

# **SNAPSHOT OF WHY HABERFIELD IS A GARDEN SUBURB**

## **Haberfield Heritage Conservation Area.**

Haberfield's is located between Hawthorne Canal, Parramatta Road, Dobroyd Canal and the Parramatta River foreshore.

Haberfield was developed in the early 1900s as a "Garden Suburb" shown in its layout in **Figure 1** below. This coincided with the "Garden City" movement promoted by Ebenezer Howard in England and this also resulted in "Garden Suburb" town planning movements happening throughout the world.

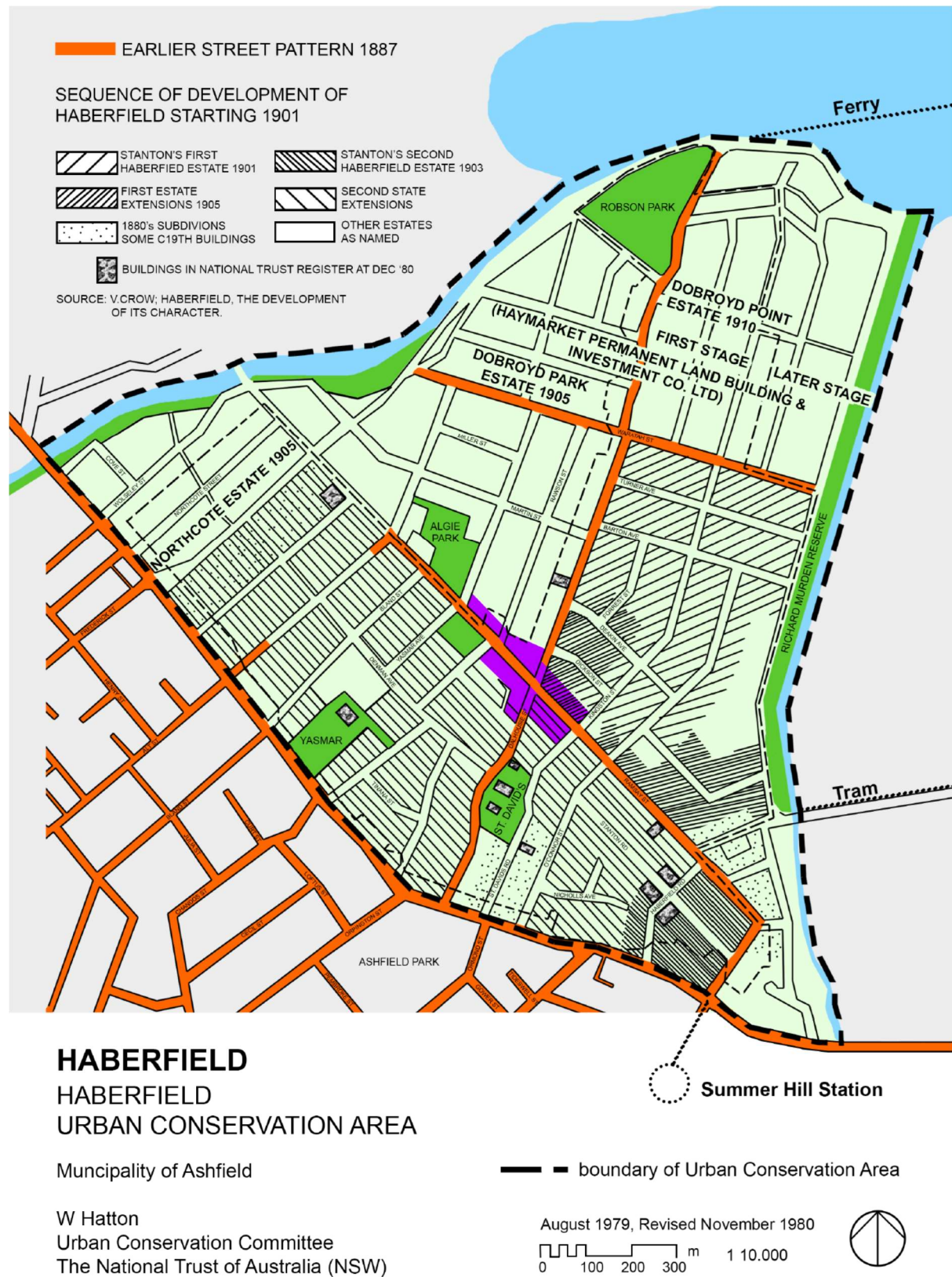
The developer of Haberfield was Richard Stanton. He explained his intentions for Haberfield's town planning to a Royal Commission in 1915. His intention was to have a self contained suburban place providing a new town planning prototype for a healthy living environment for its residents. This was achieved by having separate residential areas for mostly detached houses, with larger wide house lots to provide a garden setting for free standing houses in combination with wide tree lined streets providing a garden setting. There would be also separate areas for an accessible central town centre which would be publess and safer for people for social reasons at the time, churches, parks and schools. The style and location of buildings and their landscaped gardens on tree lined streets created a suburb dense with green streetscapes and character. Haberfield had access by trams and ferry, with parts of Haberfield also being within walking distance of the Summer Hill Station, thus providing access to employment and business areas in Sydney. A new utilities system for underground sewerage drainage addressed critical health issues at that time. There were covenants on the land titles controlling the design of houses, with detailed designs for houses and town centre buildings under the careful control of Stanton's architect to achieve a harmonious built environment responding to its garden setting. Existing grand landmark buildings contributed to the Haberfield's character such as the Gothic inspired St David's Protestant church and spire, also the large YASMAR site from the middle 1880s off Parramatta Road still in existence with its middle 1800s house, large gardens and grand entrance gates at Parramatta Road.

