



# Blue Gum Community School

Heritage Interpretation Plan  
April 2023

## Acknowledgement of Country

*At GML we acknowledge that we work and live on the land of the First Australians. We know that this land was never ceded, and we respect the rights and interests of Australia's first people in land, culture, and heritage. We acknowledge their Elders past and present and support the concepts of voice, treaty, and truth in the Uluru Statement from the Heart.*

## Report Register

The following report register documents the development and issue of the report entitled Blue Gum Community School Interpretation Plan undertaken by GML Heritage Pty Ltd in accordance with its quality management system.

Job No.	Issue No.	Notes/Description	Issue Date
20-0270A	1	Draft Interpretation Plan	29 July 2022
20-0270A	2	Final Interpretation Plan	03 April 2023

## Quality Assurance

The report has been reviewed and approved for issue in accordance with the GML quality assurance policy and procedures.

## Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property

We acknowledge and respect the inherent rights and interests of the First Nations in Indigenous cultural and intellectual property. We recognise that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have the right to be acknowledged and attributed for their contribution to knowledge but also respect their rights to confidentiality. We recognise our ongoing obligations to respect, protect

and uphold the continuation of First Nations rights in the materials contributed as part of this project.

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# Introduction

GML Heritage Pty Ltd (GML) has been commissioned by Blue Gum Community School (Blue Gum) to develop a heritage interpretation plan for its new location at 1 Rosemead Road, Hornsby, also known as Mount Errington (the site). The plan must respond to the conditions of consent provided by Heritage NSW and Hornsby Shire Council.

## Project Background and Overview

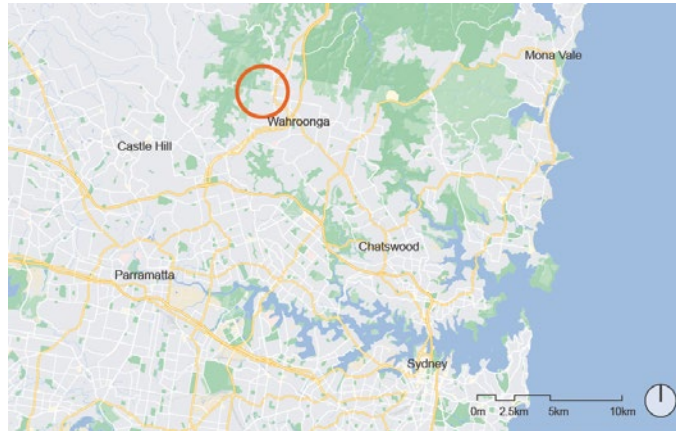
The site is listed as a heritage item within Schedule 5 of the *Hornsby Local Environmental Plan 2013* (Item 545 “Mt. Errington” and Gardens). The site is located within the Mount Errington Precinct of the Hornsby West Side Heritage Conservation Area. It is also in the vicinity of several other heritage items.

In 2021, GML Heritage was commissioned by the NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (the Department) to prepare a peer review of heritage advice which has been provided in relation to a State Significant Development Application (SSDA) (SSD-10444) for the site. The SSDA sought to redevelop the site for use as a community school, involving internal alterations and exterior additions to the house and alterations to the garden.

This report provides a plan for the heritage interpretation of the site, and develops interpretive themes and devices.

### Site Identification

The site is in the Hornsby Local Government Area (LGA). It is approximately 21 kilometres northwest of the Sydney CBD, 9 kilometres northwest of the Macquarie Park business park, and 25 kilometres northeast of the Castle Hill town centre. The site occupies an irregularly shaped lot and encompasses the whole of Lot A of Deposited Plan 327582. The location of the site and its immediate context are shown in the following maps.



Location of Blue Gum Community School within its wider context. (Source: Google Maps with GML overlay, 2022)



Extent of the Blue Gum Community School site, bounded by Rosemead Road and William Street. (Source: Nearmap with GML overlay, 2021)

## Conditions of Consent

This interpretation plan has been prepared in response to part of the consent conditions as set out by Heritage NSW and Hornsby Shire Council:

### Condition F26

*Within three months of commencement of operation, the Applicant must submit a Heritage Interpretation Plan to acknowledge the heritage of the site to the satisfaction of the Planning Secretary. The plan must:*

- (a) be prepared by the Project Heritage Architect in consultation with the Strategic Planning Branch of Council;*
- (b) include details of the heritage walk proposed along the pedestrian pathway from William street to the rear of the dwelling;*
- (c) include details of interpreting the tennis court;*
- (d) include details of relocating the existing timber gate and posts on Rosemead Road;*
- (e) include details of preserving the existing first-floor balustrade and timber handrails; and*
- (f) incorporate interpretive information into the site including naming of elements within the site.*

## What Is an Interpretation Plan?

Heritage interpretation can transform our experience and understanding of a place. Effective interpretation is most engaging when it not only communicates a story but evokes an emotional response and prompts us to appreciate a place’s heritage values in a meaningful way. Interpretive initiatives present an opportunity to enhance places through creative design interventions that are visually and intellectually stimulating.

