



Nominated IHPR Project Status Sheet

Project Name Wybalena Grove, File No. 04/15069

Preliminary Draft

Accepted by Council – Proceed to Draft Final

Draft Final Sent out for Stakeholder Comment [sent / /] [due / /]

Stakeholder Comments received

Draft Final Amended

Amended Final Sent out for Public Comment [sent / /] [due / /]

Public Comments received

Final Amended

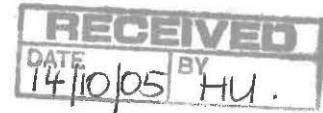
Final Citation submitted to Interim Heritage Places Register

Other Comments

Draft received 30/9/04
 comments sent 23/3/05



ACT Heritage Council



**AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY
PROPOSED ENTRY TO AN INTERIM HERITAGE PLACES REGISTER FOR:**

WYBALENA GROVE [also known as COOK-ARANDA], COOK, ACT.

For the purposes of s. 54 of the *Land [Planning and Environment] Act 1991*, this heritage assessment for Wybalena Grove [also known as Cook-Aranda], Cook, ACT, has been prepared by the ACT Heritage Council as the basis for its inclusion within an interim Heritage Places Register.

Public Submissions are sought on this proposed entry of Wybalena Grove [also known as Cook-Aranda] to an interim Heritage Places Register. All submissions should be addressed to:

**The Secretary
ACT Heritage Council
PO BOX 144
LYNEHAM ACT 2602**

Facsimile: [02] 6207 2200

Submissions must be received by close of business Friday.....

For enquiries related to this proposal please telephone **[02] 6207 7378**

LOCATION OF PLACE:

Block 1, Section 37, Cook, ACT consisting of a residential complex of 105 dwelling units set in 30 acres of bushland bounded by Lyttleton Crescent and Bindubi Streets, Cook, Canberra, including landscape, footpaths and road system known as Wybalena Grove and also known as Cook-Aranda, refer **Figure 1: Site Plan** below.

FEATURES INTRINSIC TO THE HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PLACE

The features intrinsic to the heritage significance of Wybalena Grove and which require conservation comprise:

- the natural bushland setting and its enhancement, firstly by development of an Australian native landscape and site planning for an urban medium density housing development within the setting, and secondly the relationship of dwellings spaces to that landscape setting [the original natural bushland areas include the dry sclerophyll forest at the centre of the development, the dense woodland at the north western corner, the open woodland along the western boundary and the native grassland in the south east corner].
- the variation in dwelling sizes [one, two, three or four bedrooms], designed to accommodate diverse lifestyle requirements, and the design of one, two, three or four split levels.
- the architecture of the dwellings, which is in the Sydney Regional style, and the architectural features of the multiple unit housing [constructed of brick, tile and timber to create a natural aesthetic].

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Wybalena Grove is significant as an urban medium density housing development situated within a natural bushland setting which, under the auspices of the NCDC, was procured through communal and co-operative processes for the purpose of demonstrating a socially responsible residential alternative and environmentally sensitive form of housing. The natural bushland setting and the introduced native landscape, the selection of materials [dark brick, tile and timbers] and the building forms provide a special natural aesthetic response of unique qualities for a medium density housing project. The place is architecturally significant as demonstrative of the early work of the architect Michael Dysart, and socially significant as an early co-operative project in Canberra and within Australia as a whole.

TBC → does this mean additional clarification required.

SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR THE CONSERVATION OF WYBALENA GROVE

In accordance with s.54 of the *Land [Planning and Environment] Act 1991*, the following specific requirements are identified as essential to the conservation of the heritage significance of the place.

GUIDING CONSERVATION OBJECTIVE

Wybalena Grove and its setting are to be conserved and maintained in a manner consistent with its heritage significance.

