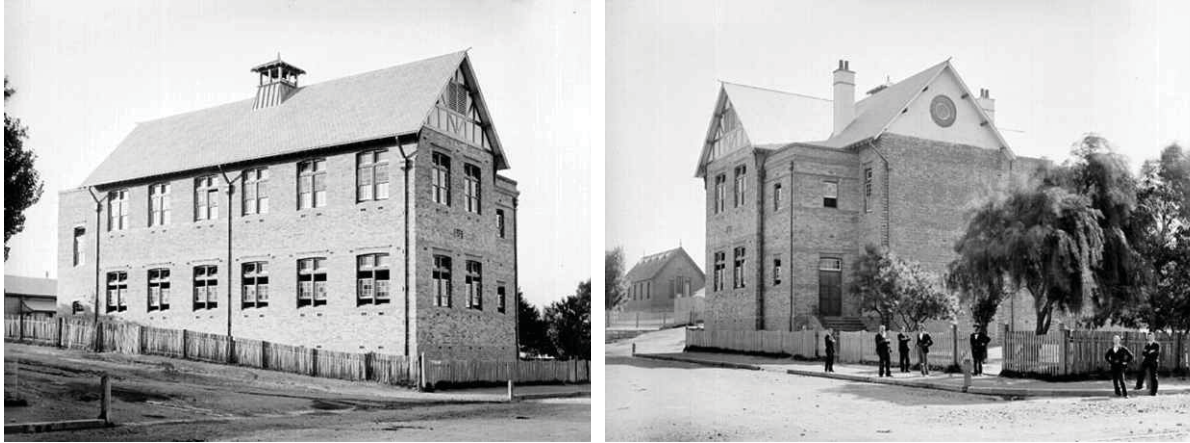


Figure 7: Hamilton Public School (date unknown). (Source: Newcastle Library)

In 1861, after another dispute between the company and its miners, a local newspaper stated:

*The miners who are employed in the works of the AACo express more dissatisfaction, and exhibit a greater bitterness of feeling, than the men belonging to the other mines. They consider that they earn their money harder, and have been treated more arbitrarily than their fellow workmen. The huts and houses of the miners...are also old and of inferior description, and the rent paid for them is said to be excessive in proportion to the charges at Minmi and elsewhere. The homes of the AACo's miners too have a most comfortless appearance, and are almost entirely destitute of the commonest conveniences of civilised existence. The slab huts look as if they wished to run away, being inclined in all directions, and the brick cottages, standing at the foot of a slope, are flooded every time it rains heavily, and look black with damp and dirt.*¹³

The first St Peters Anglican Church was completed adjacent to the school in 1864. It was a slab-walled building and seated 80-100 people. By 1883, plans were underway to replace the slab building with a masonry structure designed by John Horbury Hunt, shown in Figure 8.

¹² EJE Heritage 2022, *Hamilton Public School—Statement of Heritage Impact*, report prepared for NSW Department of Education

¹³ EJE Heritage (2015).



Figure 8: St Peter's Church, Hamilton (date unknown). (Source: Special Collections, University of Newcastle, NSW)

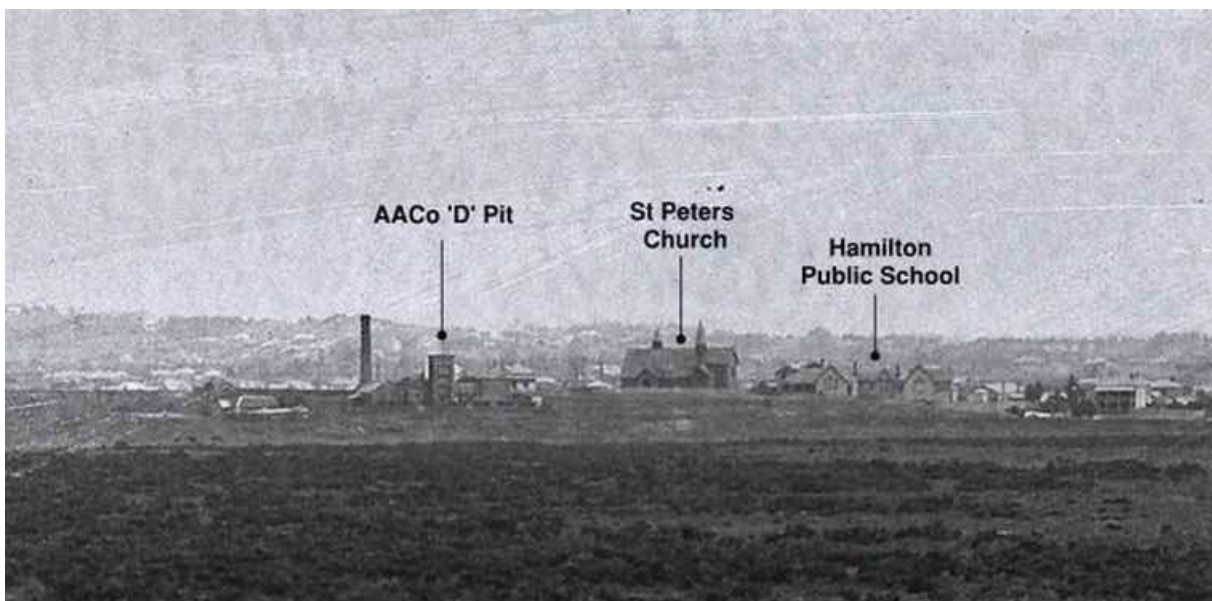


Figure 9: Extract from a panorama of the AACo mining fields, taken from near the present-day intersection of Beaumont Street and Glebe Road. (Source: EJE Heritage, 'Conservation Management Plan—Former AA Company Mine Managers House', 2015, annotated by CN)

