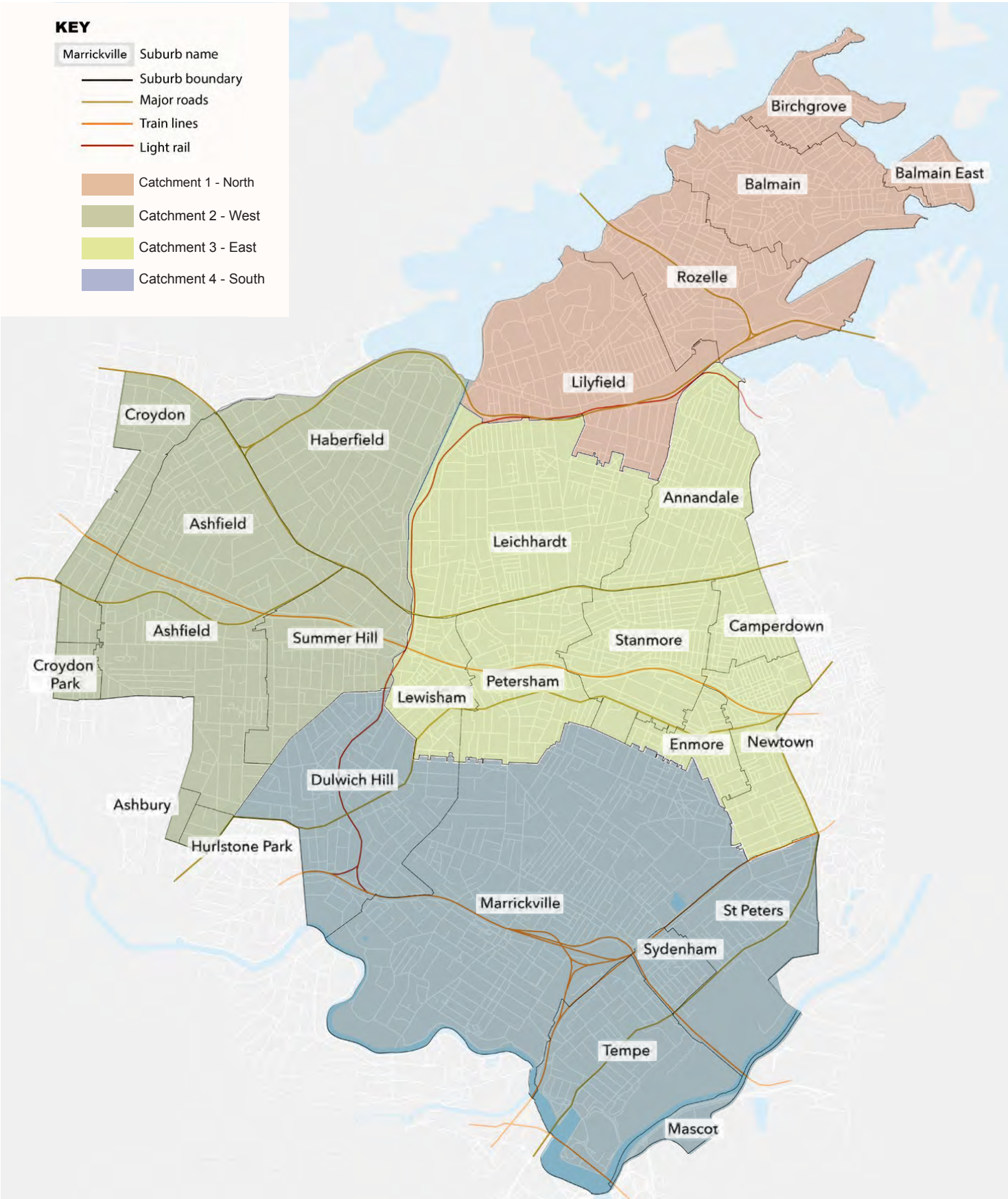




Mural on Canoe Club building along Cooks River. Photography by Welsh + Major Architects.



Inner West Council area and suburbs. Recreation Needs study - A Healthier Inner West.

Demographics

Overview

This section outlines the current community profile of Marrickville using data from the 2021 ABS Census from Profile i.d. as well as future projections outlined in Recreation Needs Study - A Healthier Inner West, Updated 2021 (Cred Consulting). This study breaks down the Inner West area into 4 catchment areas. Marrickville falls into catchment 4.

The population of Marrickville and the area within its catchment is characterised by higher levels of relative social disadvantage, particularly in Marrickville South which has the lowest score Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA) in the LGA, highest levels of youth disengagement, highest number of households without internet and high levels of social housing. The catchment has the second highest forecast residential growth of all the catchments and is also facing challenges of loss of industrial and creative spaces to residential renewal and gentrification.

Population growth

In 2021, the estimated resident population of the Inner West was 183 772 people. The population decreased by 7422 people or 3.8% between 2016 and 2021. The growth rate of Greater Sydney during this period was 7.8%. Marrickville has experienced a steady population between 2016-2021.