CONSERVATION OBJECTIVE 1

Provide adequate conservation management planning in accordance with the Wybalena Grove Co-operative Management Committee's guidelines

Specific Requirements for Conservation Objective 1

- A conservation management plan [CMP] **should** be developed for the place to guide its conservation and future use.
- Any works necessary prior to the development of a CMP that may potentially impact on significant fabric **shall** be guided by professional conservation advice;
- No changes of use necessitating substantial changes to the place, or other substantial works affecting fabric, other than reversible stabilisation works, **shall** be permitted before the preparation of a CMP, after which all works and uses should be in accordance with the CMP.
- Maintenance **shall** be as defined in the Australia ICOMOS Burra Charter [as annotated 1999] and **shall** not involve change to significant fabric. Maintenance **shall** be continued regardless of the status of the CMP.
- Following the preparation of a CMP, identified essential conservation works **should** be implemented. The requirements determined within the CMP may further refine the Specific Requirements in the Interim Heritage Places Register.

CONSERVATION OBJECTIVE 2.

Conserve the Significant components of Wybalena Grove by preventing demolition of the existing buildings

Specific Requirements for Conservation Objective 2

- The original Wybalena Grove buildings **shall** be conserved. Maintenance **shall** retain as much original fabric as possible and where replacement is required, replace same with same.
- The demolition of features intrinsic to the significance **shall** not be permitted except in exceptional circumstances, such as the building is so structurally unsound as to be beyond reasonable economic repair or that the existing condition of the building poses a significant health or safety risk that is beyond reasonable economic repair. Such applications must include a professional structural or health assessment in support of demolition.
- Where standard conservation options are found not be feasible and prudent for a place or element, demolition or removal of significant material **shall** be limited to minimum extent necessary, and standard conservation principles will be applied to the maximum extent possible. All fabric to be removed or modified **shall** be professionally recorded and the records lodged with and responsibly archived by Environment ACT.

CONSERVATION OBJECTIVE 3

Retain the historical form and architectural character of the existing Wybalena Grove buildings and landscape

Specific Requirements for Conservation Objective 3

- No new development [except that covered under **Conservation Objective 1**] **shall** involve the loss, removal or damage to any features intrinsic to the significance of the place;
- Any new development **shall** fully protect features intrinsic to the significance of the place;

- Additions to the existing buildings are not permitted unless the need can be clearly demonstrated;
- Alterations and additions to existing buildings shall match the existing or original details, materials, finishes for all key elements including roofing and ridge capping, gutters and down-pipes, fascia and eaves detail, wall finishes and details, window types, materials and sill details and door treatment. However it need not be identical in every detail provided essential details match and the character is maintained;
- All additions to buildings shall be designed to minimise disturbance to the principal form of the existing building: and to ensure that the existing building remains the dominant built form;
- Existing structures shall not be relocated unless it can be demonstrated that the building was originally in the proposed location or if relocation will enable items of greater significance to be recovered, and
- Original fabric shall be conserved insitu. Any disturbance to the building fabric to be recorded before any action occurs.

CONSERVATION OBJECTIVE 4

Conserve the natural bushland and landscape setting of Wybalena Grove

Specific Requirements for Conservation Objective 4

A Conservation Management Plan **should** be developed for the natural bushland and designed landscape settings of Wybalena Grove.

