



ACT Heritage Council

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Northbourne Housing Precinct Representative Sample

(part) Block 41 Section 6, (part) Block 1 Section 12, and (part) Block 4 Section 1, Dickson; (part) Block 8 Section 51, Lyneham

On 19 November 2015 the ACT Heritage Council decided that the Northbourne Housing Precinct Representative Sample was eligible for registration.

The information contained in this report was considered by the ACT Heritage Council in assessing the nomination for the Northbourne Housing Precinct Representative Sample (the Representative Sample) against the heritage significance criteria outlined in s10 of the *Heritage Act 2004*.

HISTORY

Public housing in Canberra and the city's early growth and development

Public housing forms a crucial element in Canberra's history. Unlike other cities, where the main focus of public housing is to provide a minimum level of accommodation for those who cannot afford to provide it for themselves, in Canberra, a large program of public housing established from 1927 has provided housing for all classes of society. It was not until 1972 that the number of privately built dwellings surpassed the number built by government (Wright, 2000 p. 6).

The Government provided housing in all manner of forms: hostels, hotels, detached residences, and flats.

Well before Parliament's first sitting in Canberra in 1927, the Federal Government knew that it would need to provide housing for those relocating to the nation's capital.

In 1912 the Minister for Home and Territories stated that 'it appears that the Government must, therefore, be responsible for housing its officials who are transferred from Melbourne, and who are on a different footing from the commercial population, and will suffer some hardship and inconvenience on their compulsory transfer to the seat of government' (Wright, 2000 p. 6).

The Federal Capital Advisory Committee (FCAC) was established in recognition that the pace of work had to be lifted significantly if the Seat of Government were to move to the capital. (Wright, 2000:p.3) The FCAC, constrained by limited funding, built only 126 houses across four residential subdivisions. It had a little more success building hostels with the completion of Hotel Canberra (now the Hyatt Hotel), Hotel Ainslie (now Gorman House), Hotel Kurrajong and Hotel Acton and hostels in Brisbane Avenue and Telopea Park. (Wright, 2000 p.4)

The Federal Capital Commission (FCC) was established in 1925 and set about providing housing for the expected influx of construction workers and public servants. In the year to 30 June 1927 the FCC approved construction of 545 Government houses. A year later 646 public servants had been transferred to Canberra with office and residential accommodation provided. This included houses, hotel and hostel accommodation (Wright, 2000 p.17).

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The Depression was accompanied by a downturn in the transfer program and with the change of Government in 1930, the FCC was wound up and Canberra reverted to divided departmental control. A partly elected ACT Advisory Council was then established to provide residents of the ACT with representation on local matters. (http://www.library.act.gov.au/find/history/frequentlyaskedquestions/personal_stories/act_advisory_council,_1930-1974).

By the late 1930s the piecemeal approach to development by the Department of Interior and other responsible agencies was having significant adverse impacts. In February 1939, there were 400 people on the waiting list for government housing in Canberra. Administration was not coping with Canberra's rate of growth (Wright, 2000: p.28).

There were also concerns about approaches to planning and development of the capital. To safeguard the Griffin Plan and maintain architectural standards, the NCPDC was established as an advisory body to the Minister of the Interior in 1939 (Archives ACT Finding Aid 'National Capital Development Commission Records'). This body reviewed and commented on many of the post-war housing development plans until 1958 when the National Capital Development Commission was established.

During World War II construction of Government houses in Canberra was halted leaving Canberra with an estimated shortage of 500 houses through the latter part of the war.

Putting still further pressure on the housing situation, Cabinet decided in 1948 to recommence the program of transferring the public service from Melbourne to Canberra (Wright, 2000 p. 29).

In 1955 the Administrative Building (the first public service office block of significant size) was nearing completion. In that year the Government planned to transfer 1,500 public servants from Melbourne to Canberra over three years, and the Department of the Interior estimated a need for 4,000 new dwellings by 1958.

After it became clear that the construction of single housing was not going to meet the growing waiting list for accommodation, alternative housing models were considered. To compound the problem, since World War II building costs had escalated dramatically, there were shortages of materials – which led to rationing arrangements – and a lack of tradesmen. A quick-fix solution was needed. Blocks of flats, which had previously been considered as the cause of congestion and unhealthy conditions, suddenly found favour (Wright, 2000 p. 29).