## Methodology

This report has been prepared according to the principles and approaches for heritage interpretation set out in *The Burra Charter: The Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance, 2013* (the Burra Charter), and the *Heritage Interpretation Guidelines*, produced and endorsed by the Heritage Council of NSW in August 2005.

## Consultation

On 27 May 2022 GML met with Hornsby Shire Historical Society to discuss draft content and devices, and to view relevant historical images.

On 8 June 2022 presented to Hornsby Shire Council to present draft themes and devices.

The Hornsby Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Committee (HATSIC) reviewed and approved the Aboriginal cultural heritage content in this report.

## Authorship

This heritage interpretation plan has been prepared by Minna Muhlen-Schulte, Associate, and Angus Bowen, Designer, with input from Lucy King, Heritage Consultant.

## Acknowledgements

Blue Gum Community School's principal, Jill McLachlan, and Hornsby Shire Council's Alison Bangs have provided review, feedback and key content in the development of this plan. Mari Metzke and the Hornsby Shire Historical Society provided key content and advice at the beginning of the process.



Oscar Roberts' Renault (Source: Blue Gum Community School)

# Interpretation Framework



This section outlines our recommended principles for heritage interpretation at Blue Gum Community School. It also provides an introduction to thematic-based storytelling and outlines the key themes and stories to ensure that interpretation within the school is both comprehensive and engaging.

## Interpretation Principles

The importance of integrating interpretation in the conservation/development process is recognised in the 1999 revisions to the Burra Charter, which state (Article 1.17):

*Interpretation means all the ways of presenting the cultural significance of the place. Interpretation may be a combination of the treatment of the fabric (e.g. maintenance, restoration, reconstruction), the use of and activities at the place, and the use of introduced explanatory material*

Article 24.1 of the Burra Charter states:

*Significant associations between people and a place should be respected, retained and not obscured. Opportunities for the interpretation, commemoration and celebration of these associations should be investigated and implemented.*

The Charter notes that, ‘for many places, associations will be linked to use’. Article 25 continues:

*The cultural significance of many places is not readily apparent, and should be explained by interpretation. Interpretation should enhance understanding and enjoyment and be culturally appropriate.*

This interpretation plan uses the terminology, methodology and seven key principles contained in the Burra Charter, which are:

1. Provide for access and understanding.
2. Use all information sources.
3. Conserve setting and context.
4. Conserve authenticity.
5. Plan for sustainability.
6. Be inclusive.
7. Recognise the importance of research, training and evaluation.



A thematic framework is a method for categorising, understanding and presenting information. Within this model, storylines that share common motifs, meanings and association are grouped together under an overarching theme. This ensures that the interpretation methods follow a coherent basis, that they are engaging, memorable and easily understood by a broad visitor audience. Unstructured by themes, interpretation and visitor experiences can become overwhelming with too many topics or ideas to absorb.

The premise underlying the thematic framework for Blue Gum Community School is that each generation of people who have lived in this landscape have formulated their own cultural, spiritual or artistic response to the place.

The following themes guide the different perspectives on time, people and place at Mount Errington. They form the basis of content for future interpretive devices.

### **The Gum Leaf Motif**

Visually linking the stories across each period is the Gum Leaf itself. The ancient eucalyptus has been omnipresent and each generation has used it as a motif in its own way.

# ***Ngara: Listen to Darug Country*** **The Healthy Highlands** **Art in Everyday Life**

# Ngara Ngurangwa Byallara (listen, hear, think) Darug Country

**Mount Errington is sited on Darug Country, within a landscape occupied by the First Australians since before the last ice age. Watching over these seismic shifts of climate was the oldest living part of the landscape, the Eucalypt. The fossil pollen record provides evidence of eucalypts in Australia for at least 45 million years.**

Trees were harvested for food, used for making canoes and tools, and as markers for ceremonial and burial locations. More recently the smell of gum leaf smoke marks Welcome to Country ceremonies. Burning the damp leaves creates billowing white smoke, used to cleanse and to pay tribute to Elders.

The ancient Hornsby Shire landscape is connected to one of the world's oldest continuous living cultures. Aboriginal people have lived close to Dyarubbin or the Hawkesbury River for at least 50,000 years. Their ancestors occupied Country before the last ice age.

This is a landscape of everyday and special places and practices, connected through pathways, camp sites, shelters, tool making, seasonal foods, ceremony and belief. The landscape has been used by people for physical and spiritual nourishment according to traditions and responsibilities over hundreds of generations.