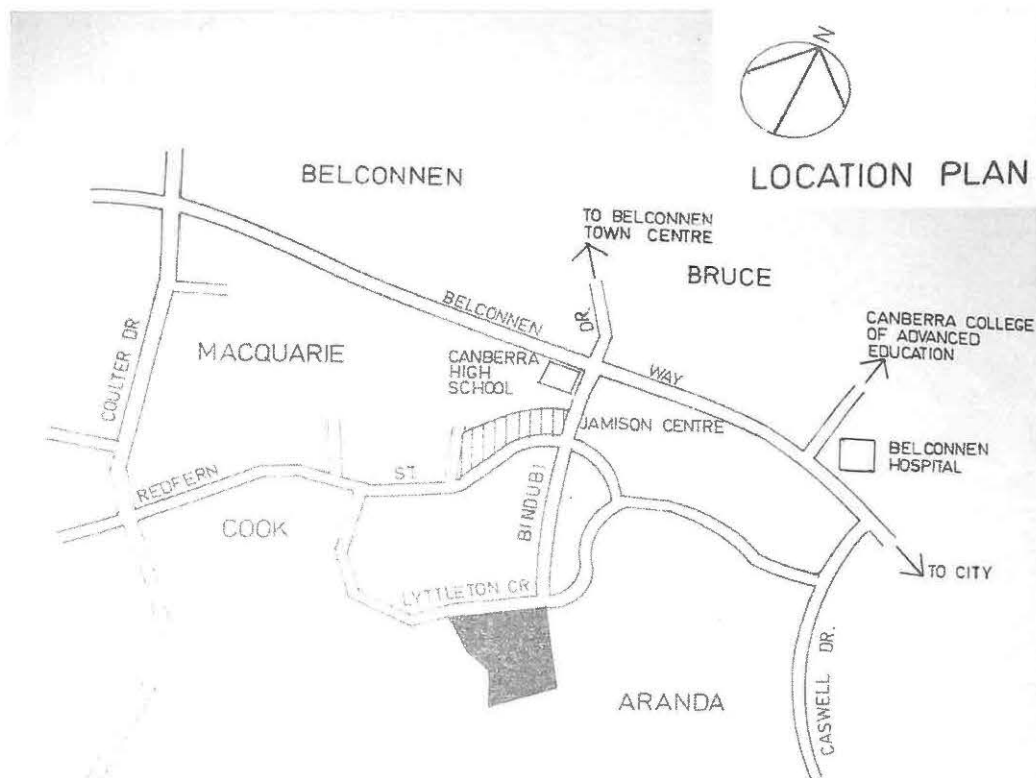


Figure 1: Location plan Cook Aranda Community Housing Co-operative Site for Wybalena Grove , Brochure for Official Opening. 1977.

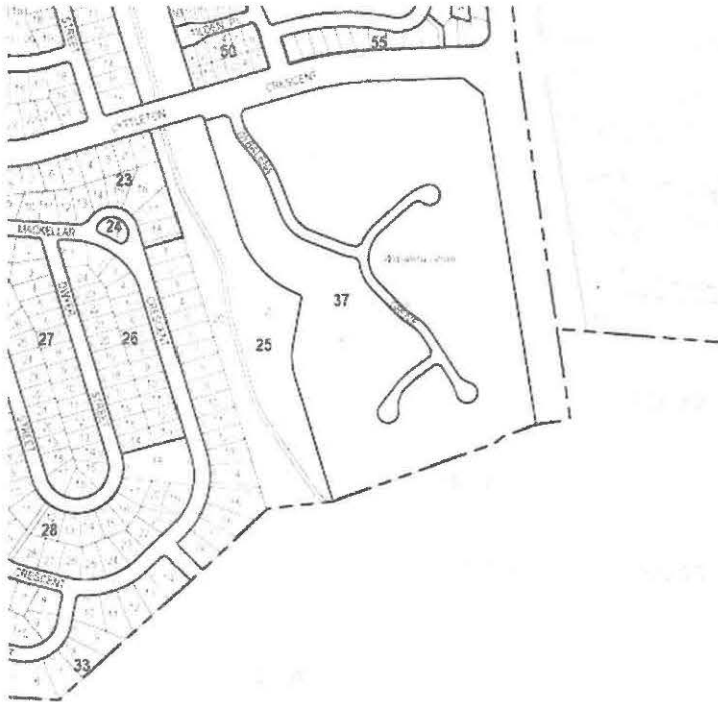


Figure 2: Site plan : Wybalena Grove , Canberra by Suburb. 2004.



Figure 3: Site Plan of the CACHS Site in the Brochure for Wybalena Grove , Brochure for Official Opening. 1977.

ATTACHMENT A

WYBALENA GROVE

A1 Description of Place

The residential complex known as Wybalena Grove, Cook [formerly known as the Cook-Aranda Housing Co-operative], consists of 105 residential units situated on 13 hectares [32 acres] of bush-land. The bush-land forms the south-eastern edge of Belconnen and is linked to the Black Mountain Reserve by the Aranda Bushland reserve. The land slopes to the north-west.