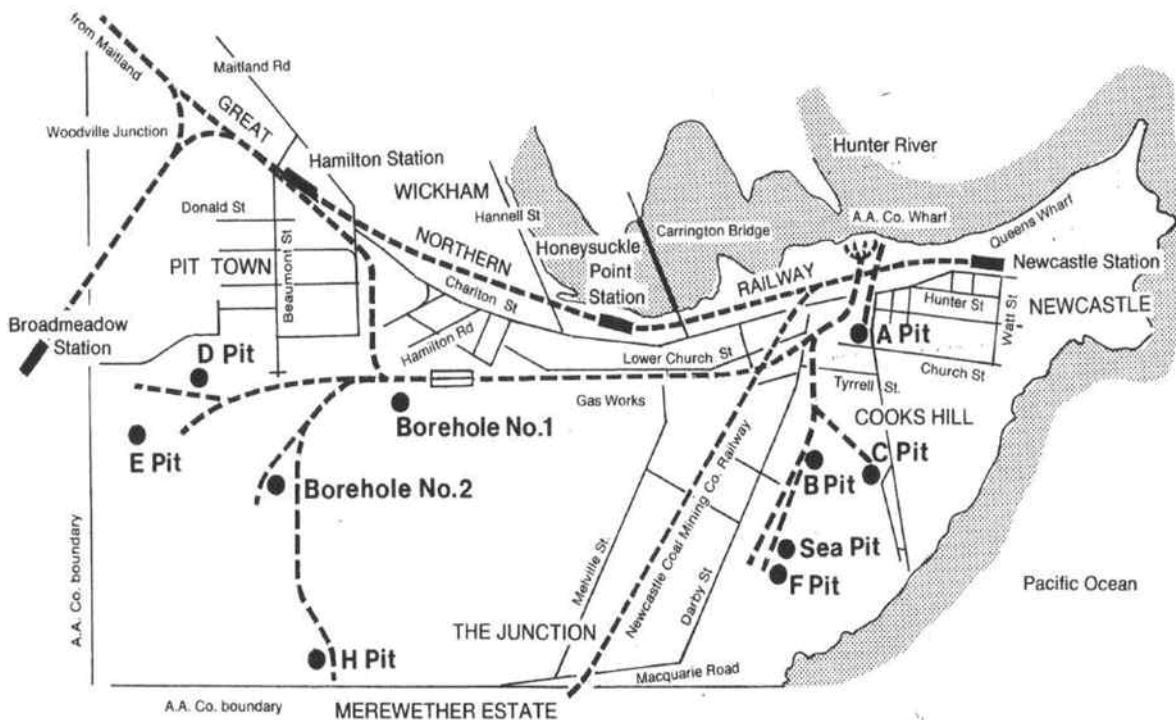


Figure 10: Map of the AA Company's mining pits in the Newcastle area, c1847. (Source: Newcastle Herald, 'How the Australian Agricultural Company went from merinos to mines', 19/07/2019)

2.5 Establishment of Hamilton

The Borehole locality was 'too close to the noisy, smoky, and dirty atmosphere of the pits, coke ovens, and railway sidings'.¹⁴ Most of the subsequent population growth occurred nearby in 'Happy Flat', an ad-hoc settlement in the vicinity of present-day Turner Street, and 'Pit Town', an AACo subdivision laid out in 1855 (refer to Figure 11).

Workers could save to purchase land from the AACo to build their own homes. These were a significant improvement on the slab huts the AACo rented at "excessive" rates.¹⁵ Eventually, residents took action to improve the environment and how they lived. *Hidden Hamilton* notes the "incorporation of the mining settlements as a municipality offered a way to collectively address the terrible state of the roads, provide sanitation, draining and a clean water supply, as well as meet other challenges such as public health and the safety of the settlements."¹⁶

¹⁴ EJE Heritage (2015).

¹⁵ R. Cotton (2013), 'How Hamilton Got Its Name', *Hidden Hamilton*

¹⁶ R. Cotton (2013), 'How Hamilton Got Its Name', *Hidden Hamilton*

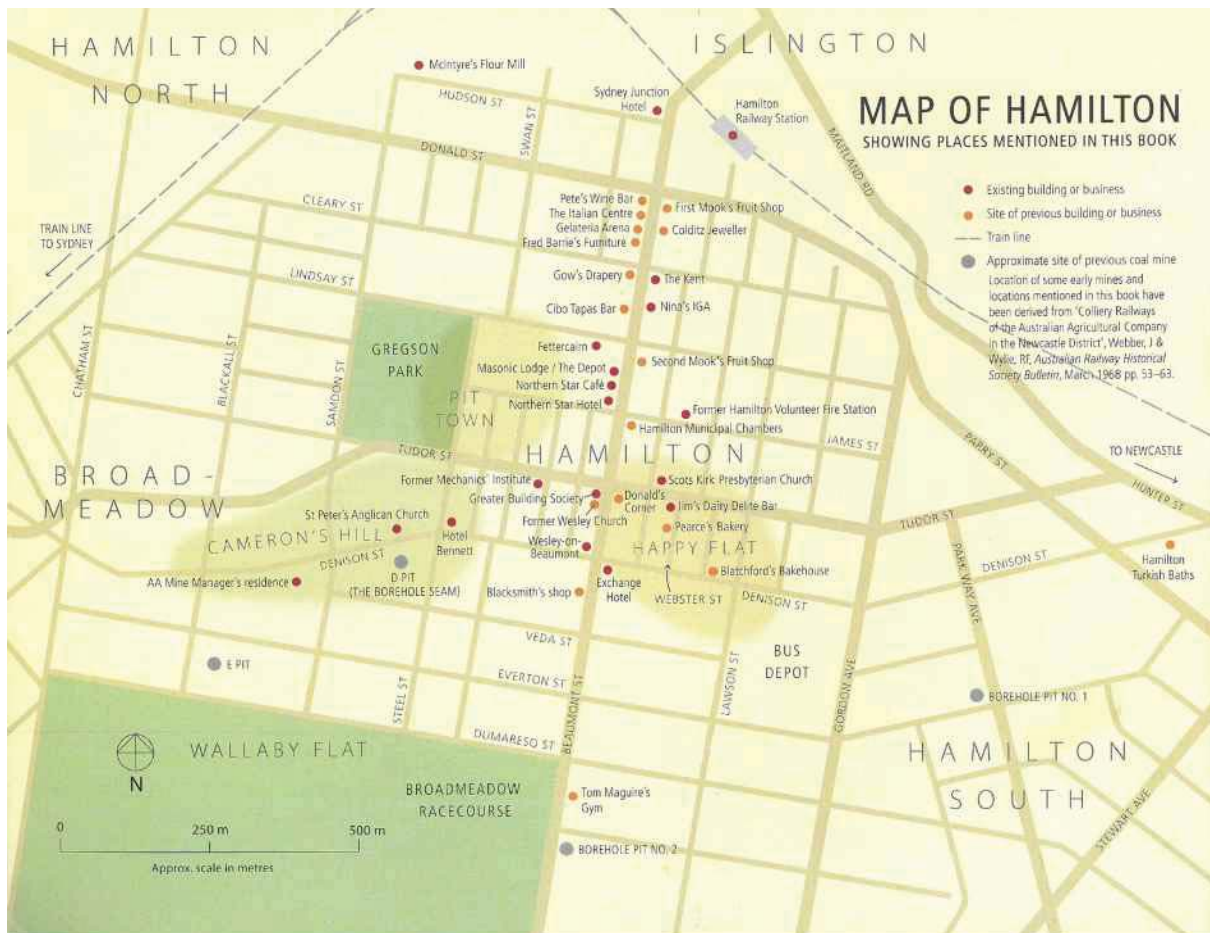


Figure 11: Map of Hamilton showing approximate locations of Cameron's Hill, Pit Town and Happy Flat. (Source: Ruth Cotton 2014, *Hidden Hamilton – Uncovering stories of Hamilton*; map by Christine Bruderlin)