Today the Darug community of Hornsby Shire are reviving their language and our understanding of Country. Historian Grace Karskens' recent discovery of Reverend McGarvie's 1829 notebook of Darug language initiated a project with Darug women Leanne Watson, Rhiannon Wright and Jasmine Seymour to decolonise the landscape and reinstate names for Country. As Karskens explains:

**Place names have enormous significance in Aboriginal society and culture. As in all societies, they signal the meanings people attach to places, they encode history and**

**geography, they are wayfinding devices and common knowledge. In Aboriginal culture they are also crucial elements of shared understandings of Country, 'integral to a group's understanding of its history, culture, rights and responsibilities for land'.<sup>1</sup>**

## Ngara

[Listen]

## Warretya, Warang, Warradé, Warrakia

[words for lagoon]

## Dugga

[thick brush/rainforest Country]

## Dorumbolooa

[the zone where the rainbow passes through]

## Gunanday

[words for a rainbow, signalling sacred Country]

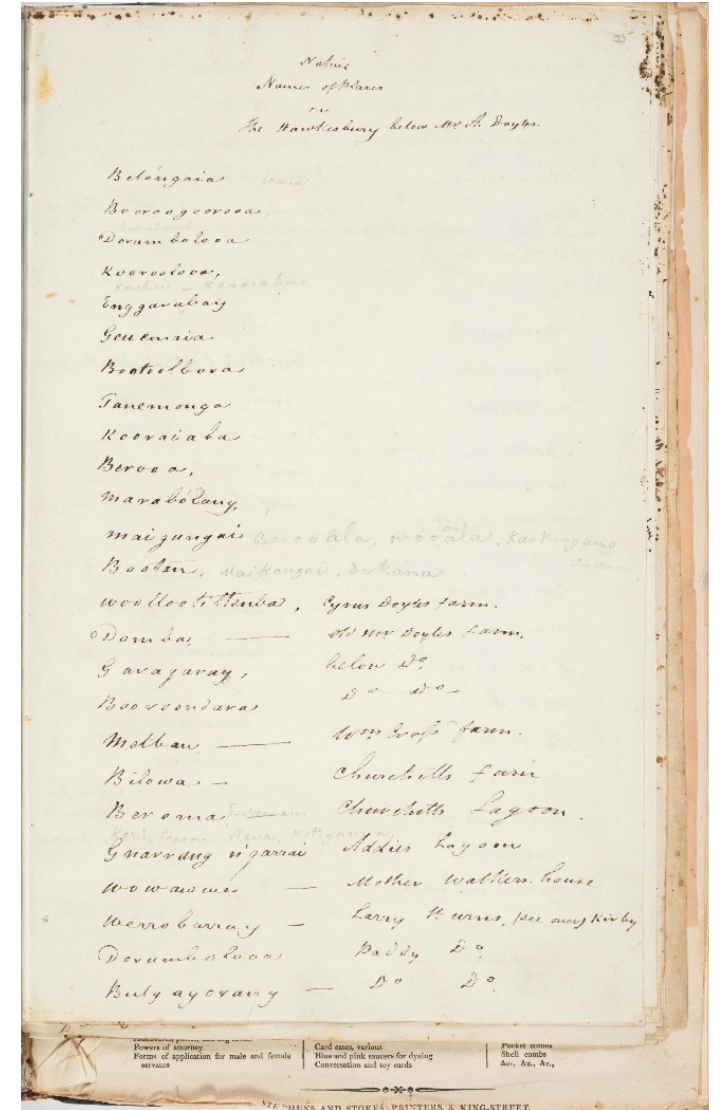


A now-destroyed koala engraving at Westleigh, pictured c1970 (Source: Ralph Hawkins, Hornsby Shire Library)





Darug women Leanne Watson, Rhiannon Wright and Jasmine Seymour at Dorumboloo / Sackville, October 2020. (Source: Avryl Whitnall)



First page of John McGarvie's list of 'Native names of places on the Hawkesbury', 1829. (Source: State Library of New South Wales [A 1613, Poems and prose, 1825-1835, p 25])



# The Healthy Highlands

**Nicknamed the Bushland Shire, Hornsby has long been the ‘lungs’ for Sydney—a sanctuary on its northwestern edges away from the inner city. The urban forests, national parks, bushland reserves and lush gardens that swathe much of the shire, including Mount Errington, remain part of its enduring appeal for health, recreation and open space.**

The arrival of the railway in 1886 meant the pure country air and elevated topography was now within commuter reach and proved a marketable asset.

The new wave of homeowners was largely drawn from the city elite. New residents were often attracted to the shire by the promise of the fresh air easing their personal health complaints or by the opportunity to realise a grand design in their new home.

With views over Old Man’s Valley, the Mount Errington area was highly desirable and featured several grand residences designed for the upper echelons of society who could afford it. In contrast the working-class housing closer to the railway station was built where workers lived, often within walking distance of their occupation.