The dwellings were sited within an existing bushland setting and further planting of Australian natives within the public areas have reinforced the 'naturalness' of the setting. The dwellings are 'clustered' in five groups of between 20 and 25 dwelling units. There are several detached dwellings, but generally dwellings are arranged in groups of two or three and placed to form parallel rows of terraces. The 'clusters' are serviced by car courts [comprising carports and visitor car park spaces]. Pedestrian access to the dwellings from these car courts is by landscaped access pathways which also connect to a bus-stop on Lyttleton Crescent with direct access to Belconnen Town Centre and Civic. These pedestrian access ways also provide access for emergency service and maintenance vehicles. Thirty of the units have adjacent carports. The complex has two communal tennis courts, two children's playgrounds, barbecues and seating areas, letter boxes, garbage collection areas, village green and forest zone.

no reference to site plan

The distinctive aesthetic appearance of the buildings is formed by steeply pitched roofs and triangular shaped wing walls, with the external building materials of brick, timber and tile used in their natural state. This architecture is of the Sydney Regional style of the 1970s [which was often colloquially referred to as the 'nuts and berries style'], a distinctly Australian aesthetic which was primarily a local architectural response to the International Brutalist approach to architecture. The 10 different designs for dwellings range in size from a 6.5 square one-bedroom dwelling to a 19.5 square five-bedroom dwelling. Spaces within the dwellings are arranged on one, two, three or four levels, the latter depending on the upper level being provided with vaulted rather than flat ceilings. The main aspect of the dwellings takes advantage of the north western orientation of the site and the natural landscape setting. Public access to the dwelling units is from the south-eastern side of each dwelling, refer typical plan **Figure 1 Appendix A** below.

The dwellings are provided with external spaces with a limited, controlled range of options for enclosing courtyards, enhancing the perception of buildings situated in a natural landscape setting. The privacy of the external spaces is enhanced both by the stepping back of one dwelling from another and the triangular projecting wing walls of each dwelling which extend the roof line from the eaves to the ground.

There are several areas of largely untouched natural bush-land which include: the dry sclerophyll forest at the centre of the development, the dense woodland to the north-west and adjacent to Lyttleton Crescent, the open woodland to the west adjacent to the government parkland and the grassland to the south-east. The landscape of the shared-communal areas, including the access ways to the five dwelling 'clusters', utilising Australian native plants, further enhances the perception that Wybalena Grove exists within a natural bush-land setting. Areas of Kangaroo grass [*Themeda australis*] have been regenerated throughout the complex, particularly in front of the northern cluster [Cluster A].

A2 Status of Wybalena Grove at assessment date

- Nominated for inclusion on the ACT Interim Heritage Places Register
- Nominated for inclusion on the RAI A Register of Significant Twentieth Century Architecture

A3 Historical Background

The Co-operative

The idea of a communal co-operative approach to medium density housing was supported and encouraged by the National Capital Development Commission [NCDC] in the early 1970s. At this time this phenomenon was being explored internationally as well as nationally. The newly elected Federal Labor Party established the Department of Urban and Regional Development [DURD] which explored ways to increase and diversify the provision of more socially equitable housing. Hugh Stretton's *Ideas for Australian Cities* [1970] placed many of these ideas into the Australian context. The following specific concerns helped to bring these phenomena into a reality in the ACT;

- the oil crisis of 1972 and the requirement for the NCDC to encourage housing choices less dependent on the car than single suburban dwellings;
- the desire to provide the opportunity for the development of medium density housing projects which could involve prospective residents in the design and development process from the outset as a co-operative and communal venture; and
- the desire to demonstrate that medium density urban housing could be developed with an overall aesthetic that was at one with a natural Australian landscape.