Despite this short term dip, Inner West Council estimates significant population growth by 2036.

Open space provision

The Inner West has an estimated 321.6 hectares a of open space which equates to 9.1% of the total land area.

In 2016 the provision of open space per person was 16.4m². To further analyse this data, the LGA was broken down into 4 catchment areas. Balmain falls into catchment 1, which has the highest provision of open space per person. In 2016 Catchment 4 had a provision of open space per person of 20.7m² with an estimated 16.9m² by 2036.

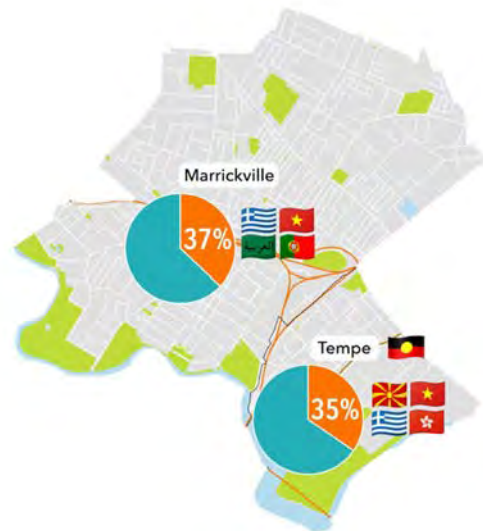


KEY

Icons show suburbs with a proportion above the LGA average or high number of:

- Babies and children (0 - 12yrs) (over 12.9% or over 1,000 people)
- Young people (12 - 24yrs) (over 13.1% or over 1,000 people)
- Older people (65yrs +) (over 12.2% or over 1,000 people)
- People with disability (over 4.5% or over 500 people)

01 Ashfield - Age + disability profile. Recreation Needs Study - A Healthier Inner West.



KEY

- % speaking English at home
- % speaking a language other than English at home
- >1.5 % Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population

Languages spoken by more than 2% of the population:

- Arabic
- Cantonese
- Greek
- Italian
- Macedonian
- Mandarin
- Nepali
- Portuguese
- Spanish
- Tagalog
- Vietnamese

*In Leichhardt, while the proportion of people speaking a language other than English at home is relatively low, the number of speakers is very high: >2,000

02 Ashfield - Cultural profile. Recreation Needs Study - A Healthier Inner West.



KEY

Median weekly household income:

- \$1,500 - \$1,749
- \$1,750 - \$1,999
- \$2,000 - \$2,499
- \$2,500 - \$2,999
- > \$3,000

% of households with cars:

- Under 75%
- 75% - 80%
- 80% - 85%
- 85% - 90%
- Over 90%

Dominant dwelling type:

- Low density
- Medium density
- High density

03 Ashfield - Density, income + housing profile. Recreation Needs Study - A Healthier Inner West.

Demographics

Age + disability profile

Spaces that are inclusive of all age groups, accessible and flexible should be prioritised to cater for current and future population needs.

Marrickville has an above average proportion of babies and children (0-12yrs), young people (12-24yrs) and older people (65+yrs). Marrickville has the third highest rate of people reporting a need for assistance at 6.5%.

Tempe also has an above average proportion of babies and children (0-12yrs), young people (12-24yrs) and people reporting a need for assistance.

Cultural Profile

Marrickville, and its neighbouring suburbs are culturally diverse. Marrickville has a high proportion of people who speak a language other than English at home, identified as 37% of the population. The primary languages identified included Greek, Vietnamese, Arabic and Portuguese.

35% of the Croydon population also identify as speaking a non-English language at home, speaking primarily Macedonian, Greek, Vietnamese and Cantonese.