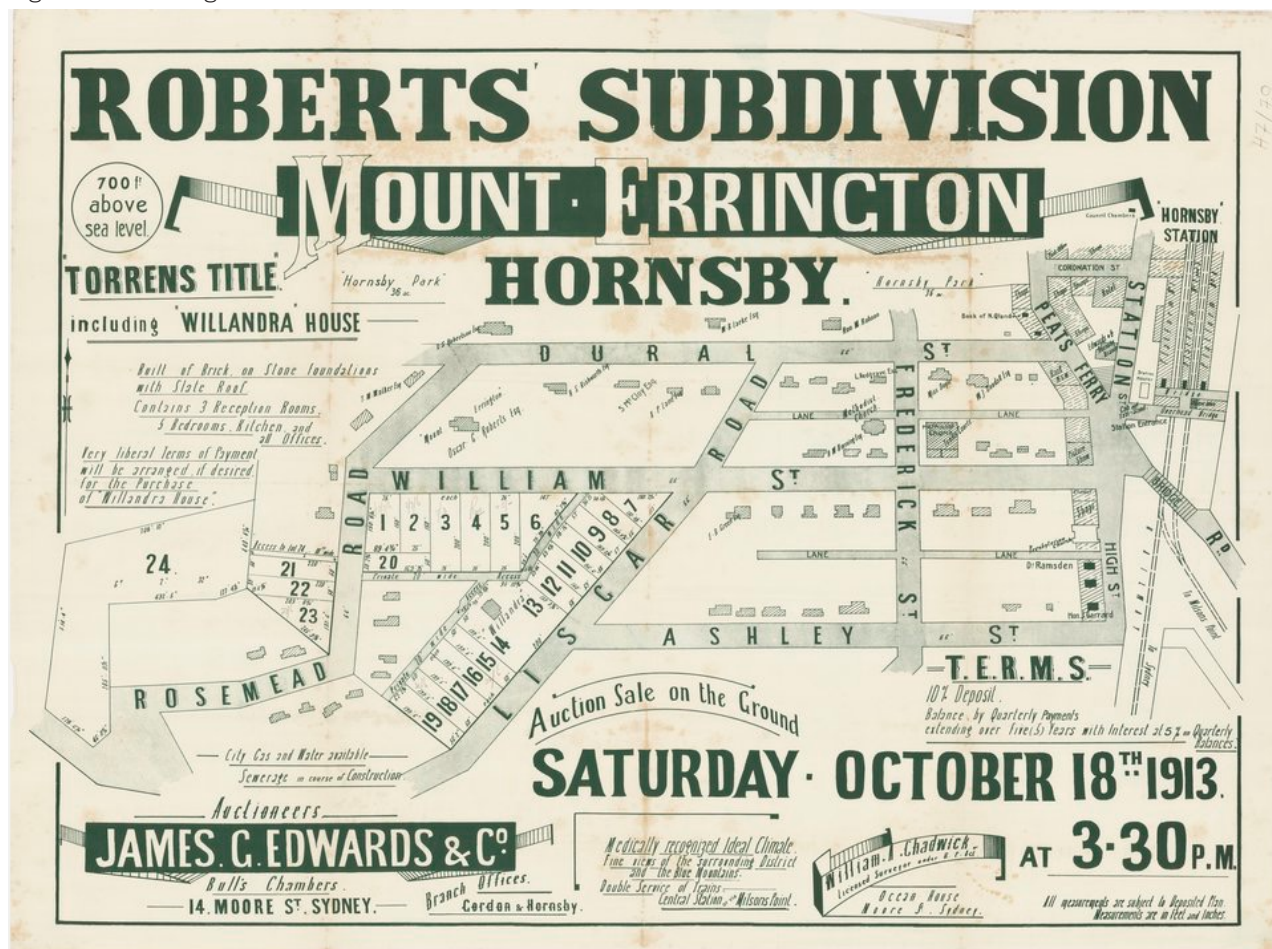
High on the hill overlooking the valley, Anne Warren bought the land that became Mount Errington house. She and her husband Oscar Garibaldi Roberts lived the high life with a croquet lawn, tennis courts, a gardener’s cottage and a coach house. Oscar’s large cream Renault was distinctive in the streets of Hornsby as one of the first cars in the shire.

Anne and Oscar Garibaldi Roberts set the tone for the area and their house gave the suburb its name. The subsequent subdivision of land advertised ‘the medically recognised ideal climate; fine views of the surrounding district an the Blue Mountains’.

Originally residing in Summer Hill, the Roberts moved to Hornsby in 1894. The move may have been for the climate. Their social standing was expressed in the

construction of a house that soon became an icon in the shire.

As for the coachman who drove Oscar to Hornsby Station each morning, the gardener, the man who delivered coal or the maid we know little of their stories. Nor where they lived and returned to at the end of a long day spent servicing the homes high on the hill.