Construction of housing flats in Canberra

The provision of public housing over the period of the construction and development of the National Capital is a significant and distinct example of Australian public housing provision. The Commonwealth Government was the predominant provider of housing in Canberra from the 1920s until 1972 when NCDC encouragement of private enterprise construction and the purchase of government houses succeeded in tipping the scales towards private investment in housing (NCDC p. 15)

In the post-war period government housing provision in Canberra entered a new phase of medium density development in response to the decision to complete the transfer of Government departments from Melbourne to Canberra. The NCPDC made a clear distinction between Commonwealth provision of public housing elsewhere in Australia as part of the post-war reconstruction program, and the provision of housing that would meet both the standards of planning and design in the National Capital and the needs of public servants. (41st meeting 6-7 October 1944) It was not until the 1970s that provision of public housing in Canberra became more aligned with the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreements concerning low-income social housing (Hutchison, 2000 p.50)

The three initial developments to be constructed by the Commonwealth Department of Works and Housing in response to the housing shortages were the Griffith Flats (1948), the Braddon and Reid flats (1951) and the Ainslie Flats (1952). The design of these flats followed Garden City principles, of two storey load bearing brick construction arranged around the edges of long rectangular blocks, facing the surrounding streets, irrespective of solar orientation with a shared central area. (Graham Brooks and Associates, 2014p. 55)

The Griffith Flats, consisted of 48 two-bedroom units on a rectangular site bounded by Canberra Avenue, Eyre Street, Oxley Street and Dawes Street. The units were spread over eight two-storey blocks, each facing a road frontage with the central area between the blocks containing facilities for car parking and clothes drying.

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The Braddon Flats, located on a rectangular site on the northern side of Ainslie Avenue and facing onto Elimatta, Bateman and Gooreen Streets, comprised of eight two-storey buildings containing 48 two-bedroom flats. The Reid flats were directly opposite on a rectangular site facing onto Elimatta, Allambee and Gooreen Streets, comprised 20 one-bedroom units and 28 two-bedroom units. Both complexes comprised eight two-storey blocks, each facing a road frontage with the central area between the blocks containing facilities for car parking and clothes drying.

The Ainslie Flats, located on a rectangular site bounded by Hayley Street, Chisholm Street, Quick Street and Howe Crescent, consisted of 32 one-bedroom units and 56 two-bedroom units. The eight two-storey buildings were arranged to face street frontages with a central area between the blocks containing facilities for car parking and clothes drying.

The construction of the Allawah and Bega Courts (1956/57), the Currong Flats (1959) and the Northbourne Flats (1959) demonstrated a shift in design intent towards modernist site planning techniques and construction. The need for an appropriate architecture for the large commission, and its important location, provided an opportunity to shift away from architectural styles previously employed on housing projects and to experiment with elements and concepts of International Style design and construction techniques. The flats were arranged on their sites to create smaller areas of shared open space with some of the smaller blocks raised on 'pilotis' or columns to allow parking below the buildings. (Graham Brooks and Associates, 2014p. 56)

The Allawah and Bega Courts consisted of eight three-storey blocks of two-bedroom flats. They presented to Cooyong Street as six blocks of 18 flats raised on columns over car parks with laundries under two blocks. Behind this row of blocks, a further ten blocks of 12 flats on the ground formed rectangular courtyards between. The complex demonstrates characteristics of Post-War International Style (1940-1960) including a cubiform overall shape, overhang for shade, plain, smooth wall surfaces, cantilevered balconies and contrasting texture between brick and rendered facades.

The Currong Flats, adjacent to Allawah and Bega Courts (known later as the 'ABC flats') consisted of six eight-storey buildings, comprising 184 one bedroom flats and 28 two bedroom flats. They presented to Currong Street and Ainslie Avenue and also demonstrated some aspects of the Post-War International Style, such as cubiform overall shape, overhangs for shade, plain smooth wall surfaces, cantilevered balconies and contrasting textures. (Graham Brooks and Associates, 2014 p.66)

The Northbourne Flats consisted of 24 three-bedroom, 154 two-bedroom and 70 one-bedroom flats located on two sites, in Turner and Braddon, facing each other across Northbourne Avenue. The development on the Turner side of Northbourne Avenue is bounded by Condamine Street, Forbes Street and Greenway Street and the development on the Braddon side of Northbourne Avenue is bounded by Henty Street and the boundaries of Haig Park and the Canberra Rex Hotel. The complex consists of two building blocks types, both 3 storeys high – those that contain two-bedroom flats with the one-bedroom flats attached by glazed links and those that contain three-bedroom flats. The Flats exhibit some features of the Post-War International Style (1940-1960) such as cubiform overall shape, plain, smooth wall surfaces and exposure of structure frames.

Allawah and Bega Courts were initiated and completed during the period in which the NCPDC was the advisory body. The Currong and the Northbourne Flats were initiated at the same time but completed by the NCDC after it came into operation in 1958. With queues for housing growing and more transfers planned, Stuart Flats, Lachlan Court and Gowrie Court were priority construction projects in the NCDC's first two years.

The Stuart Flats, Griffith constructed in 1959 continued the overall site planning arrangement evident in the Allawah and Bega Courts and the Northbourne Housing Precinct, although located on a steeply sloping site which resulted in less clarity of the parking and common areas. Furthermore their architectural expressions remained in the restrained Inter-War Georgian style. (Graham Brooks and Associates, 2014 p.56)

The Stuart Flats consisted of 29 bedsitters and 117 two-bedroom flats on a site bounded by Captain Cook Crescent, Stuart Street, Light Street, Evans Crescent and the boundaries of St Paul's Cathedral, the Russian Embassy and private flats. The units are spread over 12 separate blocks varying in height from two to four storeys plus part basement with some blocks raised on concrete frames to provide covered car parking. The central open space between the blocks contained additional car parking and drying areas however landscaping was minimal. There is little evidence of any strong concept, architectural style or a considered approach to site planning in the design of these buildings despite being designed in the highly regarded office of Spencer, Hanson and Partner.