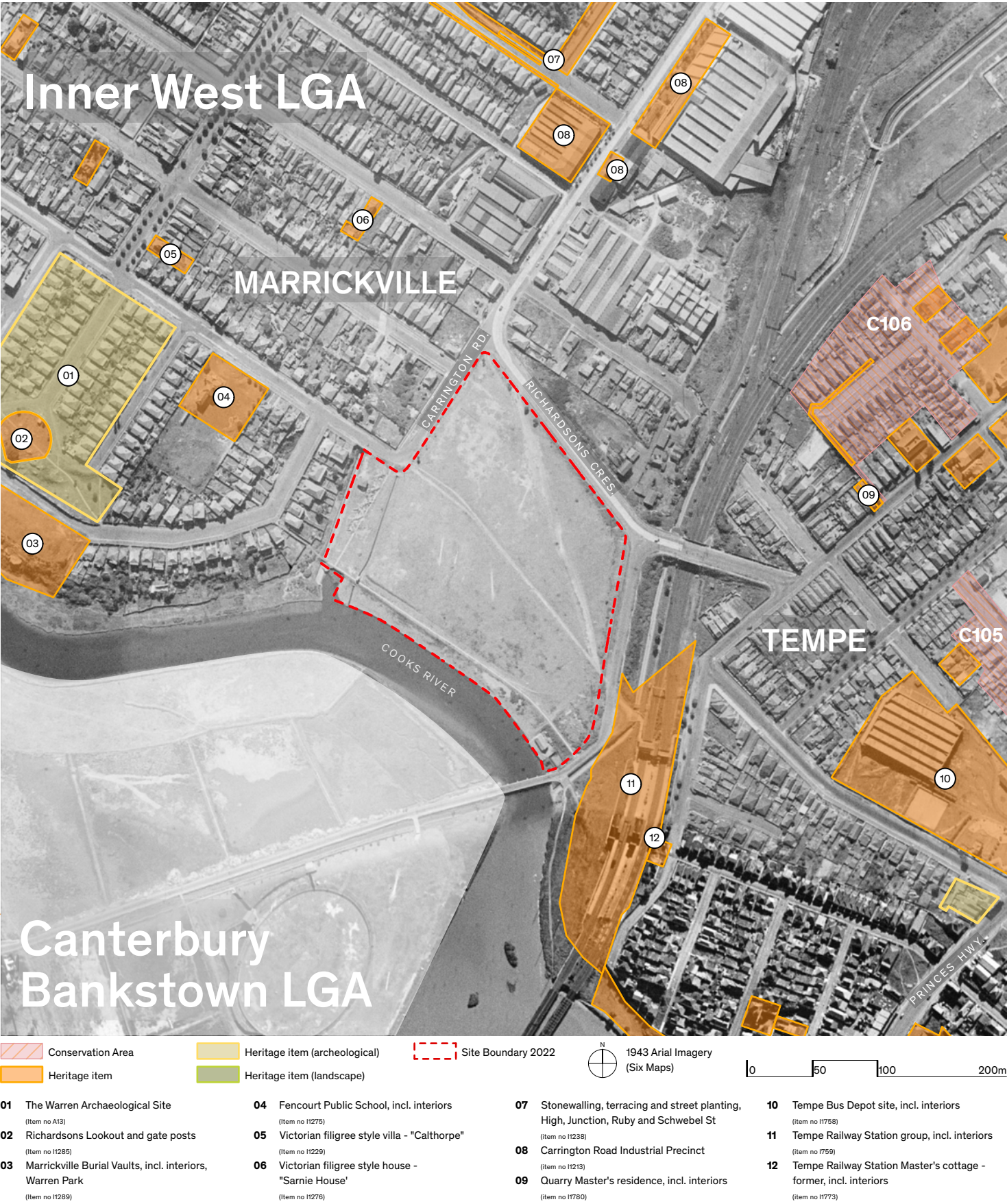
Tempe also recorded an Aboriginal + Torres Strait Islander population of above 1.5%.

Density, income + housing profile

Marrickville records one of the highest number of high-density dwellings in the LGA at 31%. Although, low density housing is still dominant. Tempe also has a high proportion of people living in low-density housing.

Marrickville and Tempe have a below average median household income, between \$1,750 - \$1,999. Marrickville South had a high proportion of low-income (less than \$650 per week) households at 16%.

Marrickville and Tempe have an average number of households with cars. Tempe has the fifth highest proportion of houses with two or more cars at 35%.



Mackey Park - An Historic Summary

The Mackey Park site is bound by two stormwater channels feeding into the Cooks River to the south. The channel to the east, which separates the park from Tempe Station, follows the path of the Gumbramorra Creek, which ran from Gumbramorra Swamp to the north of the site.

The Origin of the name 'Marrickville'

The name Marrickville comes from the 24.3 ha 'Marrick' estate of Thomas Chalder, which was subdivided on 24 February 1855. He named it after his native village Marrick, North Yorkshire, England. The estate centred on the intersection of Victoria Road and Chapel Street. William Dean, the publican of the Marrick Hotel, in Illawarra Road (now the site of the Henson Park Hotel) is credited with adding the "ville" to Marrick when it was gazetted in 1861.¹ - Historical Encounters

First Nations

The wetlands created by the Gumbramorra Swamp, alongside the abundancies of Cooks River were core to Aboriginal people as a source of food and resources, with plants and animals aplenty. The area was inhabited by the Cadigal band, who identified as Eora. Supporting the dense growth of thatch reed, the swamp was abundant with native birds, including swamp hens, moorhens, ducks and gulls. Mounds of middens still found along the shore of Cooks River are evidence of the fish and shellfish which provided food for the Cadigal people.

Bulanaming was the Aboriginal name of the area and the Cooks River was known as Goolay'yari. The proximity of the Cooks River to the Sydney penal camp had an enormous impact on the Cadigal people. Disease, competition for food and land grants soon created a European landscape of isolated farms and paddocks, pushing the remaining indigenous people out of the area or making them dependent on Europeans. The last known sighting of Aboriginal people in this area was in 1835 when a visiting missionary called Backhouse noted a couple fishing from a bark canoe on the Cook's River ⁰¹.