1913 Mount Errington subdivision map. (Source: Hornsby Shire Council)



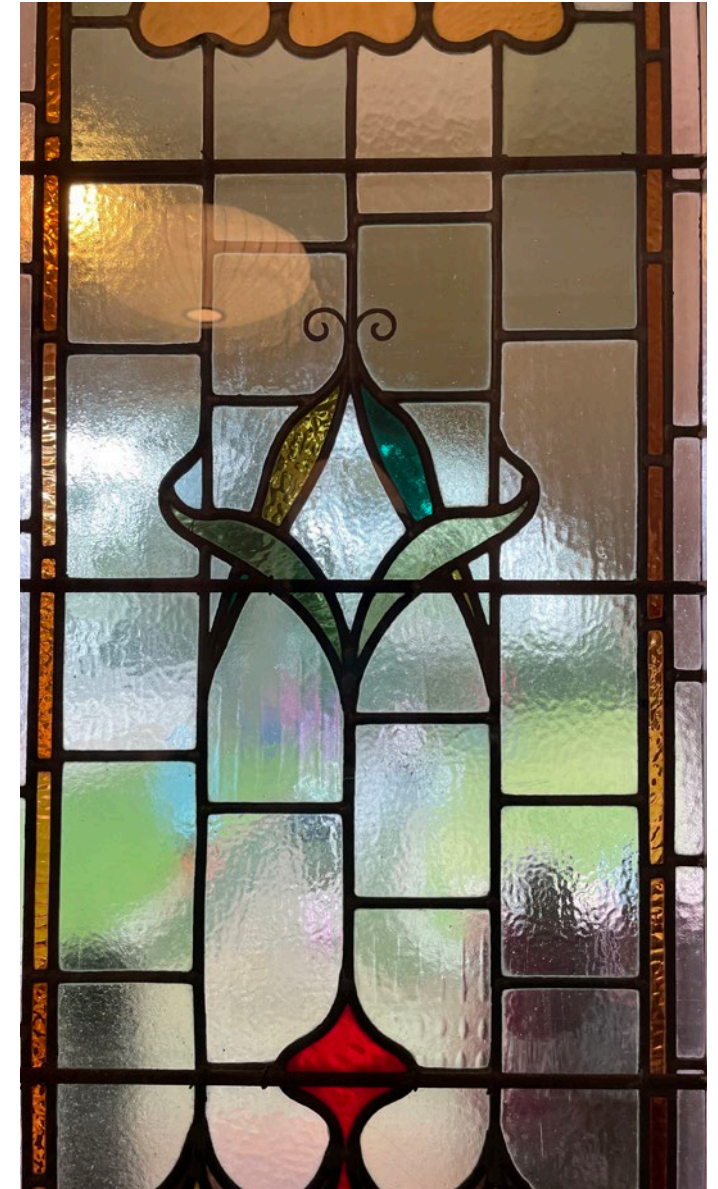
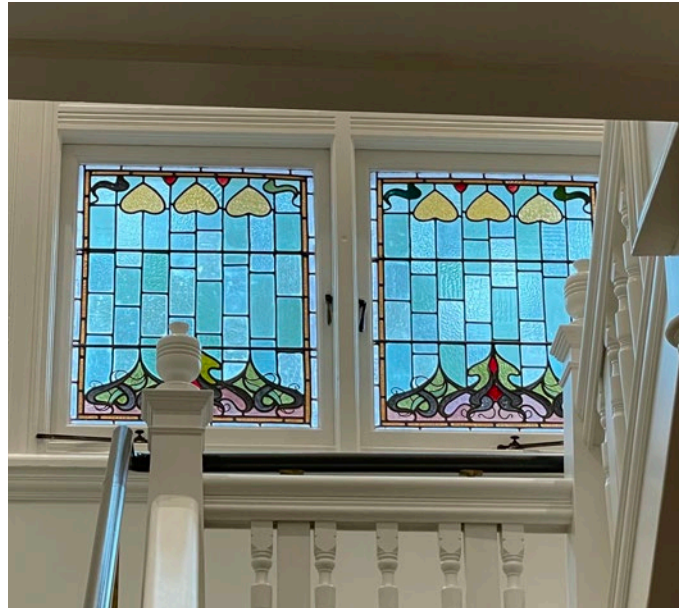
**Gems ... of the sunlight on rocks and gum, and on a lovely honeysuckle heavy with old grey cones and a few fresh ones: the colour and general fascination is wonderful.**

Arthur Streeton at Northgate, Rosemead Road, 1906

Aesthetic appreciation of the shire's highlands also influenced its design and architecture. The Federation period houses designed in the Queen Anne and Arts and Crafts styles demonstrate an Australian vernacular twist on these internationally popular styles, as seen in rising sun motifs, waratahs and flannel flowers.

The formation of the Mount Errington area captured the zenith of the Federation Arts and Crafts style and the Art Noveau spirit of the times. Arthur Streeton's memory of visiting Northgate on Rosemead Road, which was the home of his father Charles H Streeton, noted the palette and light that still plays in the area today.

Many of the Art Noveau touches in Mount Errington echo what was outside in the interior: earthy natural colours, timber panelling, floral wallpaper, and gum leaves worked into the leadlight stained-glass windows.



Existing Arts and Crafts features within Mount Errington. (Source: GML)

# Devices

Each of the following proposed devices has been specifically aligned to the thematic content.