The Municipalities Acts of 1858 and 1867 allowed any group of 50 freeholders, leaseholders and householders to petition for incorporation. Following agitation by miners and residents, Pit Town, Borehole and Happy Flat settlements were gazetted for incorporation as a township on 11 December 1871. Present-day Denison Street was the main thoroughfare through the mining settlements, from Cameron's Hill to Newcastle. At one time 10 hotels lined Denison Street (refer to Figures 12 and 13).¹⁷ However, the completion of the Hamilton to Sydney rail link in 1887 shifted the focus of commercial activity away from Denison Street to the railway station and Beaumont Street.¹⁸

¹⁷ R. Cotton (2013), 'Hotel Hey-day on Denison Street', *Hidden Hamilton*

¹⁸ R. Cotton, *Hidden Hamilton*



Figure 12: Map showing approximate location of hotels close to Denison Street, Hamilton in the late 1800s. (Source: Ruth Cotton 2014, *Hidden Hamilton – Uncovering stories of Hamilton*; map by Christine Bruderlin)



Figure 13: Denison Street, Hamilton (15 February 1892). The Universal Hotel can be seen in the foreground on the corner of Denison and Turner Streets. The former Hamilton Hotel, at 100 Denison Street, is visible beyond. St. Peter's Anglican Church is located in the background. (Source: Ralph Snowball, 1892, held by Special Collections at the University of Newcastle, NSW)



Figure 14: Denison Street, looking east, 28 October 1907. Tudor's Hotel, now the Hotel Bennett, is on the left. (Source: Ralph Snowball, 1907, held by Special Collections at the University of Newcastle, NSW)

Monday 28th October 1907 was the 8-Hour day holiday. Figure 14 shows a procession past Tudors Hotel along Denison-street. A large banner can be seen with groups marching - this is most likely the procession on its way to the Showground at Broadmeadow.¹⁹

2.6 Cameron's Hill

By the end of the nineteenth century the 'D' Pit was worked out and closed. In 1904, the AACo began to subdivide and sell the elevated land surrounding the former 'D' Pit, on the southern side of Denison Street through to Everton Street. The subdivision was advertised as Cameron's Hill, after James Cameron, a local publican. Cameron had arrived in the Borehole in 1856, building the Queen's Arms Hotel shortly after. He was a keen sportsman and served as Newcastle Jockey Club President for 25 years, for the nearby racecourse.²⁰

The Queens Arms Hotel was on Denison Street and one of the earliest brick buildings on the hill (refer to

¹⁹ EIGHT-HOUR DAY. (1907, October 29). Newcastle Morning Herald and Miners' Advocate (NSW: 1876 - 1954), p. 5. Retrieved from Trove, April 11, 2015: nla.gov.au/nla.news-article134695160

²⁰ R Cotton, *Hidden Hamilton*

Figure 12). The site is today occupied by a pair of semi-detached residences. Cameron owned a second hotel on the south-east corner of Steel and Hunter Streets in Newcastle West, Cameron's Family Hotel—today known simply as the Family Hotel.

Aerial imagery indicates the area was largely built out by the start of WWII. A large proportion of grand Federation residences survive, particularly around Denison and Everton Streets.



Cameron's Hill Subdivision
Australian Agricultural Company's Estate
HAMILTON
33 Residential Sites
Saturday, June 11
on the Ground at 3 o'clock

Creer & Berkeley AUCTIONEERS

TERMS:
25% deposit
Purchases up to £100, 1 and 2 years 3%
Up to £200, 1, 2, and 3 years 3%

CAMERON'S HILL SUBDIVISION
A Company's ESTATE
HAMILTON
Healthy and elevated position
24 Residential Sites
SATURDAY 29th AUGUST
ON THE GROUND at 3 P.M.

The pick of this popular Suburb
Good frontages and great Depths

JOHN O'MARA
Auctioneer
NEWCASTLE

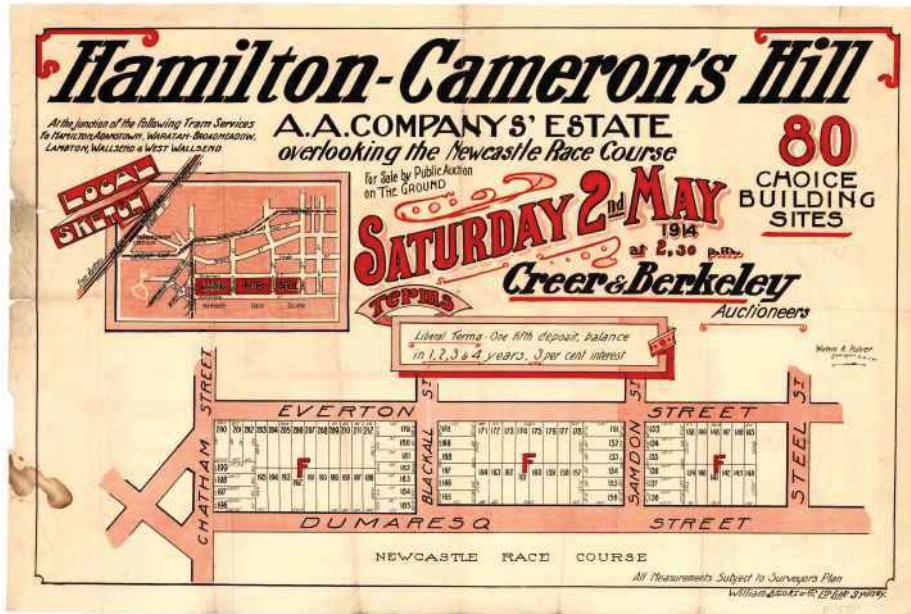


Figure 45: Subdivision plans: Cameron's Hill, Hamilton. Source: Alfred Francis Hall Archive and Creer & Berkeley Archive, Newcastle Region Library.