Post European

Following European settlement, Marrickville was a place where runaway convicts could easily hide out in the bush or disappear quietly into the Gumbramorra swamp, which was a natural boundary between Marrickville and what now comprises the suburbs of St Peters, Sydenham and Tempe. The swamp was almost always impassable.

After European settlement its role in the ecological system was not fully understood or appreciated, and the swamp was drained in the 1890s to facilitate the industrialisation of the suburb.

In 1859, Thomas Holt, a wealthy wool merchant, financier and politician, with investments in gold mining, purchased a 130 acre estate, within which the future Mackey Park site was located.

The Warren

At the time the land was purchased by Holt, the area still held its undeveloped, picturesque character. Architect George Mansfield designed the craggy stone 'Victorian Gothic' mansion which was built circa 1866.

The mansion itself, of noble extent and standing on the summit of a hill, is the most prominent feature in the view...The scenery of 'the Warren' is bold and fine. Nature has done much, but she has been materially 'assisted' by art. The sight of a rabbit or two scampering off now and then towards their burrows gives life to the scene...Mr Holt has erected a very picturesque little building for a 'Turkish Bath', near the river and opposite to this building stands a small bathing house, belonging to Mr Campbell. [33]

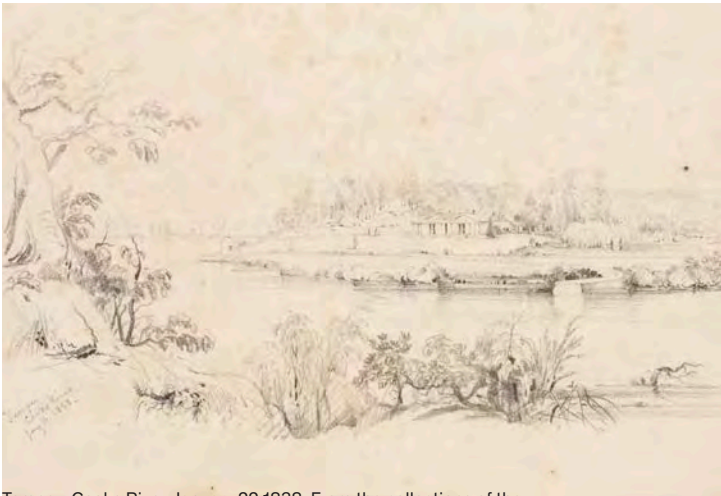
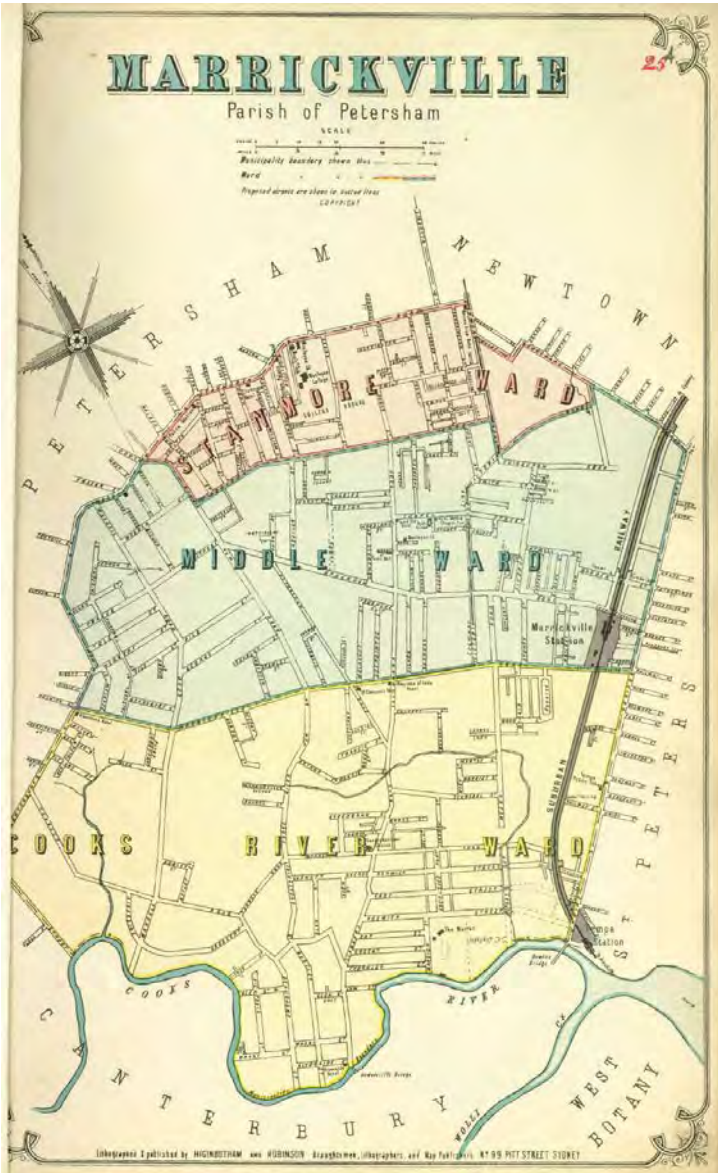
The Warren was built from stone quarried on the property and had 30 rooms, including a dining room which could seat 50 to 60 and a picture gallery 30 metres long and five metres wide. Schoolchildren were encouraged to come to the house to view the sculptures and paintings and to picnic in the grounds. Holt had burial vaults cut from the sandstone beside the river.