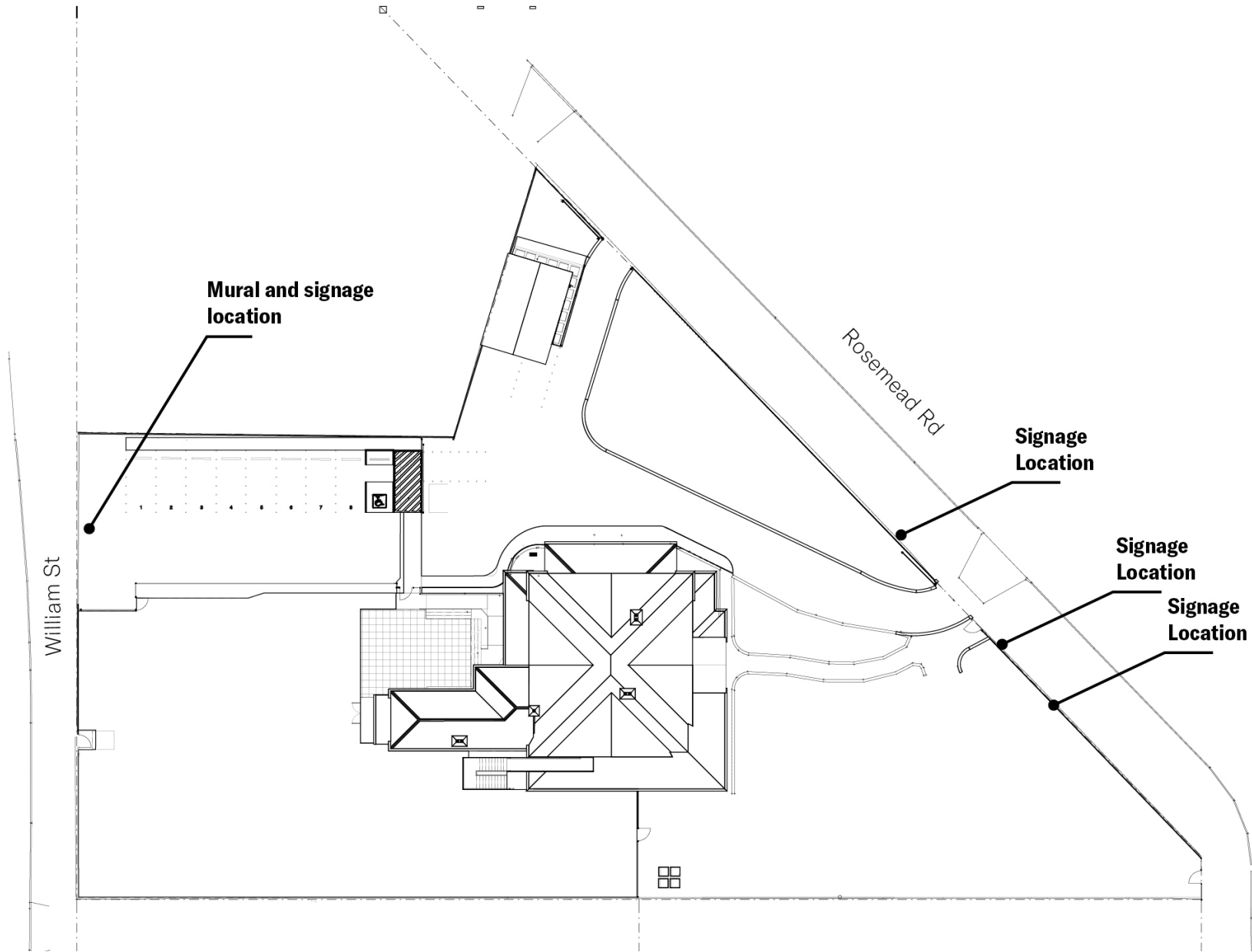
Consideration has been given to the scale and budget requirements of proposed devices and availability of space on site. We are also mindful of resourcing to ensure sustainability, with some devices needing to be staged.

The proposed devices have been recommended based on their ability to communicate themes and key stories about the history of Blue Gum Community School and Mount Errington in an evocative and meaningful way to appeal to different audiences.

As a suite these devices will provide a multilayered experience of the site's cultural heritage, enabling a broad range of visitors to discover and connect the past stories and associations of the place with the present-day experiences at Blue Gum and in Hornsby.

- Device 1: Outdoor signage and mural**
- Device 2: Ongoing student-led projects**
- Device 3: Brochure**
- Device 4: Website content**
- Device 5: Open day and events**

# Indicative on-site device locations





# Device 1: Outdoor signage and mural

Device 1 comprises signage to be placed at the front end of the site and a large-scale mural within the boundary line along the back fence of the carpark.

The signage along the front of the site will be within the site boundary. It will convey the significance of the heritage listed item as an outstanding example of Arts and Crafts architecture and as the garden and the home of Oscar and Anne Roberts.

The content and imagery includes a brief history of the house, the original occupants, its architectural style and the historical geography of the area when the house was built, being one of the first homes developed the precinct.

The mural will show Mr and Mrs Roberts in their Renault, one of the first cars in Hornsby Shire.