Figure 16 shows an extract from a map from c1910, with an outline of Cameron's Hill study area in red. The black hatched area of the former Pit Town indicates "very close" predominantly timber housing. Individual squares are stand-alone residences. Note the red contour lines in the study area, indicating its elevated geography. The study area stands in stark contrast to the densely clustered residences of the Hamilton village and is indicative of the character of the Cameron's Hill subdivisions occurring at the time. The map provides the location of Cameron's Queens Arms Hotel, being the red square labelled "H" towards the west of the study area. The low-lying land south of Everton Street was not subdivided until 1914 (Figure 15).

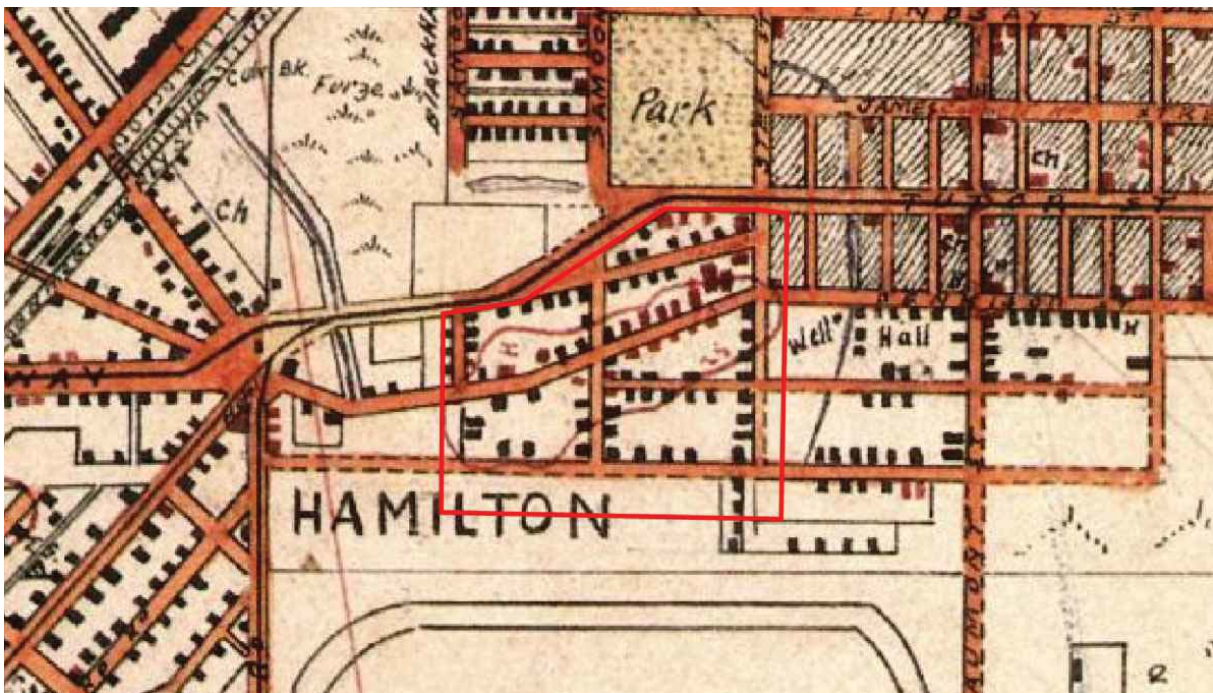


Figure 16: Extract from 'Map of the country around Newcastle, NSW', c1910, with Cameron's Hill study area outline in red. (Source: University of Newcastle Special Collections)



Figure 57: Houses in Samdon Street, post-1904. (Source: Ralph Snowball Collection, Newcastle Region Library)



Figure 68: Aerial view of Broadmeadow, c1964. The approximate location of Cameron's Hill study area is outlined in red. (Source: Newcastle Region Library)

2.7 Historical summary

Table 5: Historical timeline.

Date	Description
1828	The AACo is granted an almost total monopoly on coal mining in NSW, including 2000 acres of land in the Newcastle area including today's suburbs of Broadmeadow, Bar Beach, Cooks Hill, Hamilton, The Hill and parts of the Newcastle City Centre.
1847	The AACo relinquishes its monopoly on mining in the area in return for the right to subdivide and sell its estates.
1848	An exploring party led by Alexander Brown discovers coal beneath Borehole Hill (later known as Cameron's Hill; the study area).
1849	Work commences on the AACo's 'D' Pit. The AACo mine managers' house is constructed on Denison Street a short distance west of the pit (refer to Figure 4).
1855	A small village, known as The Borehole, started around the 'D' Pit. Miners' slab huts (refer to Figure 5) are built addressing 'Pit Row', a track running over the hill towards Newcastle. Subdivision of Pit Town, in the vicinity of present-day Beaumont Street, is laid out by AACo surveyor George Ogden.
1858	Pit Town School opens, later named Hamilton Public School (refer to Figure 7).
1859	Cameron's Queens Arms Hotel opens on Winship Street (now Denison Street).
1860	Pit Town has a population of approximately 500 adults. ²¹
1861	Pit Row is renamed Winship Street; Borehole Hill is renamed Winship's Hill, after James Barron Winship, Superintendent of the Borehole Colliery.
1864	The first St Peters Anglican Church is completed.
1871	The municipality of Hamilton is formed, combining the townships of Pit Town, Happy Flat and Winship's Hill. Pit Town School is renamed 'Hamilton'.
1885	Replacement St Peters Anglican Church is completed (refer to Figure 8).
1887	A public railway station is opened at Broadmeadow.
By end 1800s	The 'D' Pit is closed.
1902	AACo begins the process of relocating mining activities to Kurri Kurri.
1904	AACo released its Cameron's Hill subdivision of the land south of Denison Street, through to Everton Street.
1914	AACo Mine Manager's House is sold.

²¹ The Empire, 11 May 1860, pg 2.

CHAPTER THREE – SITE ANALYSIS

3.1 Description

The Cameron's Hill study area is southwest of Hamilton Business Centre (Beaumont Street). It comprises several residential blocks between Tudor/Belford Streets in the north, and Everton Street in the south (refer to Figure 19). The topography is elevated with Denison Street roughly following the ridge of the hill, falling gently to the south to meet the low-lying land of Newcastle Racecourse (refer to Figure 19 below).