When Holt planned to return to England, he tried to sell the house to governor Augustus Loftus as his country residence, but the government acquired Hillview in the Southern Highlands for Loftus and his family instead. Eventually the house became a Carmelite convent, then during World War I it was used as an artillery camp. It was demolished in 1919 and Sir John Sulman was engaged to build a housing estate for returned soldiers on the site.

Cooks River Dam

Three months later The Maitland Mercury & Hunter River General Advertiser gave extensive copy to the issue, outlining in detail the reclamation plan for the 800 acres (3.2 kilometres sq) of mangrove swamps at the Cooks River dam. This plan had a threefold aim: to fix river sanitation, to create a navigable channel with deep water to enable vessels to reach the dam's government wharf and to create local work for the unemployed. Reclamation work began on the marshy land in December 1886 and soon 50-60 acres (20-24 hectares) had been cleared

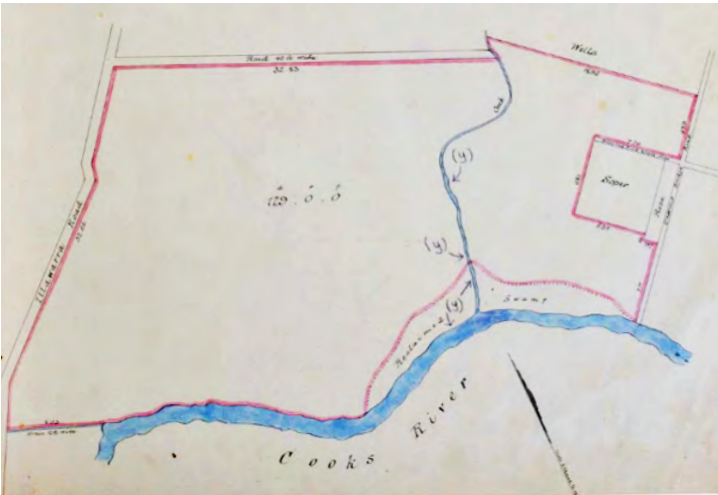
xx (NOTE: Acknowledgments to be confirmed)



Tempe - Cooks River, January 22 1838, From the collections of the State Library of New South Wales [a996016 / PXC 295, 14] (Mitchell Library)



From the Warren, Botany in distance, 8 August 1883 , By Henry Grant Lloyd From the collections of the State Library of New South Wales [a5894074 / DL PX 42] (Dixon Library)



Map which appears on a Certificate of Title from 1864 when Holt purchased the land. Source: Marrickville Historical Society



West Botany, Illawarra Railway route: large blocks of land for sale in the estate of the late John Archibald Cunningham 1881, By Hardie & Gorman Pty Ltd Contributed By National Library of Australia [nla.map-lfsp340-s1]

under the supervision of Alfred Williams, the Assistant Engineer for Harbours and Rivers. It was believed that this work would transform the Cooks River flats into valuable areas. 120 men worked at the dam, with 35 others engaged cutting ti-tree for the embankments at Georges River. [33]

Although the dam's completion in 1842 gave a new solid transport link to the city, allowing a road to Illawarra through the forest (Forest Road), [22] it quickly caused problems of pollution and flooding. The river was said to flood every time there was a heavy downpour. After a rainy, windy night in April 1841, Spark wrote: 'the river has overflown the dam, and the whole of the lower ground is underwater.' [23] It was to flood many times over the next decades, causing destruction to property, poisoning of the river's rich marine life and creating menacing health hazards from the deposition of sewerage from cesspits.

The flood on Queen Victoria's 70th birthday on 24 May 1889 was memorable for the 17 inches (43.1 centimetres) of rain over one weekend, which caused the workmen and artisans of Tramvale estate to be rescued in rowing boats. Chinese market gardeners working terraces along the riverbanks became homeless after their houses were destroyed. [24]

The Sydney Morning Herald reported the deaths of a fare boy and four horses after George Coleman's omnibus containing passengers was dragged into the flooded river at Prout's bridge. The body of the fare boy was discovered the next day, 200 yards (182.8 metres) from the bridge, with his fare bag still attached to his body. [25] This flood was significant as it caused the river to rise as high as ten feet (three metres) above the Cooks River dam. [26]

The Cooks River Improvement Act of 1897 targeted the Cooks River dam but pollution and flooding continued unabated. [42] Finally a bridge with tide gates was constructed [43] and the Cooks River dam drew its last fetid breath when it was demolished between 1896 and 1899

The area now called Richardson Lookout, adjacent to Ferncourt Public School, sits on a knoll and is said to have been a significant vantage point for the local Aboriginal people³. This area affords district views to Botany Bay and the River catchment. Ferncourt Public School is also on this knoll and has a similar outlook.