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Gowrie Court, Narrabundah, constructed in 1959, broke away from the 'donut' planning model partly due to the site not being surrounded by roadways. It demonstrates some architectural influences of the Post-War International style such as low pitched roof and overall cubist form. (Graham Brooks and Associates, 2014 p.56)

Gowrie Court consisted of 72 two-bedroom units in series of separate, three-storey blocks that ran parallel with each other for optimum solar orientation. This was in contrast to the early 1950s flats that were two-storeys high, and flanked all four boundaries of their sites regardless of individual orientation. Other evidence of the shift to a more modern, International Style-influenced approach is exemplified by the very low pitch to the roof, accentuating the rectangular, cubistic form of the blocks. In another modernist tendency, the crisp, planar form is offset visually by the white-painted cantilevered balconies, which regularly punctuate the main facades.

Lachlan Court, Barton also constructed in 1959 received notoriety for its use of 'no-fines' concrete in place of typical load bearing brickwork. The complex consisted of 118 bedsitters over four separate buildings, one one-bedroom caretakers' cottage, a restaurant, central laundrette and 41 garages on a site bounded by Brisbane Avenue, Macquarie Street, Darling Street and National Circuit. In 1999 Lachlan Court was sold by the ACT Government and subsequently demolished for redevelopment.

The construction of the Red Hill Housing Precinct in 1961 demonstrated another shift in the planning layout of public housing towards the Post-War International style and were part of a group housing project, an idea discussed earlier by the NCPDC for new subdivisions, a similar scheme which would be evident in the future Northbourne Housing Precinct. This project consisted of a total of 145 dwellings in a variety of housing types including flats, bed-sitter units, houses and townhouses. The majority of the original precinct is bounded by La Perouse Street, Discovery Street, Monaro Crescent and Cygnet Crescent with a smaller section being located outside that perimeter on the other side of Cygnet Crescent. The nine blocks follow the gently sloping topography, street pattern on a symmetrical, semi-formal, curved radial layout set out in a series of radial wings which results in a series of open spaces. The buildings however made no reference to the Post-War International style.

The NDC's construction of the Northbourne Housing Precinct, between 1959–1962, was a much more ambitious architectural undertaking along the avenue that was the main entrance to Canberra. This project established a significant difference to its predecessors in terms of the use of the variety of building types and group layouts, and proved more confident in its adoption of the Post-War International style. (Graham Brooks and Associates, 2014 p.57)

The Northbourne Housing Precinct stretches some 500 metres along Northbourne Avenue in Dickson and Lyneham and consists of five building types, comprising one, two, three and four storey buildings with variety of housing types including bachelor flats, two-storey paired houses and maisonettes. The original precinct was considered by the NDC as a 'gateway' marking the entrance into the National Capital. The prominence and consideration given to its landmark status were novel qualities in Canberra's public housing, as previous examples were primarily considered as a quick response to housing shortages. Further information can be found in the next section: **The Planning and Development of the Northbourne Housing Precinct.**

Subsequent medium density public housing, such as Kanangra Court, Reid took a different approach to architectural and site planning.

Kanangra Court, Reid completed in 1965 demonstrated some domestic qualities of private houses associated with the Sydney Regional Style (1960-) such as scale, footprint shape, massing, proportion of windows, detailing and building materials. Originally comprised of 118 bachelor flats over seven three-storey blocks, the flats has since been modified into two-bedroom flats. Bounded by Ainslie Avenue, Limestone Avenue, Allambie Street and Goren Street the buildings are set in an open landscaped area with covered carports and screened drying areas.

By the mid 1970s demand for government housing in Canberra had dropped significantly. The Government decided that building large flat complexes exclusively for occupation by government housing tenants was over, and that low-cost housing should be developed for the increasing number of tenants on welfare and aged pensioners. (Phillip Leeson Architects 2011 p.319).

Jerilderie Court, Reid completed in 1977 demonstrated this new phase in intent and design approach to public housing in Canberra. Developed in response to lobbying for low cost accommodation it was designed in response to a places' context rather than a conscious exercise in any specific architectural style. It contains a total of 62 dwellings within nine blocks ranging from two to three storeys in height. Dwelling types include three-bedroom townhouses, single-

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storey garden units, maisonettes and mews-style units with car parking provided at ground level under some blocks, in group carports and in open parking spaces. The units are bounded by Ainslie Avenue, Allambee Street, Doonkuna Street and Elimatta Street.