Figure 19: Topographic map of the Cameron's Hill study area. Yellow border approximates the Cameron's Hill study area. Green contour lines are at 0.5m intervals. Red contour line is 10m. (Source: CN, 2024)

The study area generally aligns with the AACo's 1904 Cameron's Hill subdivision layout, with land north of Denison Street included for its harmony of style and architectural character, and connection with its former use for mining operations before its residential subdivision. Notable landmarks include St Peter's Anglican Church and Hamilton Public School.

The key phases of the expansion of Cameron's Hill, documented in Chapter Two, are as follows:

- Early mining operations (c1840s—1863)—construction of the 'D' Pit, Mine Manager's Residence and associated early vernacular miners' cottages; Cameron's Queens Arms Hotel opens; Pit Town School c1858 (now Hamilton Public) and the first St Peters Anglican Church c1863.
- The late Victorian period (c1860s—1890s)—some residential expansion north of Denison Street; Denison Street is a commercial centre.
- Federation period (c1895—1915)—Land between Denison and Everton Streets is released as Cameron's Hill subdivision. Surrounding land is also built out generally in the late Federation period.

The study area is predominantly residential in character. Most dwellings were constructed in the Federation period and reflect identifiable characteristics aligned with those of the period. Housing is generally larger, with grand residences on generous lots, reflecting the social status on the elevated land of the study area. There are also several smaller workers' cottages, particularly in the vicinity of the church and school that reflect smaller lot sizes associated with the earlier Victorian period. Dwellings in Cameron's Hill are typically single storey, with a small number of two-storey residences in elevated positions. There is remnant sandstone kerbing and brick footpath paving in the public domain throughout the area.

There is a dominant housing typology throughout the area, with minimal disruption of contemporary residential development. There are many examples of well-preserved houses demonstrating significant details such as decorative timber fretwork, verandahs, coloured glass windows and a materials palette consistent with the styles of the Federation period. Some properties have had alterations such as substantial additions and enclosure of verandahs that are inconsistent with these styles. There are some isolated examples of uncharacteristic infill development from the post-war period onwards, as well as some commercial development that has occurred on the larger allotments.

The study area incorporates St Peters Church and Hamilton Public School, both listed as local heritage items in the LEP. These larger complexes have contributed to the historic development of Cameron's Hill, being constructed during the period of the 'D' Pit operations to meet the needs of miners and their families.

Table 6: Heritage items within the boundaries of the study area.



Figure 7: St Peter's Anglican Church, Denison Street—LEP Item #125



Figure 28 Hamilton Public School, Tudor Street—LEP Item #127



Figure 22: Hotel Bennett, corner of Denison and Steel Streets—LEP Item #124



Figure 23: AA Company Mine Manager's House, Denison Street—SHR Item #01992

Table 7: Sample of buildings ranked as 'contributory' or 'neutral' to the streetscape character and/or heritage significance of the study area.





Table 8: Sample of buildings ranked as 'non-contributory' to the streetscape character and/or heritage significance of the study area.



CHAPTER FOUR – SIGNIFICANCE

4.1 Introduction

An assessment of heritage significance is conducted to establish why a place is culturally important. The Burra Charter defines cultural significance as 'aesthetic, historic, scientific, social or spiritual value for the past, present, or future generations.' Significance is embodied in the physical fabric of the place, its setting and relationship to other items, the recorded associations with the place, and the response the place evokes in the community or in individuals to whom it is important.

The assessment of heritage significance for the Cameron's Hill study area uses the standard criteria identified in the NSW Assessing Heritage Significance guidelines.

4.2 NSW Heritage Assessment Criteria

Chapter 2 of this report describes the methodology for this study. The NSW Assessing Heritage Significance guidelines provide the framework for the assessment and the Statement of Significance in this report. These guidelines incorporate the five types of cultural heritage values identified in the Burra Charter into a specially structured framework.

Under these guidelines, places are assessed using a specific set of criteria (**refer to Table 2**). To apply the assessment criteria, both the nature and degree of significance of the place need to be identified. This is because items vary in the extent they embody or reflect key values and in the relative importance of their evidence or associations. The assessment also needs to identify the item's value in a relevant geographical and social context, usually in a local or state context. Items can have local and state significance for similar or different values/criteria.

4.3 Comparative Assessment

A comparison of the Cameron's Hill study area with other listed HCAs in the Newcastle LGA is provided to establish the area's potential rarity as an HCA in its local context. The HCAs of Hamilton Residential Precinct, Cooks Hill, and Glebe Road Federation Cottages were compared with the study area. The Statements of Significance for each HCA are listed in Table 9 below.

Table 9: Summary of comparable HCAs in the Newcastle LGA.

Hamilton Residential Precinct HCA
<p>Statement of Significance</p> <p>The Hamilton Residential Precinct HCA is a low scale, residential area typified by small lot housing of generally one or two storeys, with the character of the area and its streetscapes representative of the late Victorian, Federation and Inter-war periods of Australian urban development. The style of housing - late Victorian terraces and cottages, Federation cottages and bungalows in the popular styles of the time, Italianate, Queen Anne, Edwardian, and California and Spanish Mission influences. In particular, a large number of detached terrace houses, with streets generally comprising of small</p>

lot housing, with a traditional street grid nestled adjacent to Hamilton railway station, and general absence of space for vehicle accommodation.

The Hamilton Residential Precinct HCA represents a pattern of urban settlement that is representative of the gradual urban infill of the Newcastle coal field as mining moved out to the Hunter valley from 1880s until the turn of the 20th century. The urban development in the suburb reflects the gradual release of land by the AA Company, with some houses built as early as 1870. Most of the suburb was released in 1885-1886, and 1900-1920.

Hamilton's development between 1880 and 1900 reflects a period of intensive infrastructure investment by the state government, comprising the opening of the railway and train station in 1887. This attracted people to the suburb from the city centre and the style and age of much of the housing stocks reflects this period of growth and development. The Hamilton Residential Precinct HCA has special associations with the Australian Agricultural Company, being part of their 2000 acre grant of land in inner Newcastle. The township developed around the lucrative borehole pit, and was named 'Pit Town', with operations at the No 1 pit, No 2 pit, the Hamilton pit and the lucrative D pit on Cameron Hill, all of which were opened up in the late 1840s and 1850s. The enduring legacy of the AA Company is still reflected in the contemporary names of streets, including Lindsay, Denison, Cleary, Everton and Skelton Streets. The smaller lot layout of the present-day residential area of Hamilton can be attributed to the manner in which the AA Company released land for sale, the main purchasers being miners and company employees, and also reflects an era of urban development before the widespread use of the motor car, with little provision made for car parking.