The coincidence of there being several groups of people willing to embrace the NCDC's ideas resulted in the formation of a group to develop a site at Kambah, Tuggeranong, which became known as 'Urambi' [1974] and a second group originally known as 'MALA' [an Aboriginal word for community] which established itself with a broad range of radical social goals including the provision of an alternative communal form of housing. This group subsequently incorporated itself as the Cook-Aranda Housing Co-operative in March 1975 when the land being made available to them by the Department of Territories was considerably larger than necessary for their immediate needs. The development now known as Wybalena Grove [1974-7] is the result. The first 63 houses [stage one] were officially opened on Friday 11 February 1977 at 4.15pm by the Minister for the Capital Territory, Mr Staley. A further 42 houses were completed within 12 months. Many of the original radical social ideals were not attained, not least because of cost increases, however both Urambi and Wybalena Grove are significant ACT outcomes of this rare [but not unique] communal and co-operative approach to development.

The original 'MALA' group of people involved with developing Wybalena Grove were primarily associated through the Centre for Continuing Education at ANU [Chris Duke]. The Cook-Aranda Co-operative Housing Society [CACHS] embraced the concerns and ideas of the NCDC, and while many were involved across a broad spectrum of the activities of the development process, CACHS Manager Mr Oleh Harasymiw became the primary spokesperson for the community when liaising between the NCDC and the architect, Michael Dysart of Sydney.

The Landscape

The development of the landscape involved the co-operative community under a resident garden committee chairperson. Subsequently, the garden committee included resident landscape professionals assisted by a landscape consultant. Several of these people had associations with the Landscape Architecture course at the School of Environmental Design, Canberra College of Advanced Education [now University of Canberra]. This Landscape Architecture course was the first undergraduate professional degree course in Australia.

The land on which this complex stands was originally part of the bushland which forms the southern edge of Aranda, now known as 'Aranda Bushland'. The land was separated from the Aranda Bushland by the later construction of Bindubi Street. The development was constructed in two main stages.

The Buildings & the Architect

The Sydney architect Michael Dysart was commissioned to design both the Urambi and Wybalena developments in 1974. Urambi is an excellent example of the late twentieth century Sydney regional style of architecture. Natural materials, dark roof tiles and split-level house planning that follows the slope of the site around the brow of a small hill creates a relaxed and informal development in a native landscape setting. The Sydney regional style Swinger Hill [Ian Mackay & Partners] Stage 1 and 2 cluster housing of Swinger Hill is a similar development to Urambi, albeit on a smaller area of land with a higher density per acre. Michael Dysart occupies a prominent position in Australian architecture due to his work within the 'Sydney style' and his public buildings undertaken for the NSW Government Architects Branch of the Department of Public Works.

Architect: Michael Dysart

Building Contractors: Whiteholme Pty Ltd [stage one: 63 dwellings and stage two: 42 dwellings].

Civil Engineers: R D Gossip Pty Ltd.

Service Engineers: Scott and Furphy Pty Ltd.

Structural Engineers: Bond James Laron Pty Ltd

Electrical: Barry Webb and Assoc.

Site Servicing Contractors – Civil: Guideline Pty Ltd & **Electrical:** Chas Cook Pty Ltd

A4 Documentary References

- Abbott Tout Creer & Wilkinson: Cook-Aranda Co-operative Housing Society Limited, registered 24 March 1975.
- ACT Building Control BEPCON 042505/01 COOK-37-0 MF FE Parts 1-3 Units Plans No 116 B-Section 37 Registered Book Volume 617 Folio 19 Deposited Plan No 4208 Registered 30 August 1976 [File p 76].
- Microfilm roll 19 "28-4-1998 11:04:18 AM Carol Coulton."
- *Canberra Times* Tuesday 20 January 1976; Announcement of commencement of work on the \$3.5m Cook-Aranda Housing Co-operative project [File p. 15].
- R. D. Gossip Consulting Engineer [File p. 18]
- 28 April 1976 B.J.Pettitt [Whiteholme Pty Ltd] approval granted for construction of 63 one and two storey residential units for a contract price [exc. land] of \$1,450,000 [60,700 sq. ft.] [file p. 20.]
- ACT Memorandum of Transfer of Units Lease: Units Plan No 116 Vol 645 signed 17 August 1976: Form 5: Real Property [Unit Titles Ordinance for Units Plan No 116 Section 37 Division of COOK [File pages 40-43] and Form 4: Schedule of

Provisions, Covenants and Conditions subject to which lease units are held [single private dwellings [File Pages 44-50]. Schedule of Unit Entitlements [1-105] [File p. 72].