The planning and development of the Northbourne Housing Precinct

The Representative Sample makes an important contribution to an understanding of the intervention of the newly formed NCDC in the development and provision of medium density accommodation for the huge influx of public servants from Melbourne and other capitals in the post-war period. In its layout of distinct housing types, landscaping and provision of facilities designed to meet government standards and particular advice such as that provided by the national Council of Women, it is an exemplar of NCDC medium density residential construction and of a distinct provision of public housing in Australia that is no longer practised. (Graham Brooks and Associates, 2014 p.148)

The original precinct was among the first medium density public housing schemes undertaken by the NCDC, as it commenced several decades as the major driving force in the development of Canberra and its consolidation as the National Capital. It provided an opportunity for John Overall and senior Commission staff throughout the design and construction to provide strong guidance on the desired direction and outcomes for the project. The original design brief specifically stipulated a mix of dwelling sizes and called for a high level of civic design.

The NCDC invited leading Australian architects, including Ancher, Mortlock and Murray; Arthur Baldwinson and Edwards Madigan Torzillo, to design 150 houses along Northbourne Avenue. Ancher Mortlock and Murray were selected with Sydney Ancher as Director in Charge and the Design Architect and Stuart Murray as the Project Architect. Professor Denis Winston, head of the Department of Town and Country Planning at Sydney University and consultant to the NCDC on town planning matters, was also engaged on this project. Ancher's output was not extensive and the original precinct is his only large medium density housing design, and also the largest project in extent and cost he completed. Furthermore, it is one of only two of his projects to be built in Canberra (the other being the original ANU Students Union Building, now the Pauline Griffin Building).

As the Commissioner, John Overall maintained a close watch on the development of the master plan and subsequent sketch designs, often requiring meetings with Sydney Ancher to resolve issues or request additional resolution of design matters. Overall had also been steeped in International Modernist architecture and planning through his pre-war membership of the Modern Architecture Research Society, and post-war involvement with William Holford and other leading planners in the United Kingdom.

Other senior NCDC staff who contributed to the outcome included the Associate Commissioners Grenfell Rudduck and William Andrews, Chief Town Planner Peter Harrison, Executive Architect John Goldsmith, Secretary Manager Robert B. Lansdown, Landscape Architect John Grey, and later in the project Gareth Roberts, who became the NCDC's first Director of Architecture. The architects were also requested from time to time to discuss the project with Professor Denis Winston from the Department of Town and Country Planning at the University of Sydney. Professor Winston was a consultant to the Commission on town planning matters. The landscaped outcome for the completed project reflected the NCDC's commitment to the overall landscaping character of Canberra. The Department of Interior Parks and Gardens Section was an important contributor, in addition to the NCDC's Chief Landscape Architect, Richard Clough.

As a matter of policy, the NCDC consulted the National Council of Women regarding the functionality of the proposed flats. Their comments lead to a major re-design of what became the single storey Garden Flats.

The NCDC always envisaged the original precinct would be an important site on the approach to Canberra and it was designed and constructed to present as a 'gateway' into Canberra which required a high degree of civic design. The original brief was to design a precinct comprising of 150 dwellings in a mix of one, two and three storey buildings, incorporating flats and attached dwellings. A strong landscaping program for the precinct was also designed to reinforce and complement the civic design and its presence on Northbourne Avenue and to create amenity for incoming residents rather than to reinforce the geometric urban structure.

The Representative Sample also manifests elements of the plan for Canberra designed by Walter Burley and Marion Mahoney Griffin. That plan anticipated along the tree lined boulevard and main thoroughfare that is Northbourne Avenue, "contiguous terrace buildings and small (fine grain) blocks with rear service lanes [and] individual tenancies to public street frontage" (Graham Brooks and Associates 2014 p.13). The original precinct achieved residential density

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along the avenue, with the main access being from quiet rear streets, but the residences were not all designed in terrace format.

The Representative Sample has been designed in the Post War International Style (1940-1960) by Ancher, Mortlock and Murray, a firm considered to be key practitioners in the Post-War International Style movement in Australia. The design also demonstrates influences of the Weissenhof Siedlung, most likely as a result of Ancher's travels through Europe, and Radburn planning principles.

The Weissenhof Siedlung

The Weissenhof Siedlung (or model housing estate at Weissenhof) was an exhibition held in 1927 near the City of Stuttgart to demonstrate the latest thinking in housing design, interior fittings, and construction technology. The Deutscher Werkbund proposed the exhibition and vice-president, Ludwig Mies van der Rohe was placed in charge. Sixteen leading architects from across Europe were invited to participate including Le Corbusier and Walter Gropius. The concept behind the exhibition was to design modestly scaled dwellings units suitable for mass production. A variety of approaches emerged from individual designers but commonalities, such as painted white finishes, functional windows emphasizing the horizontal and flat roofs were crucial in the development of the Modern movement. The common thread of rational or functional design could be detected in all buildings. (Moffit, 2003 pp. 519-520)

Radburn Planning Principles

The Radburn philosophy, stemming from the design of the unincorporated community of Radburn in New Jersey, was the concept of Stein, Wright and Ascher in the United States in the 1920s. It grew out of the work of Ebenezer Howard and the Garden City movement. 'The Radburn concept was an attempt to solve the difficulties associated with the motor car by a radical revision of the relationship of houses, roads, paths, gardens, parks, blocks and local neighbourhoods' (NCDC 1971 p. 1).