- Key Period of Significance - circa 1870 to 1940.

Glebe Road Federation Cottages HCA

Statement of Significance

The Glebe Road Federation Cottages HCA is important at the local level in demonstrating the principal characteristics of the Federation period and the nature of residential building construction in Newcastle between 1909 and 1915. The narrow window of time in which the precinct developed is significant in providing evidence of the key features of the Federation period including construction and building technologies, fashions and key elements of the Federation style. Those being the single storey scale of these modest detached row of dwellings, a symmetrical street frontage, set close to Glebe Road and set off side boundaries, open verandah, pyramidal roof form, hip and gable roofs, bearer and joist construction with lightweight cladding material (weatherboard), and the absence of garaging with provision for parking occurring at the rear accessed via side driveways. The uniformity of the group in terms of architectural style, age, height, form, massing, setbacks, materials, and lack of obvious garaging contributes to defining the character.

The house at 55 Glebe Road has associative significance with a prominent individual, being the home of RJ Kilgour, a past Mayor of Merewether, and whose son was the first to enlist locally in 1915 for the First World War. The group of houses itself has associational significance with the Australian Agricultural Company, and the south east boundary line abuts the easement of the former Burwood Coal and Copper Company railway line, which was the Merewether Estate's coal haulage line.

- Key Period of Significance - circa 1909 to 1915.

Cooks Hill HCA

Statement of Significance

Cooks Hill HCA is culturally significant on a number of levels. As a residential and commercial precinct it is regarded for its special historical character, liveable streetscapes, diverse range of historic residential and commercial buildings and several tree lined streets. The age of the suburb, relative to other suburbs of Newcastle, is apparent in the style and form of buildings and eclectic street layout.

It has a significant visual character comprising buildings which represent all of the common architectural styles including mid-19th century workers' houses and terraces, Federation bungalows, Inter-war cottages and post-war residential flat buildings. A critical mass of contributory buildings, traditional streetscapes, significant trees, sandstone kerb and gutters, artefacts, heritage listed hotels, shops and parklands, gives the suburb a strong sense of place and a distinctive historic identity valued by local residents and visitors.

Cooks Hill is closely associated with the Australian Agricultural Company as part of the original 2000 acre grant owned by the Company. The Company began to sell off parts of Cooks Hill in the 1850s. However even before that the Company built huts for its workmen and so the area began its life as a mining village in the midst of the Company's' railways and mines. When the first land sales did occur, development was rapid along Lake Macquarie Road (Darby Street) and eventually Blane Street (Hunter Street), becoming an extension of the main laid out streets towards the City Centre. The early houses were single and two storey terraces and miners' cottages, both brick and timber. Retailing and hotel keeping flourished as did the population. The area is significant as it reflects the land uses and activities of the AA Company. Its mines, its railways, and the Colliery railway serving the Merewether district, exercise a strong physical presence over Cooks Hill to this day.

- Key Period of Significance - circa 1850 to 1940.

Similarities can be drawn between the above examples and the Cameron's Hill study area:

- Cameron's Hill is comparable with the Cooks Hill and Hamilton Residential Precinct HCAs for its origins as a mining village association with early operations of the AACo's Newcastle estate. In particular, the origins of Cameron's Hill and Hamilton Residential Precinct HCA are similarly shaped by the 'D' Pit and the development of the Borehole village, however they have contrasting physical characters.
- Like the Cooks Hill HCA, Cameron's Hill reflects the AACo's land uses and activities and its physical appearance and built form were largely influenced by the AACo's actions and decisions of the nineteenth century.
- Unlike the Cooks Hill and Hamilton Residential Precinct HCAs, Cameron's Hill does not have an eclectic character. Most residential development of the locality occurred soon after the AACo's "Cameron's Hill" subdivision in 1904. This resulted in a collection of intact streetscapes in a relatively condensed area, strongly representative of the Federation period. The Glebe Road 'Federation Cottages' HCA similarly demonstrates a cohesive example of Federation residential development in a short time period, albeit with more variety in building typology and over a larger area.

4.4 Assessment of Significance

4.4.1 Criterion A—Historical Significance

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

The Cameron's Hill study area is culturally significant in the course of the local area's and state's history. It is strongly associated with the early decades of the AACo, an entity of considerable importance in the social and economic development of the Hunter Region, the New England Region, and New South Wales. The area's remnant topography and subdivision pattern illustrates the role of the AACo's operations in the development of mining and associated industries, particularly that of the Borehole seam. The layers of historical development of the study area are legible today, including the influence of the 'D' Pit operations and subsequent emerging township. The local area was closely influenced by the decisions and activities of the AACo, leading to the eventual emerging settlement and incorporation of the Hamilton municipality.

The study area is a notable example of patterns of domestic life in the local area, illustrating the transition from its origins as an industrial mining area to a residential area for the more affluent social classes. This contrasts to development that occurred on the surrounding flat and flood prone land, formerly known as Happy Flat and Pit Town. This provides a demonstration of social hierarchies and living standards in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Under this criterion, the study area has cultural significance, primarily at a local level.

4.4.2 Criterion B—Historical Association

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

The Cameron's Hill study area originates from land associated with the Colliery Department of the AACo and its senior staff who lived and worked in the study area in the 1800s. Later in the nineteenth century, the area was known locally for its association with James Cameron, a prominent publican and horse racing identity who operated a hotel on Denison Street. Subsequent subdivisions were advertised as Cameron's Hill, solidifying Cameron's notoriety, and connection with the locality. Cameron's own residence was located on Belford Street, behind the Queens Arms hotel.

The study area has cultural significance at a local level under this criterion.

4.4.3 Criterion C—Aesthetic Significance

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

The Cameron's Hill study area has aesthetic significance at a local level, demonstrating key Federation residential typologies. The area includes a significant group of consistent Federation weatherboard and brick cottages and bungalows, as well as larger villa residences, indicative of the economic and social status of residents in the early twentieth century. Despite alterations, many of the dwellings display a good degree of integrity and intactness, incorporating typical details such as verandahs, established gardens, corrugated metal and terracotta tile roofs, timber barge boards and joinery, finials, decorative chimneys, picket and brick fencing, and coloured glass windows, providing an evocative atmosphere and a rich sensory experience.