- CACHS: Cook-Aranda Cooperative Housing Society Ltd; publicity brochure [private copy] and invitation to official opening Feb 1977 and information pamphlet [private copies].
- *Canberra Times*: Saturday 12 February 1977 p. 8; advertisement for Wybalena Grove. Monday 15 February 1977 p. 11; Staley Opens Co-operative Plan Houses.
- Correspondence: To CACHS 5th April 1977 private indicating cost estimate of \$51,000 including carports had risen to sum in excess of \$59,000
- Group A: Elevations Nos 18-22: CACHS-Cook Aranda Co-operative Housing Society prepared by Michael Dysart then of 105 George Street, Sydney Cove. tel 241 2157 signed off by the Department of Territory 23 Sept, 12 and 24 December 1975;
- www.canberrahouse.com.au Canberra Houses website.

A5. ANALYSIS AGAINST THE CRITERIA SPECIFIED IN SCHEDULE 2 OF THE LAND [PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT] ACT 1991:

[i] A place which demonstrates a high degree of technical and/or creative achievement, by showing qualities of innovation or departure or representing a new achievement of its time;

Wybalena Grove demonstrates a high degree of creative achievement by providing the first ACT example of a medium density urban housing situated within an existing natural bushland setting. The success of Wybalena development resides in its fine architectural and planning qualities, and its homogeneous siting within the native woodlands of the Black mountain slopes. The Urambi development preceded Wybalena, and in a sense Urambi was the 'parent' project. The co-operative philosophy embodied in Urambi and Wybalena was a new achievement for its time and had its genesis in the Castlecrag co-operative of the late 1920s led by Marion Mahony & Walter Burley Griffin.

[ii] A place which exhibits outstanding design or aesthetic qualities valued by the community or a cultural group;

As an example of the Sydney Regional style of architecture, Wybalena Grove provides the first example of the integration of medium density housing within an existing bush-land location within the ACT. The inner suburbs of Belconnen, specifically Aranda, were developed without extensive removal of existing trees. Wybalena Grove extended this approach geographically into the adjacent suburb of Cook, with a medium density housing development that produced a new urban aesthetic. The place's association with architect Michael Dysart is also of significance.

[iii] A place which demonstrates a distinct way of life, taste, tradition, religion, land use, custom, process, design or function which is no longer practised, is in danger of being lost, or is of exceptional interest;

The uniqueness of the Wybalena Grove development is supported by the communal and co-operative processes and methods of its procurement. The establishment of a housing co-operative early in the 1970s was of great significance in a community/social sense.

[iv] A place which is highly valued by the community or a cultural group for reasons of strong or special religious, spiritual, cultural, educational or social associations;

The creation of the Wybalena housing co-operative was essentially a societally based phenomenon, and involved a large section of the Canberra community at the time. The place is highly valued by the community and those who created the co-operative for reasons of strong community and social associations.

[v] A place which is the only known or only comparatively intact example of its type;

Wybalena Grove is significant as the only known example in the ACT of a medium density urban housing development situated in a natural bushland setting which includes areas of sclerophyll forest, dense and open woodlands and natural grassland.

[vi] A place which is a notable example of a class of natural or cultural places or landscapes and which demonstrates the principal characteristics of that class;

This criterion is not represented.