The main principles of the Radburn housing included separation of motor vehicles and pedestrian access, large areas of internal open space connected by walkways, and houses facing open space with back doors facing the street.

In Australia, Radburn principles were used in the Melbourne suburb of Doncaster East in an area known as the Milgate Park Estate in the 1970s, and in New South Wales and Tasmania around the same time. It was also used in areas in England (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Radburn,_New_Jersey, accessed 19 August 2014).

In the early 1970s a design for 24 government houses in the Weston Creek suburb of Fisher was commissioned by the NCDC as a study to test design and construction aspects for the suburb of Charnwood which was being planned for the new town of Belconnen, north-west of Canberra's City Centre.

Prior to this, areas of Curtin and Hughes had already been developed in the late 1960s, based on Radburn planning philosophies. At Curtin, houses were designed and constructed with a single frontage – facing to the pathway and parkland areas, and away from the street. In addition, fencing and hedging to the street frontage, as well as garages, together limit the street presence.

The Hughes Radburn precinct was developed as a precinct of two storey duplexes, with services including electricity at the street frontage. Hedging and tall fences front the street. Although Radburn principles are used here, in the segregation of pedestrian and vehicular movement, with pathways and parklands to the rear of the homes, it demonstrated a different approach to medium density housing than the freestanding individual residences at Curtin, Fisher and Charnwood.

Landscaping

An important aspect of the original precinct was the visual presence of its landscaping along the Avenue. As the NCDC sought to develop the place as a 'gateway' into the capital, the landscaping was to form an important visual, physical and symbolic role on this approach route. (Graham Brooks and Associates 2014 p.111)

The landscaping philosophy adopted in the original precinct centred on loosely arranged groups of trees planted in open spaces between the housing groups and along the cul-de-sac leading off De Burgh Street. Included within the

landscaping were play areas, walkways and undercover parking.

The landscaping was initiated in the early 1960s by the Executive Architect of the NCDC, John Goldsmith, through discussions with John Gray of the ACT Parks and Gardens Department. Their intent was to mitigate the visual impact of the original precinct along the avenue and complement the existing nearby treed avenue to blend with both the architecture and site layout. (Graham Brooks and Associates 2014 p.111)

Two major planting phases were carried out:

- 1) Early/mid 1960s, under the direction of John Gray; and
- 2) 1979/80, under the direction of Deverson Scholtens Bombardier (DSB Landscape Architects).

Phase one preferred tall growing trees, such as *Cedrus deodara*, *Cedrus atlantica*, *Casuarina cunninghamiana*, and *Cupressus arizonica*. Together with these species, *Prunus cerasifera* (plum), *P dulcis* (Almond) and *P mume* (Japanese Flowering Apricot) were also planted.

Phase two included planting a range of species types, including oaks (*Quercus* spp), pistachio (*Pistacia chinensis*) and ash trees (*Fraxinus oxycarpa* and *F pennsylvanica*). (Graham Brooks and Associates 2012 p.160)

DESCRIPTION

The Northbourne Housing Precinct Representative Sample (the Representative Sample) stretches for some 500 metres, on both sides of Northbourne Avenue. One side is in the suburb of Dickson, while the other is in Lyneham (Block 8, Section 51, Lyneham and Block 41, Section 6, Block 1 Section 12, and Block 4 Section 1, Dickson). The Representative Sample is comprised of five building types ranging from single, one, two, three and four stories, providing accommodation in a combination of one, two and three-bedrooms. The five building types are arranged in five groups, each with its own distinctive and cohesive character. The five groups are:

- Bachelor (Bedsitter) Flats;
- Pair Houses;
- Maisonettes;
- Garden Flats (Courtyard Houses); and
- Three Storey Flats (Owen Flats).

Bachelor (Bedsitter) Flats

The four bachelor blocks of flats are located at the northern end of the original precinct on both sides of the avenue, one block is located on the west side (Lyneham) and the remaining three on the east (Dickson). The Bachelor Flats are present as 'point blocks' enhancing the Precinct's civic design as a 'gateway' to the capital. These four blocks consist of four-storey buildings, each containing seven bed-sitters. The ground floor comprises the main entry, defined by a curved wall, mail boxes, common laundry and one flat. They are constructed of concrete frames to the lower floor, load bearing masonry walls and suspended concrete slabs to the upper levels finished with a flat roof. The lower level is cement rendered smooth and painted grey/blue and the upper levels are exposed sand/brown render however the block located on the Lyneham side has since been painted entirely white. The windows are full height vertical panels in timber frames painted white. Landscaping consists of planter boxes, external benches and concrete paths. The original pergolas are no longer extant. The two northernmost examples on either side of Northbourne Avenue are included in the Representative Sample to maintain the 'point blocks' acting as a 'gateway'.