Due to the topography of the area, many dwellings take advantage of views from the elevated positions of Denison and Everton streets. Several dwellings retain ornate timber details demonstrative of the Arts and Crafts movement. Throughout the area, contributory properties maintain a consistent single-storey scale (with some notable exceptions), materiality and architectural character. These make a positive contribution to the local streetscapes and the community's sense of place.

The Cameron's Hill study area has cultural significance at a local level under this criterion.

4.4.4 Criterion D—Social Significance

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

The resident community significantly value the historical and aesthetic qualities of the area and seek to protect it as an HCA. Community members nominated the area for its potential as an HCA in 2018. Subsequently it was raised as a consistent theme in community submissions responding to the draft Broadmeadow Renewal Corridor section of the DCP in 2022.

While a formal social values assessment has not been undertaken within the scope of this study, the Cameron's Hill study area is considered to have social significance at a local level under this criterion.

4.4.5 Criterion E—Research Potential

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

This study did not assess the historical archaeological potential of Cameron's Hill. Several buildings could contribute to understanding the local area's building typologies, design, materials, construction and lifestyle. The former workings of the 'D' Pit were within the study area opposite St Peter's Church and are identified as a potential archaeological site within Volume 4 of the Newcastle City Wide Heritage Study 1996/7.

It is not known if the Cameron's Hill study area could meet the threshold for inclusion under this criterion.

4.4.6 Criterion F—Rarity

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

The Cameron's Hill study area has a high concentration of early twentieth century Federation period architectural typologies. This includes Federation bungalow dwellings, larger villa residences, and representative examples of the Arts and Crafts movement. It is comparable locally with other HCAs. Cooks Hill HCA strongly compares as it also began as a mining village historically associated with the AACo. The Hamilton Residential Precinct HCA is comparable as its origins were also as a mining settlement influenced by the operations at the Borehole. The Glebe Road Federation Cottages HCA also has its streetscape character defined by Federation period residential development constructed in a relatively condensed period.

While Hamilton Residential Precinct HCA and Cooks Hill HCA are eclectic in character, the subsequent early twentieth century expansion of the Cameron's Hill subdivision provides a collection of intact streetscapes that are strongly representative of the Federation period. This is not considered to be rare in a local context as there are many examples of Federation streetscapes in Newcastle, particularly the Glebe Road Federation Cottages HCA and parts of the Cooks Hill HCA. Notwithstanding, Cameron's Hill has more variation in architectural style in the Federation period as well as building typologies represented.

The Cameron's Hill study area does not demonstrate this criterion to any notable degree.

4.4.7 Criterion G—Representativeness

An item is important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of NSW's (or a class of the local area's):

- *Cultural or natural places; or*
- *Cultural or natural environments.*

The Cameron's Hill study area displays significant and consistent residential typologies from the Federation period, with most dwellings constructed within a short time period following AACo's release of the area in 1904. Despite modifications and the encroachment of later residential development, the area displays a high degree of integrity, demonstrating key Federation period characteristics within a condensed area, retaining significant streetscapes. The dwellings are demonstrative of the historic character of the area and are representative of the Federation period of residential development.

The Cameron's Hill study area has cultural significance at a local level under this criterion.

4.5 Statement of Significance

Cameron's Hill has historical significance for its association with the early decades of the AACo. The area demonstrates the early days of nongovernment coal mining in the local area and represents the founding of Hamilton. Its earliest settlement was an assortment of mine workings, primitive slab huts and lean-tos, a few brick houses, and a brickyard, clustered around the AACo's 'D' Pit. This influenced the emerging townships on the surrounding flat land. Following the closure of the mine, the area gradually transitioned into a residential suburb, closely influenced by the decisions and activities of the AACo. The study area is a notable example of patterns of domestic life in the local area, illustrating the transition from its origins as an industrial mining area to a residential area for the more affluent social classes. This contrasts to development that occurred on the surrounding flat and flood prone land, formerly known as Happy Flat and Pit Town. This provides a demonstration of social hierarchies and living standards in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Cameron's Hill has strong associations with the Colliery Department of the Australian Agricultural Company and its senior staff, whose influence defined the development of Hamilton and surrounds.

The area has aesthetic significance at a local level, demonstrating characteristics that define the late Victorian and Federation periods in Australian urban development, with early buildings and the street layout closely influenced by the development of the AACo's mining operations. Surviving buildings from the mid to late nineteenth century provide evidence of this period of mining operations. The elevated position and subdivision following the closure of the 'D' Pit resulted in the proliferation of grander residences in the early twentieth century.

Cameron's Hill is a significant representative example of a Federation period residential subdivision in the Newcastle area. It retains a substantial proportion of original dwellings, forming cohesive and attractive streetscapes with an established sense of place. The area demonstrates a range of characteristics associated with this time. It is highly intact, being developed in a relatively condensed period. The area is strongly characterised by intact streetscapes and contributory dwellings including particularly fine examples of the Federation Arts and Crafts style.

- Key Period of Significance - circa 1840 to 1940

4.6 Desired Future Character Statement

The DCP provides Desired Future Character Statements for each HCA. These guide development assessment and design planning. Should the Cameron's Hill study area become an HCA, it is recommended that DCP 2023 be amended to include the following statement:

The character of the Cameron's Hill HCA is made up of a variety of building styles and settlement patterns dating from the late 19th century and early decades of the 20th century. The special character of Cameron's Hill is to be preserved, celebrated and maintained through the retention of contributory buildings, street trees, existing subdivision pattern and elements of visual interest and heritage significance.

Elements to preserve and/or sensitively restore or reconstruct (based on evidence of original appearance) include:

- *A range of contributory and historic buildings built before the Second World War, particularly intact or historically significant groupings, heritage items, iconic structures, and the appearance and layout of streets.*
- *Single storey scale of housing stock, with a small number of two-storey residences in elevated positions, that is an original defining feature of the area.*
- *An existing subdivision pattern and street layout, including preserving the human scale of development, the fine grain and the groupings of intact Federation era weatherboard and brick cottages and bungalows, as well as larger villa residences, which have high contributory value to the streetscape.*
- *Contributory dwellings that retain ornate timber details demonstrative of the Arts and Crafts movement.*
- *Dwellings that display a good degree of integrity and intactness, incorporating typical details such as verandahs, corrugated metal and terracotta tile roofs, timber barge boards and joinery, finials, decorative chimneys, and coloured glass windows.*
- *Mature trees in gardens and the public domain.*
- *Public open space including the Hamilton Rotary Park.*
- *Heritage picket and brick fences.*
- *Exposed face brick and stone of existing building facades and front fencing.*
- *A traditional road layout and street furniture such as sandstone kerbing and guttering, brick paving, and other features of historical interest.*
- *Items of heritage significance individually listed as heritage items in Schedule 5 of LEP 2012, including retention of the three-dimensional form and adaptive re-use of heritage item buildings.*

4.7 Building contributions

In HCAs, contributory items are buildings and elements contribute to the overall significance of the area and must be kept if the heritage significance of the area is to be retained. Non-contributory items may be replaced. There may also be an opportunity to strengthen the local character by removing elements that detract from or compromise that character.