Around 1887 Ramsay Street, Dalhousie Street, Wattle Street were within what was then called "Ramsay's Bush" consisting of a largely uninhabited area of virgin bushland. Beginning in 1901, it was the strict application of the above "Garden Suburb" town planning principles for the new Haberfield that was extraordinary for the time.

The spatial morphology (streets, buildings, open space) of Haberfield has remained intact (except for the recent severe Westconnex interventions to part of the west side). This conservation is due to local community heritage conservation group initiatives and their strong advocacy beginning in the 1970s, the assistance of the National Trust and the Haberfield Association. Also the support of former Ashfield Council with the protection of a large part of the existing Haberfield Conservation eventuating in the Ashfield Local Environmental Plan 1985. The place has been very carefully managed since 1985 by the former Ashfield Council, with unique at the time 1995 Development Control Plan which has detailed written building design controls in conjunction with diagrams. In addition since the 1980s a dedicated specialist architect heritage adviser employed to give design guidance for property owners. In 1995 the entire Haberfield suburb became a Heritage Conservation Area in the Ashfield LEP 1985 with specialist tailored LEP clauses added for its protection.

Today Haberfield is a unique large (2.54 sq km) intact town planning example of the Garden Suburb in the NSW and Australian context providing an environmentally healthy living place for people. Haberfield is a reminder that spatial town planning practise is important, a place at that time providing a setting for a sustainable environment with plentiful open space for gardens and trees, clean air, design quality, streetscape, townscape, community character and liveability.

**Figure 1- Haberfield's Town Planning layout**



**More information can be found at:**

“Haberfield Conservation Study 1988”, Robert Moore and Associates for Ashfield Municipal Council. Provides a detailed history, includes statements from Richard Stanton to the Royal Commission 1915 on his intentions for Haberfield, commentary on the Garden Suburb Principles, town plan diagram for Haberfield by the National Trust and provides Haberfield’s Statement of Significance. Refer to the Your Say document library to view.

“Haberfield Distinctly Australian”, Vincent Crow 1997. Provides a historical overview beginning in the early 1800s and from the “Ramsay era” through to events leading to the listing of Haberfield in the Ashfield LEP 1985 including the involvement of local community groups.

“Ashfield Speed the Plough, Sheena and Robert Coupe”, 1988. Ashfield Council. Chapter 8- Haberfield Garden Suburb.

“Ashfield at Federation, Ashfield and District Historical Society”, 2001. Ashfield Council. Includes references to Haberfield.

“Paradise Planned - The Garden Suburb and Modern City 2013” - Robert AM Stern, David Fisherman and Jacob Tillove. Provides spatial definitions and comparative examples of the Garden Suburb throughout numerous countries in the world and in Australia. Provides a detailed history and records complete with town planning diagrams and photos of resulting Garden Suburbs places still in use today.

The above documents are held in the Ashfield Library at 260 Liverpool Road Ashfield.

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