



Heritage Council of NSW
Locked Bag 5020
PARRAMATTA NSW 2124

By email: executive@rahs.org.au

Dear Sir/Madam,

The Australian Garden History Society is the leader in concern for, and conservation of significant cultural landscapes and historic gardens through committed, relevant and sustainable action. It has three branches in NSW and this submission is made on behalf of the Sydney and Northern NSW (i.e., the local) branch (the Branch).

We are pleased to provide this letter of support for the listing of Oran Park on the State Heritage Register. The Branch considers the proposed reduced curtilage, development encroachments and loss of an open landscape context indicated on the Catherine Fields (Part) Precinct Indicative Layout Plan dated July 19, 2013, is likely to have an adverse impact on the heritage significance of the item for the following reasons,

1. Adverse impact on heritage significance due to significantly reduced curtilage

The Branch is concerned that the curtilage has been significantly reduced from that recommended by Morris/Britton study in 2000. The curtilage does not recognise the significance of the siting of the building on the crest of a knoll was to provide good views of the pastures and approach roads (p50, 5.6.4 Catherine Fields (Part) Heritage Assessment GML 2012). The Branch consider that to conserve its heritage significance the curtilage should be enlarged to include both driveways, one directly south (earliest) and the serpentine drive from the southeast corner of the estate to the corner of Camden Valley Way. The drives associate with early views to the hilltop location of the house but also early plantings that are still evident in the landscape.

2. Encroachment of residential zoning within the setting of the item

The Branch is concerned that the reduced heritage curtilage will remove the context of the house within an open rural cultural landscape. The recommended large transition zones of public open space south and west of the house have been substantially reduced and that the proposal provides insufficient spatial separation between the private garden allotment and the surrounding development (p51, 5.6.7 Catherine Fields (Part) Heritage Assessment

GML 2012). The The heritage curtilage should recognise and preserve the significance of the landscape that provides the setting for the house, not only its immediate garden surrounds but the wider expansive landscape in which it sits in contrast.

3. Adverse impact to mapped view lines in GML Conservation Management Plan 2010

AGHS considers unsuitable the location of the neighbourhood centre and medium density housing within the two main view cones (Area A and Area B) identified in the GML CMP 2010 (p 58, Figure 5.5, Catherine Fields (Part) Heritage Assessment GML 2012). To protect the visual connection between the house and the coach house and the riparian backdrop to the vista, the neighbourhood centre should not be located in an area recommended in Figure 5.5 to consist of 'open space, playing fields, car parking, school playgrounds and water features'. Similarly, the low and medium density housing should not be within the view corridor to the former drive and the former Camden Valley Way entry to the property. These areas should be retained as public open space. This is supported by Camden Council's submissions regarding lack of public open space in the precinct.

4. Loss of heritage views due to proposed road layout

Both drives should be retained, the more formal road to the south, divided with a twin, rather than severed or not used. The treatment of the drive to the south disregards the heritage approach to the property from the south. Criss crossing of residential roads and associated avenue plantings confuse the directional planting associated with the entry drive. The serpentine driveway should be retained as a pedestrian way through open space, as designed for Harrington Park.

5. Failure to consider significance of surrounding farmland in GML Conservation Management Plan 2010

The AGHS do not agree with the GML heritage significance assessment of Oran Park (p 39, 5.0 Catherine Fields (Part) Heritage Assessment GML 2012). The low ranking in the heritage significance assessment of the surrounding farmland of the estate, despite continuity of use and layout, fails to recognise not only the significance of the pastoral estate of Oran Park dating from 1847 but the northern section of Campbell's original land grant of 1815. To assist in the study of such a large 'precinct' the significance grading of elements should have included the paddocks belonging to Oran Park (p44, 5.5 GML 2012). This element is both intact and is a product of its historical processes and should have been considered in the grading of value of elements.

We wish the application well and would be happy to discuss points made in this letter if that is of assistance. Please contact me at the address below.

Yours sincerely

Stuart Read
Chair, Sydney & Northern NSW Branch
AGHS
7/2A Ithaca Road

Elizabeth Bay 2011
Stuart1962@bigpond.com
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