In the Newcastle LGA, buildings can make three levels of contribution in an HCA – contributory, neutral, and non-contributory. The contribution of any building to the area or streetscape's character and heritage significance will guide the approach to development advice and assessment, and assist in determining the degree of change permitted. Each level of contribution is explained in the table below.

Table 4 Building contribution definitions

Level of contribution	Definition
Contributory	Contributory buildings are buildings that contribute to the character of the HCA. They are:

	<p>Heritage item – buildings listed as a heritage item in the LEP; or</p> <p>Contributory 1 – buildings that clearly reflect a Key Period of Significance for the HCA and are key elements of the HCA. This ranking is assigned where the main front portion of the building is largely unaltered as viewed from the street. Includes buildings with rear additions which do not affect the main front roof; or</p> <p>Contributory 2 – buildings that have been altered but are still identifiable as dating from a Key Period of Significance for the HCA. They retain their overall form from the original date of construction and, even though altered, are contributory to the HCA character. This ranking is assigned where a building has alterations such as cement rendering to Federation or Inter-war period brickwork or a first-floor addition which affects the main front roof form, yet the period and style of the building remains discernible.</p>
Neutral	<p>Buildings that are either altered to an extent where the construction period is uncertain, or are from a construction period which falls outside any Key Period of Significance for the HCA, but which reflect the predominant scale and form of other buildings within the HCA, and therefore do not detract from the character of the HCA. This ranking is assigned where the building is either so altered that the period and style is no longer evident, or it is a recent building which is of a height, form and scale which is consistent with the streetscape.</p>
Non-contributory	<p>Buildings from a construction period which fall outside any Key Period of Significance for the HCA and that have scale or form that is not consistent with the key characteristics of the HCA. This ranking is assigned where the building is recent or late 20th century and is out of scale, i.e., not consistent with the height, form and scale of buildings within the streetscape.</p>

Each HCA in the Newcastle LGA is provided with a Contributory Buildings Map providing a snapshot assessment (at that time) of buildings as viewed from the street to be used as a starting point to understand a building's contribution to the streetscape character and heritage significance of the HCA.

Fieldwork undertaken in March 2024 established the overall intactness of this area. These are represented in the Contributory Buildings Map below.



Legend







- | | | |
|---|---|--|
|  Cameron's Hill study area |  Contributory 2 |  Neutral |
|  Contributory 1 |  Heritage Item - General |  Non-contributory |

Figure 24: Cameron's Hill study area - Contributory Buildings Map (Source: CN, 2024)

4.8 Potential heritage items

Fieldwork was undertaken in March 2024 to establish the overall intactness of this area. During the fieldwork, several potential heritage items were identified that warrant further investigation. These are listed in Table below.

Table 10: Potential heritage items identified for further investigation.

Address	Description
Hamilton Public School (Denison Street)	An anomaly in Schedule 5 of the LEP was identified that only part of the Hamilton Public School site, fronting Tudor Street, is subject to heritage listing ('Hamilton Public School', Item #127). The portion of the school complex fronting Denison Street is the original school site, acquired from the AACo in 1868. It contains the earliest surviving school building. This LEP listing should be reviewed to consider whether to incorporate the Denison Street school buildings.
148 Denison Street, Hamilton	The property at 148 Denison Street, Hamilton, was constructed in 1908 as the rectory for St Peters Anglican Church. Initially designed by esteemed Newcastle-based architect Frederick Menkens, the design was adapted by his partner Frederick Castleden. The building should be investigated for its potential historical significance, and association with St Peters Church and Castleden.
11 Belford Street, Broadmeadow	The property at 11 Belford Street, Broadmeadow, was identified as a potential heritage item in Volume 4 of the Newcastle City Wide Heritage Study 1997. The dwelling should be investigated for its aesthetic significance and is a landmark building in the Belford Street streetscape.

The scope of this study does not include a heritage assessment of individual properties for inclusion as heritage items listed in the LEP. The items listed above warrant review as a separate project in the future.

CHAPTER FIVE – RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusion

The purpose of this report is to assess the heritage significance of the Cameron's Hill study area and its potential inclusion in Schedule 5 of the LEP as an HCA. Community members nominated the area for its potential as an HCA in 2018. Subsequently it was raised as a consistent theme in submissions responding to the draft Broadmeadow Renewal Corridor section of the DCP in 2022. This report reviews the boundaries of the Cameron's Hill study area described in the nomination, provides an assessment of the built form and significance of the area, and rates the contribution of its individual built form elements to the streetscape character and heritage significance of the study area.

The key findings of the report are that the Cameron's Hill study area:

- Meets the threshold for heritage significance under several of the NSW heritage assessment criteria, at a local level.
- Should be pursued for listing as an HCA in Schedule 5 of the LEP.
- Should be included on the LEP Heritage Maps with the boundaries shown in Figure 1.
- Properties identified as potential heritage items should be investigated and assessed appropriately at a future date, for inclusion in Schedule 5 of the LEP.

This is a technical study; it does not change the LEP to create an HCA or heritage listings. Such changes follow strict statutory processes, requiring a planning proposal to amend the LEP. Similarly, recommended changes to the DCP require a formal, statutory process. This will be done as a separate project and will require council approval and further exhibition.

5.2 Recommendations

The Cameron's Hill study area assessment found it has heritage significance in a local context and should be included as an HCA in Schedule 5 of the LEP. It is recommended that CN:

- Prepare a detailed heritage inventory sheet for the Cameron's Hill HCA.
- Prepare a planning proposal to list Cameron's Hill as an HCA in Schedule 5 of the LEP.
- Prepare an update to amend DCP 2023 to include statement of significance and desired future character statements for the Cameron's Hill HCA.
- Review locality specific planning controls for the Cameron's Hill HCA to be consistent with CN's approach to existing HCAs.

newcastle.nsw.gov.au