Gumbramorra swamp

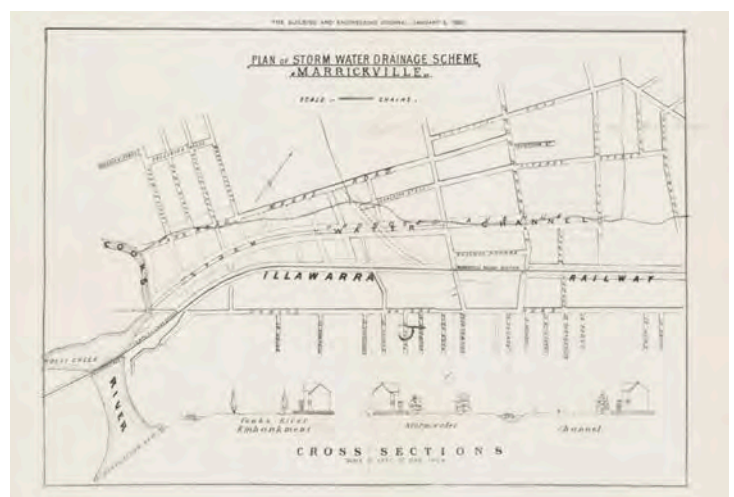
The previously mentioned Gumbramorra swamp was a natural boundary between Marrickville and what now comprises the suburbs of St Peters, Sydenham and Tempe. The swamp was almost always impassable.

After European settlement its role in the ecological system was not fully understood or appreciated, and the swamp was drained in the 1890s to facilitate the industrialisation of the suburb.

(NOTE: Acknowledgments to be confirmed)



Artillery camp at The Warren, Marrickville during World War I, 1914-1918, Contributed By Flickr [Gosford Library MACD4/099] (CC BY-NC 2.0)



Stormwater cross sections from The Building and Engineering Journal 1892. Mackey Park site is at the top left



Patrons at the bar in the Concordia Club. Established in 1883, the club moved to its current location in Mackey Park in 2003. Image Source to be identified.



Neighbourhood Context

Local Character

Mackey Park is located in the south of Marrickville, neighbouring Tempe to the east, separated by the railway line. Tempe Station is located adjacent to the park, less than two minutes walk away. To the south, the Mackey Park has 280m of foreshore along the Cooks River. Following the river, the park is part of a larger network of green spaces within the Cooks River Parklands Masterplan. As part of this network, the park is within walking distance from Warren Park, Kendrick Park, as well as Gough Whitlam Park and Wentworth Park in Earlwood via a bridge over the river.

To the west, the Fencourt Public School and other childcare facilities sit amongst low density detached dwellings. These houses vary in style and period. North of the site, along Carington Road, large mixed-use warehouses form the urban landscape. Many of these are important to the history of the area.

A bohemian vibe has been cultivated and some say Marrickville is “the new Newtown”. Recently, Marrickville has been referred to as the number one emerging “Sydney hipster suburbs of 2017”, due to its youthful population, increasing numbers of liquor licences and numerous “foodie” eateries.

Major Roads

With its close proximity to the rail way, the park is not bound by any major roads. Princes Highway is located 600m to the south east. Illawara Road runs 750m to the north west.

Public Transport

Tempe Station, serviced by the T4 Line (Bondi Junction to Waterfall), sits to the south east corner of Mackey Park, within 2 minutes walk.

Bus services following Princes Highway and Illawara Road have stops within a 10 minute walking distance to the site.

These include:

- Bus Route 348, with stops from Wolli Creek to Prince of Wales Hospital
- Bus Route 422, with stops from Kogarah to Central Pitt St
- Bus Route 423/423X, with stops from Kingsgrove to Martin Place

Cycle Routes

The area is particularly well catered to cyclists as part of the Cooks River Parklands Masterplan. Only small breaks appear in a continuous network following the river. Mackey Park has bike friendly paths along three sides. Residential areas leading into Marrickville and Tempe lack specific paths for cyclists to connect residents to the Cooks River network.

Local Parklands

Following Cooks River to the west, Mackey Park joins Warren Park, just 5 minutes walk along the foreshore. Steel Park is located 5 minutes further along the river.

Crossing the river via Bayview Ave, the Gough Whitlam Park and Waterworth Park are also within a 5 minute walk. The Wolli Creek Regional Park links to Waterworth Park and follows the creek down to Kingsgrove in the south west.

To the south in Tempe, Kendrick Park is within 5 minutes walking distance, accessed along the foreshore, below the overhead train line. The Tempe Recreation Reserve is beyond Kendrick Park, to the south east.



Existing Conditions

Character

To the north of Mackey Park, the park is characterised by vast open space and sports. Along Carrington Road and Premier Street, large trees provide shade which creates spaces for relaxation and play.