[vii] A place which has strong or special associations with a person, group, event, development or cultural phase which played a significant part in local or national history;

Wybalena Grove provides a visual record of the active appreciation of the aesthetic of the natural Australian bush as an urban landscape setting. This aesthetic flourished in the late 1960s and early 1970s. The design principles of Wybalena Grove embrace and enhance the aesthetic, creating a unique lifestyle sustained by a native bushland landscape.

[viii] A place which represents the evolution of a natural landscape, including significant geological features, landforms, biota or natural processes;

This criterion is not represented.

[ix] A place which is a significant habitat or locality for the life cycle of native species; for rare, endangered or uncommon species; for species at the limits of their natural range; or for district occurrences of species;

This criterion is not represented.

[x] A place which exhibits unusual richness, diversity or significant transitions of flora, fauna or natural landscapes and their elements; or

This criterion is not represented.

[xi] A place which demonstrates a likelihood of providing information which will contribute significantly to a wider understanding of natural or cultural history, by virtue of its use as a research site, teaching site, type locality or benchmark site.

Wybalena Grove provides a record of the communal and co-operative process for the procurement of private housing. Wybalena Grove was supported by Federal Government through the agency of the National Capital Development Commission,

and is a rare and pivotal example of government/private co-operation in the creation of co-operative housing in Australia.

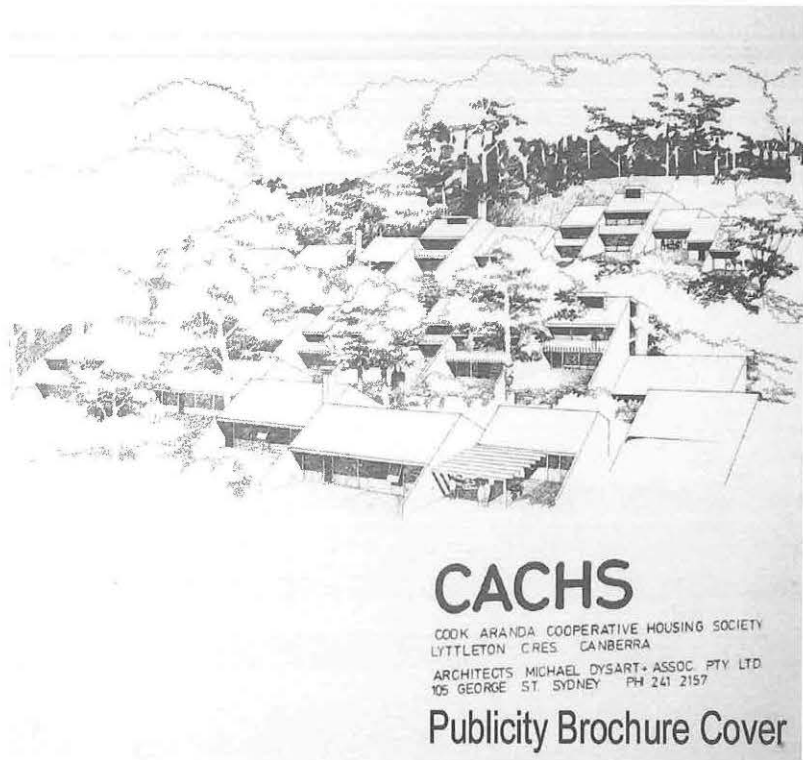


Figure 1: Cover of the CACHS Site Brochure for Wybalena Grove ,
Brochure for Official Opening, 1977.