Pair Houses (De Burgh)

The pair houses are located to the west of Northbourne Avenue (Lyneham). These houses comprise eleven, two-storey blocks, each containing a pair of semi-detached and two single houses with interlinks of double carports. An additional house is located at the De Burgh Street end of some groups. The pair houses are flat roofed, cement rendered brick, painted mushroom/grey. The windows and pergolas are timber painted white. Private courtyards have since been introduced around each house and are constructed of timber paling fences and exposed brick. The courtyard walls are unsympathetic to the original rendered construction and reduce the common open space between the groups resulting in a significant distortion of the original design intent of the pair houses. The set of buildings surrounding the second northernmost rear access of De Burgh Street are included in the Representative Sample.

Karuah Maisonettes

The Maisonettes are located on the east side of the avenue (Dickson) and west of Karuah Street. They comprise five, three-storey blocks, each containing six terrace (row) houses with a carport, laundry and entry. The Maisonettes are flat roofed structures with painted brick in off-white to the ground level and cement rendered brick, painted pale khaki, to the upper storeys. The windows and doors are white painted timber with aluminium screens over. Private courtyards have since been introduced around each house and are constructed of timber paling fences and exposed brick. The courtyard walls are unsympathetic to the original rendered construction and reduce the common open space between the groups resulting in a significant distortion of the original design intent of the Maisonettes. The block of maisonettes south of the Dooring Street and Karuah Street intersection is included in the Representative Sample as it is the best located to represent the spatial relationship with the Garden Flats and Three Storey Flats also included in the Representative Sample.

Garden Flats (Courtyard Houses)

These flats are located to the east of the Maisonettes on the east side of the avenue (Dickson). The flats comprise of sixteen single storey houses, of one and two bedroom types, linked with a garden and carport. The flats are cement rendered flat roofed structures painted khaki/cream, with timber eaves painted white. The window frames are timber painted white with aluminium flyscreens. The northernmost set of four Garden Flats is included in the Representative Sample to preserve the open space between them; they were also selected as the streets to the west, north and east will protect them from future development that may otherwise block solar access.

Three Storey Flats (Owen Flats)

These flats are located to the south of the pair housing on the west side of the avenue (Lyneham). The flats comprise of four, three-storey, blocks, each containing 12 flats, two stairs and one laundry per two flats. There are separate carports, drying yards and motor court. The flats are cement rendered flat roofed structures with timber door and window frames and aluminium sashes. The associated carports are of painted brick construction. The northernmost set of flats is included in the Representative Sample as it is best positioned to represent the spatial relationship with the Maisonettes and Garden Flats on the other side of Northbourne Avenue.

The original precinct, as represented in the Representative Sample, has been designed in the Post War International Style (1940-1960). The key attributes of Post-War International Style (1940-1960) the Representative Sample demonstrates include:

- cubiform overall shape;
- Expression of structural frame; and
- Large sheets of glass.
- Other indicators of the style represented within the Representative Sample include:
- Plain, smooth wall surfaces (all housing types);
- Contrasting non-rectangular shape (Bachelor flats);
- Overhang for shade (Owen Flats); and
- Cantilever elements (Maisonettes).

The Representative Sample is uniformly detailed and finished with a fine aggregate 'Tyrolean' render to the external walls, flat metal roofs and timber framed glazing with aluminium sashes. The interiors have plaster walls and ceilings

plastered with marble dust mixed with white cement.

Physical condition and integrity

An external inspection of the original precinct was conducted by ACT Heritage on 23 April 2014. Overall the Representative Sample remains relatively intact in terms of physical condition and integrity in relation to extant buildings and planning layout. The physical condition of the buildings and its landscape relating to general maintenance however is considered to be poor.

The integrity of the 'gateway' status of the Representative Sample remains somewhat evident in the Bachelor 'point blocks' at the northern end of the Representative Sample. The integrity of the overall original precinct, in respect to its 'gateway' status, has been diminished through expanding development and encroaching re-development, which both include higher density buildings and landscaping. The sense of entity, in relation to its original purpose to house relocated public servants, is no longer evident within the buildings.

The Representative Sample displays layers of maintenance work, such as repainting, most likely generated at tenancy turnover times, periodic inspections, accidental damage, vandalism, weather and the expected wear and tear. Maintenance appears to have been conducted in a sympathetic manner. Areas requiring further maintenance work include:

- the staining and cracking/chipping in the render (Bachelor Flats, Maisonettes, Courtyard Houses);
- flaking paint on window frames (Bachelor flats);
- removal of graffiti (Bachelor Flats, Owen Flats);
- flaking paint to roof capping (all);
- removal of ivy on external walls (pair house, maisonettes, Courtyard Houses);
- repainting of external render (Owen Flats, Maisonettes);
- large cracks through mortar and render (Maisonettes); and
- the landscaped common areas.
- Original design elements no longer extant include:
 - the pergola's linking and supplementing the Bachelor and Pair House buildings; and
 - the curved rendered wall to carports on the Pair Houses.
- Several additions have been made throughout the original Precinct negatively impacting the integrity of the architects' original design intent. These include:
 - the addition of bricked courtyard walls to the Pair Houses and Maisonettes;
 - the addition of paling fences to the Pair Houses and Maisonettes;
 - the enclosure of the internal shared open space to the Garden Flats.
- increased density to the original complementary plantings.