The character of the foreshore contrasts the rest of the park. Densely planted trees frame a shady strip of scenic views over the river. Planting separates the foreshore from the sports field creating two vastly different conditions.

Built amenity in the park is in poor condition and does not reflect the pleasant character of the parks natural assets. Buildings in the park feel isolated from the surrounding environment.

Activity

The park is well utilised by the community for a number of activities. The sporting ground itself is used for both sporting events and informal sports, as well as joggers running around the perimeter of the sporting ground.

The field is utilised for both summer and winter sports, soccer and cricket. With large sports clubs at Mackey park, the facilities are used to capacity.

The croquet lawns are used by two clubs and are in high demand.

The popular Concordia Club remains busy from members of ancillary sporting clubs in the park as well as members and guests visiting the park specifically for the club.

Furniture

Most furniture in Mackey Park is located within the picnic area to the northern corner of the park along Carrington Road. This furniture is in average condition, consisting of varying styles/materials. The picnic area includes a sheltered park bench, bbq, two uncovered picnic tables and a number of bench seats facing the playground and sports field.

The park has minimal furniture along the foreshore. Several bench seats in average condition are located along the foreshore pathway facing the river. No variation in seating types are offered.

Bins throughout the park are in fixed stainless steel sleeves with hoods and are in good condition. A number of additional wheelie bins used by the sports club are stored in a chain mesh storage cage alongside the entrance of the park from Richardsons Cres to the north. These bins consist of a combination of general waste and recycling bins. All fixed bins observed throughout the park were general waste only.

Lighting

Lighting throughout the park is in poor condition and does not meet the needs of park users. The existing flood lighting to the sports fields requires an upgrade to provide adequate light for use by the sports clubs. The croquet lawns also lack suitable light for extended use.

The existing light poles along the foreshore pathway are infrequently placed and do not provide enough light for safety in the early morning/evening.

Approximately 12 smaller light poles follow the existing pathway along the north eastern boundary from Marrickville to Tempe Station. These light's provide very little light, creating unsafe conditions for users passing through the park outside of daylight hours.

Signage & Wayfinding

Signage throughout Mackey Park is haphazard, at times unclear, and generally in poor condition. Just beyond the north-west entry, a small sign informs visitors that 'dogs must be on a leash in this park'. The sign appears quite old, bearing Marrickville Council logos, and a number of dogs off leash were observed in the park.

To the corner of Richardsons Cres and Carrington Road is an out-of-date park sign with the Marrickville Council logo.

A map of Cooks River Parklands is located on the foreshore path alongside the Canoe Club building. This sign is old and inconsistent with other signage throughout the park. The scale of the map does not clearly identify amenity in Mackey Park and its location does not promote users to utilise the park.

The park lacks a map or signage which directs users to park amenities, which are concealed from most aspects of the park.

There is signage indicating high pressure gas pipes below ground under the foreshore path. These signs are clear and in good condition.

Tree Cover + Planting

Multiple species of large trees flank the park boundaries. Along the Cooks River foreshore Poplar Trees, *Populus*

deltoides and scattered She-oak, *Casuarina glauca*, shade the pathway and popular picnic locations along the river.

A narrow strip of trees follows an existing fence line between the



Tree Cover & Understorey Planting



Existing Structures + Facilities



Lighting



Fence + Enclosure



Pedestrian Access Points & Existing Pathways



Vehicular Access Points, Roads and Carparking



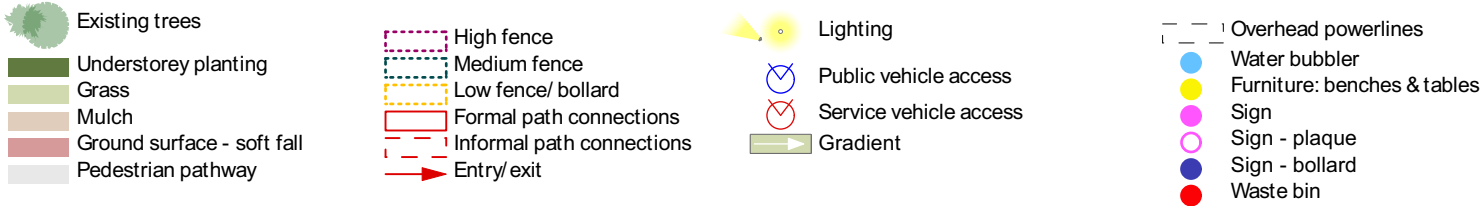
Sports + Recreation Grounds



Contours



Services



Concordia Club and the foreshore. These trees include Umbrella Trees, Schefflera actinophylla and Oliander, Nerium oleander.

A strip of established trees and dense planting covers the embankment between the park and Richardsons Cres to the north eastern boundary. This planting screens the road beyond and acts as an accoustic buffer from noise pollution from the busy roadway.

To the west boundary of the site many species of established trees including Eucalyptus spp; Plane Trees, Platanus acerifolia; and Calistemon spp. provide shade and screening of the neighbourhood beyond.