The Arts and Crafts and Art Nouveau movements play a dominant role in the visual identity of the signage. A distinct gum leaf pattern frames the signage and exists as a die-cut stencil within the stands. The typefaces Arts and Crafts from P22 Type Foundry 'is derived from the Roycroft books and periodicals designed by multi-faceted artist Dard Hunter between 1900–1910.<sup>12</sup> For the body copy, Blue Gum Community School uses the typeface Poppins by Google. It is a legible, contemporary sans serif.

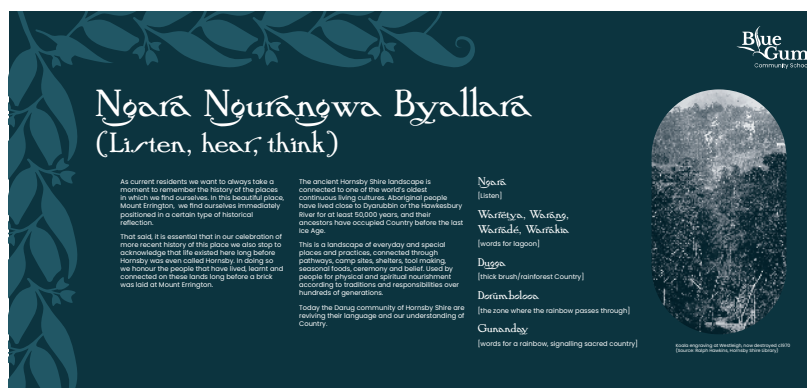
There are two options for the large-scale signage: freestanding plinths/stands (option A) or backing that can attach to an existing substrate (option B). The signage will be printed to vitreous enamel and attached to either corten steel or powder-coated steel.

Note for stands: powdercoat swatch TBC and changes may have to be made for workplace and student safety.

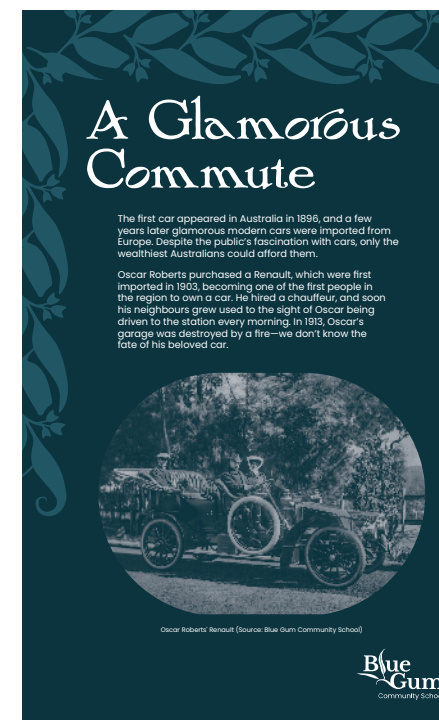
**Themes:** All

**Locations:** See page 13

**Audience:** Community, Parents, Students



Outdoor front-of-site signage. (Source: GML)



Mural signage. (Source: GML)



**Blue Gum**  
Community School

## The Peak of Hornsby Society

*"It can be truthfully said that no man has done more for the town and district than Mr. Oscar G. Roberts, who during his residence in Hornsby... has never lost an opportunity of benefitting the place in some way or another."*

Hornsby, The Cumberland Argus and Fruitgrowers Advocate, Saturday 12th January 1907.

Mount Errington was home to Oscar Garibaldi Roberts (1860-1922) and his wife Anne, members of the Hornsby social elite. Oscar was well known in his day as a rich jeweller, having become a partner in Fairfax & Roberts (the oldest jewellery firm in Australia) in the 1880s.

Following his success in business, Oscar and Anne moved from Summer Hill to Mount Errington where they lived the

high life in the countryside, at the peak of Hornsby society. Oscar was deeply involved in the community, serving as the first president of Hornsby Shire's provisional council in 1906, and later as a councillor until 1917.

Their children, Warren, Enid and Annie, would all go on to have grand society weddings. When Oscar died in 1922, he left his family a fortune of over £40,000.



Anne Roberts (Source: Blue Gum Community School)



Oscar Garibaldi Roberts (middle) and his brothers (Source: Blue Gum Community School)



**Blue Gum**  
Community School

## A Splendid Villa

Hornsby had been growing since the arrival of the railway in 1856, and wealthy residents flocked to the hills around Mount Errington to take advantage of the clean air and panoramic views. Construction was completed at Mount Errington by 1897, making it one of the first houses in the area.

Its sweeping bell-cast roof, tall chimneys, and broad verandahs capture the essence of the Federation Arts and Crafts style, and it was considered by locals to be a 'splendid villa'. There are fine decorative details of

native flowers and plants throughout the house, inspired by the landscape. The house backed on to Blue Gum Valley, and included a coach house, a servant's quarters, a tennis court, and a croquet lawn, all set within luscious gardens.

The Roberts family shaped not only local society, but also the landscape. They bought much of the land surrounding their home and eventually created the Roberts Mount Errington subdivision in 1913.