The original landscaping philosophy centred on loosely arranged groups of trees planted in open spaces between the housing groups remains evident throughout the original precinct, albeit to a greater density than originally planned. The trees appear to have matured well, achieving the desired effect of softening the buildings in the landscape.

SITE PLAN

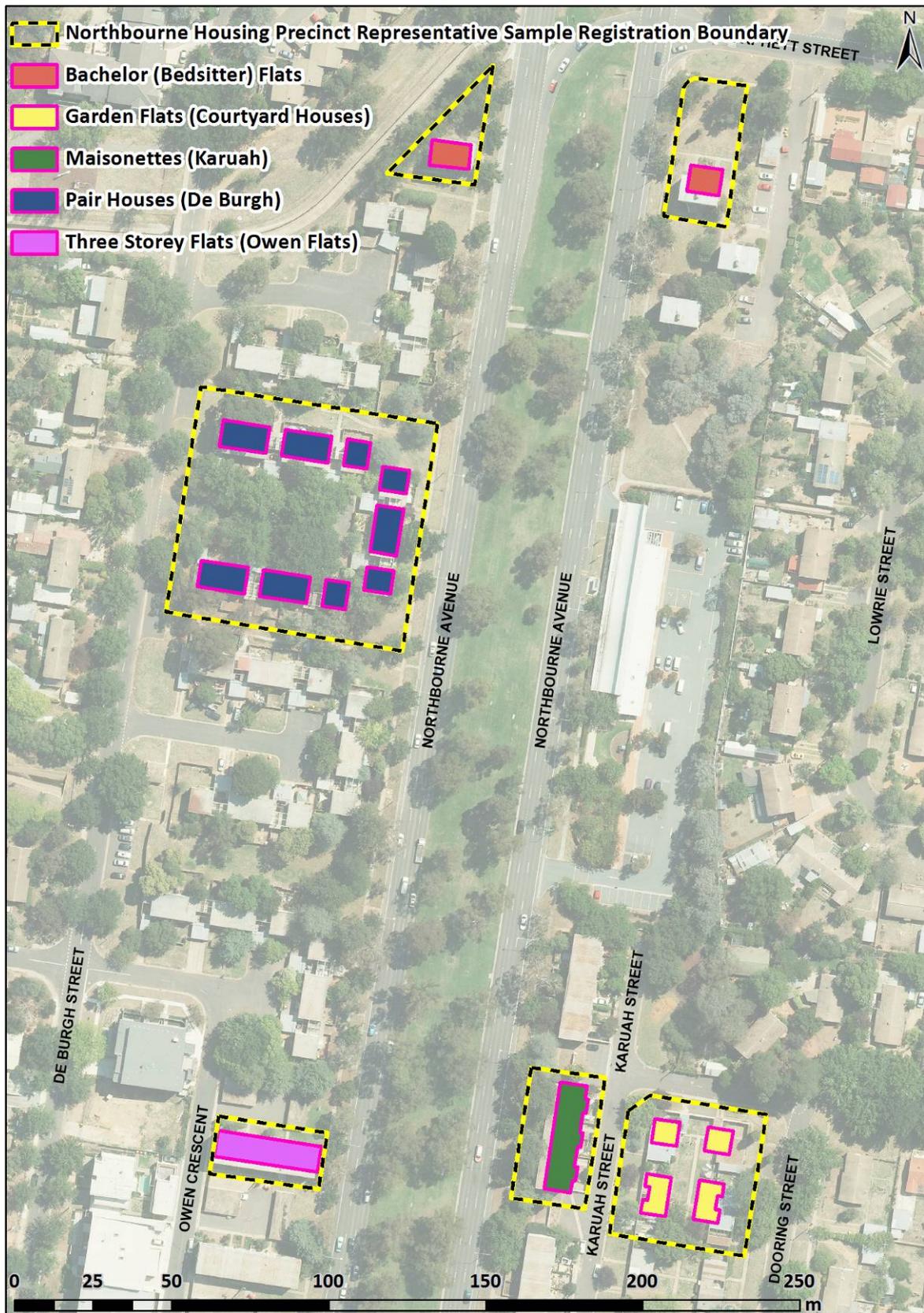


Figure 1 Northbourne Housing Precinct Representative Sample registration boundary