Fauna Linkages

Despite the large trees throughout the site, there is an overall lack of understorey planting to provide habitat for more diverse wildlife. The strip of dense planting to the north eastern boundary provides low groundcover habitat but is disconnected from any greater network, bound by the road and open sports field.

Ground Cover & Surfaces

The existing concrete paths throughout the park are in good condition. A concrete apron wraps around the amenities building to the north to provide increased hardscaping at high traffic/ congregation areas.

The surface condition of the asphalt carpark in the southern corner is very poor.

Grass areas throughout the park are typically in good condition.

Playground equipment in the park is surrounded by an area of softfall which is in fair condition.

Services & Drainage

The site has ongoing drainage issues which have major implications on use of the fields by local sports clubs. Areas to the western boundary frequently flood as a result of localised rainfall. Flood water has implications on the playground area and onto the sports field, frequently impacting the two full sized sports fields.

High pressure gas and oil pipelines run along the foreshore alongside the existing foreshore pathway.

The centre of the park has unground electrical cables which provide power to floodlights in the centre of the open field.

Boundary Conditions

The park is bound by the Cooks River along the southern boarder.

A low sandstone retaining wall separates the foreshore from the water. This wall is in varying condition, showing signs of dilapidation in some areas.

Towards Premier St to the west, a number of residential yards face the park following the stormwater channel. The grass area alongside the concrete drain is fenced with wire mesh fence and is in good condition.

The existing public toilets and sports club building sits to the north at the corner of Carrington Rd and Richardsons Cres. This building is very close to the road and lacks boundary fences at the entry to the public toilets.

Fencing along Richardsons Cres following the nothern and eastern boundary is wire mesh and in poor condition.

The Concordia Club is bound by densely planted trees and a wire mesh fence in very poor condition.

Pedestrian Access & Existing Pathways

There is not a continuous loop in circulation around Mackey Park. The clubs and carpark to the south prohibit a connection point where a path should otherwise exist. Route of travel when leaving the park at the southern corner is convoluted and dangerous for pedestrians and cyclists heading towards Tempe Station and Kendrick Park.

Vehicular Access Points, Roads and Car Parking

The capacity of the carpark at Mackey Park does not meet the demand of those who use it. The existing entrance from Richardsons Cres is also poorly positioned, with users finding it dangerous. At the corner of Premier and Carrington Rd, a locked gate is used for service vehicles to enter the park, but prohibits general cars.

Existing Structures and Heritage Significance

There is little evidence of park history throughout Mackey Park.

Public toilets, locked change rooms, clubhouse, canteen and storage space is consolidated into a biuling to the north of the park for MCC and MFC. This building is unattractive, inaccessible, uninclusive and does not meet the needs of the clubs who use it. An additional shipping container alongside this building provides extra storage.

The Concordia Club building to the south is also dilapidated and struggles to meet the needs of those who use it. The club offer function spaces and facilities to sports clubs as required, but the existing facilities are poor and require an upgrade.

The freestanding canoe Club building is in fiar condition, but also requires ongoing upgrades and maintance to serve the club effectively into the future.



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Constraints + Opportunities

Based on the Analysis set out over the previous pages, the following opportunities present themselves within Mackey Park.

There are opportunities to:

- Provide improved and accessible park amenities, with clear signage for casual park users.
- Upgrade club facilities for all sports clubs who use the park.
- Provide additional sporting facilities for park users in underutilised areas.
- Investigate solutions to drainage issues which frequently impact use of the facilities.
- Improve signage consistency throughout the park.
- Install a park map at well selected locations. The park map should include a tactile section. Clearly identify park assets and public toilet locations. The map should communicate the civic and historic character of the park.
- Upgrade flood lighting to the sporting fields/lawns to maximise use of existing facilities.
- Upgrade path lighting along major thoroughfares to increase safety of users at night and early morning.
- Investigate options to screen and separate unattractive and smelly Sydney Water facilities which have negative impacts on the park and neighbouring houses.
- Increase biodiversity with extended understorey planting.
- Provide separation of club facilities from the busy road to the north for increased safety. Investigate planting options to screen park facilities from the road.
- Upgrade play areas to provide a diverse range of equipment for all age groups.
- Provide safety and amenity to playground areas for parents and children.
- Investigate areas to renaturalise the river foreshore to promote biodiversity and decrease pollutants into the river.
- Improve car parking for the benefit of park users and neighbours.

01. Original park gates at the intersection of Pembroke St / Orpington St / 02. Pedestrian Footpath / 03. Exercise station (north) / 04. Open parkland along Orpington St. 05. View back towards park gates / 06. Embankment alongside sporting ground, note seating and lighting. / 07. Water tank below ground / 08. Tank equipment / 09. View to dressing rooms and scoreboard / 10. Shaded grassy areas alongside pedestrian pathway / 11. Seating alongside sporting ground. / 12. Exercise station (south).