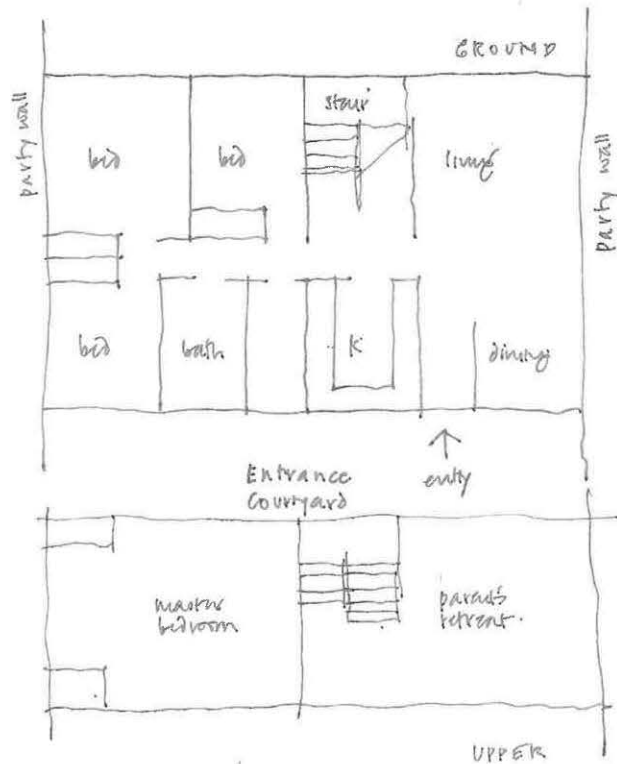


Figure 2: Typical ground & upper plan of a Wybalena grove
residence.



Figure 3: View from the access path of the private outdoor space to the north west façade of a three level dwelling. DD 2004.



Figure 4: View from the access path to typical dwellings. Note the entry courtyard and mature landscape. DD 2004.



Figure 5: View to the 'village green' looking south to typical dwellings. DD 2004.



Figure 6: View to a common car park for residents and guests with carports for residents. DD 2004.

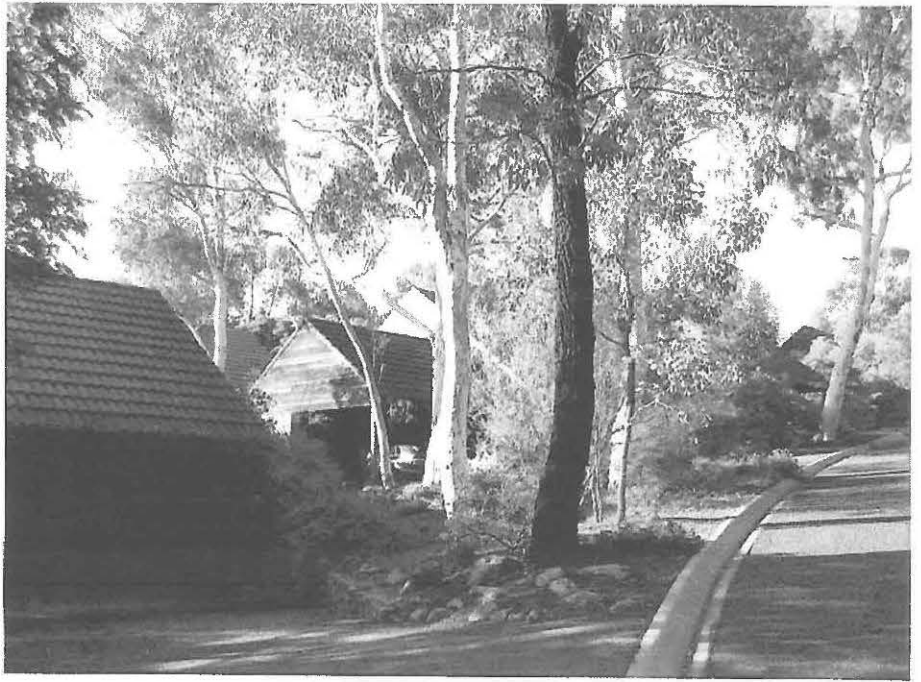


Figure 7: View to access and carports for residents. DD 2004



Figure 8: Bushland Wybalena grove.

? consider terminating @ draft stage
as it will take considerable effort
on Nield's part to finish off.

Comments have basically
been addressed (basic
being the operative word!)

T.R.

Accept as draft when
plans etc are provided.

features intrinsic:

- dot point 1. how would you protect this? is it really an intrinsic feature?

How

How would you develop a CMP for a place that is owned by so many people? Who will develop it?

Needs plans + photographs. before accepted as draft