IMAGES

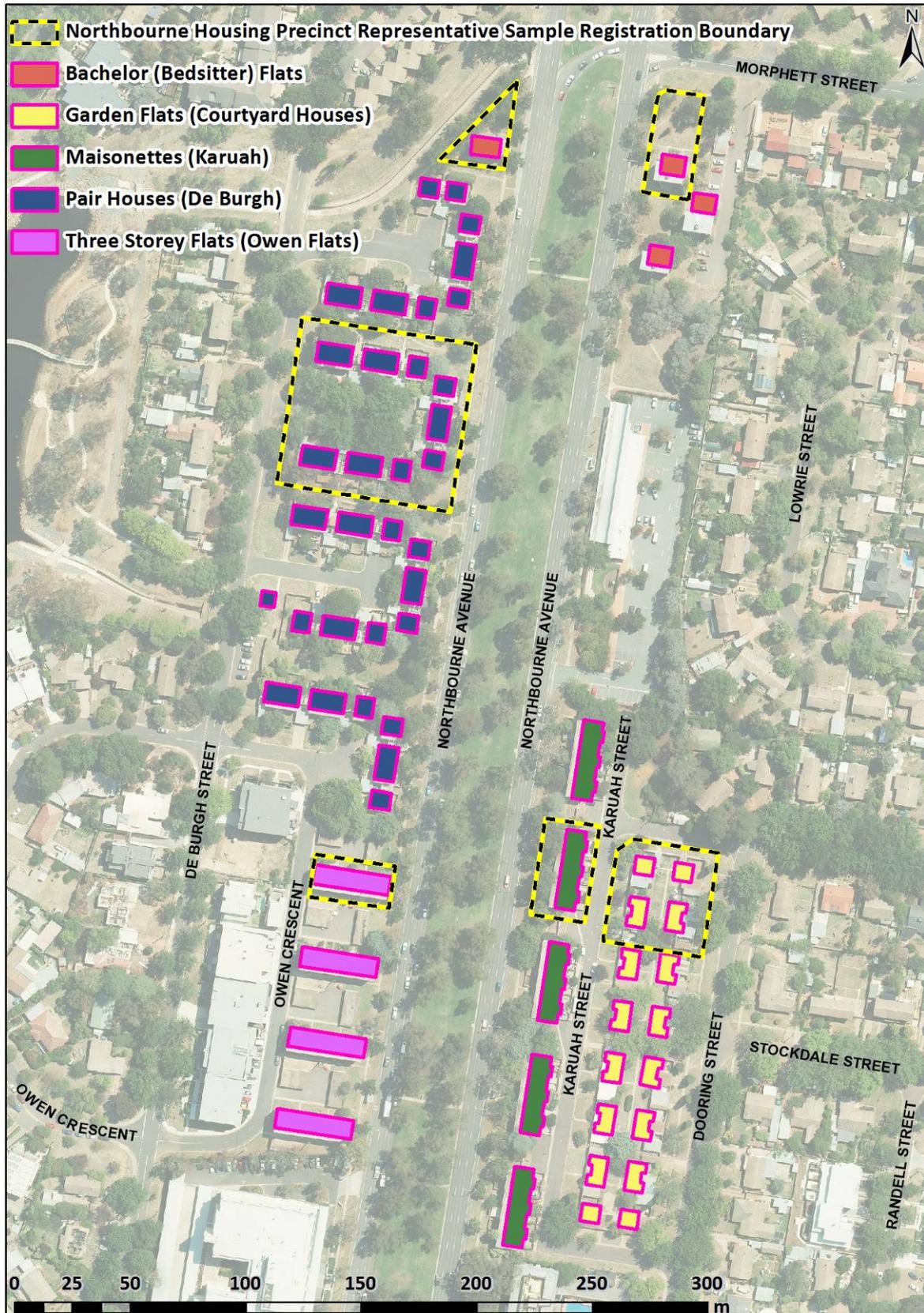


Figure 2 Extent of Northbourne Housing Precinct with the registration boundary



Figure 3 Northern most Bachelor Flat, Dickson (ACT Heritage 2014)



Figure 6 Bachelor Flats, Dickson (ACT Heritage 2014)



Figure 4 Three storey flats (Owen Flats), Lyneham (ACT Heritage 2014)



Figure 7 Courtyard houses, Dickson (ACT Heritage 2014)



Figure 5 Maisonettes, Dickson (ACT Heritage 2014)



Figure 8 Pair houses, Lyneham (ACT Heritage 2014)

BACKGROUND INFORMATION – NORTHBOURNE HOUSING PRECINCT REPRESENTATIVE SAMPLE



Figure 9 Pair Houses, Lyneham, 1961 (NAA A7973, INT614/7)



Figure 11 Pair Houses, Lyneham, 1961 (NAA 73, INT614/5)



Figure 10 Pair Houses, Lyneham, 1961 (NAA A7973, INT 614/3)



Figure 12 Pair Houses, Lyneham, 1965 (NLA nla.pic-nv3643918)



Figure 13 Northbourne Housing Precinct in its entirety, 1964 (Irving, 1999:4)

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