*"The locality combines the advantages of a mountain change with suburban cost, and little fatigue in travelling... the climate is very salubrious, and is strongly recommended by the medical profession"*

"Mount Errington Hornsby Junction", Freeman's Journal, 12 December 1896



Mt Errington, 1947 (Source: Hornsby Shire Council)

Corten steel signage (Source: GML)

## Signage Text

### Panel 1: The Peak of Hornsby Society

***It can be truthfully said that no man has done more for the town and district than Mr. Oscar G. Roberts, who during his residence in Hornsby ... has never lost an opportunity of benefitting the place in some way or another.***

'Hornsby', *The Cumberland Argus and Fruitgrowers Advocate*, Saturday 12 January 1907

Mount Errington was home to Oscar Garibaldi Roberts (1860–1922) and his wife Anne, members of the Hornsby social elite. Oscar was well known in his day as a rich jeweller, having become a partner in Fairfax & Roberts (the oldest jewellery firm in Australia) in the 1880s. Following his success in business, Oscar and Anne moved from Summer Hill to Mount Errington where they lived the high life in the countryside, at the peak of Hornsby society. Oscar was deeply involved in the community, serving as the first president of Hornsby Shire's provisional council in 1906, and later as a councillor until 1917. Their children, Warren, Enid and Annie, would all go on to have grand society weddings. When Oscar died in 1922, he left his family a fortune of over £40,000.

### Panel 2: A Splendid Villa

***The locality combines the advantages of a mountain change with suburban cost, and little fatigue in travelling ... the climate is very salubrious, and is strongly recommended by the medical profession.***

'Mount Errington Hornsby Junction', *Freeman's Journal*, 12 December 1896.

Hornsby had been growing since the arrival of the railway in 1886, and wealthy residents flocked to the hills around Mount Errington to take advantage of the clean air and

panoramic views. Construction was completed at Mount Errington by 1897, making it one of the first houses in the area. Its sweeping bell-cast roof, tall chimneys, and broad verandahs capture the essence of the Federation Arts and Crafts style, and it was considered by locals to be a 'splendid villa'. There are fine decorative details of native flowers and plants throughout the house, inspired by the landscape. The house backed on to Blue Gum Valley, and included a coach house, a servant's quarters, a tennis court, and a croquet lawn, all set within luscious gardens.

The Roberts family shaped not only local society, but also the landscape. They bought much of the land surrounding their home and eventually created the 'Roberts Mount Errington' subdivision in 1913.

### Panel 3: Ngara Ngurangwa Byallara (Listen, hear, think)

As current residents we want to always take a moment to remember the history of the places in which we find ourselves. In this beautiful place, Mount Errington, we find ourselves immediately positioned in a certain type of historical reflection.

That said, it is essential that in our celebration of more recent history of this place we also stop to acknowledge that life existed here long before Hornsby was even called Hornsby. In doing so we honour the people that have lived, learnt and connected on these lands long before a brick was laid at Mount Errington.

The ancient Hornsby Shire landscape is connected to one of the world's oldest continuous living cultures. Aboriginal people have lived close to Dyarubbin or the Hawkesbury River for at least 50,000 years, and their ancestors have occupied Country before the last Ice Age.

This is a landscape of everyday and special places and practices, connected through pathways, camp sites, shelters, tool making, seasonal foods, ceremony and belief. Used by people for physical and spiritual

nourishment according to traditions and responsibilities over hundreds of generations.

Today the Darug community of Hornsby Shire are reviving their language and our understanding of Country.

### Ngara

[Listen]

### Warretya, Warang, Warradé, Warrakia

[words for lagoon]

### Dugga

[thick brush/rainforest Country]

### Dorumbolooa

[the zone where the rainbow passes through]

### Gunanday

[words for a rainbow, signalling sacred country]

*Note: Sign 3 is subject to change and may need further consultation and research with traditional owners and stakeholders.*

### Panel 4: Glamorous Commute

The first car appeared in Australia in 1896, and a few years later glamorous modern cars were imported from Europe. Despite the public's fascination with cars, only the wealthiest Australians could afford them.

Oscar Roberts purchased a Renault, which were first imported in 1903, becoming one of the first people in the region to own a car. He hired a chauffeur, and soon his neighbours grew used to the sight of Oscar being driven to the station every morning. In 1913, Oscar's garage was destroyed by a fire—we don't know the fate of his beloved car.





Dunkeld Heritage Trail. (Source: Challis Design)



The Goods Line. (Source: Deuce Design)



Ngā Tapuwāe New Zealand First World War Trails. (Source: ww100.nz)



Promenade Du Bout Du Monde. (Source: PicBois)



*Acer palmatum*. (Source: Pinterest)



Outdoor signage. (Source: Heine Jones)





Hugues Sineux, Hornsby South Public School. (Source: Hugues Sineux)



Hugues Sineux, Dural Lane, Hornsby Shire (Source: Hugues Sineux)



jodie Barker, Hay Street. (Source: Art Pharmacy)



Steven Nuttall, Petersham Train Station. (Source: Art Pharmacy)



# Device 2: Brochure

An informational brochure will be available inside the school and for download online.

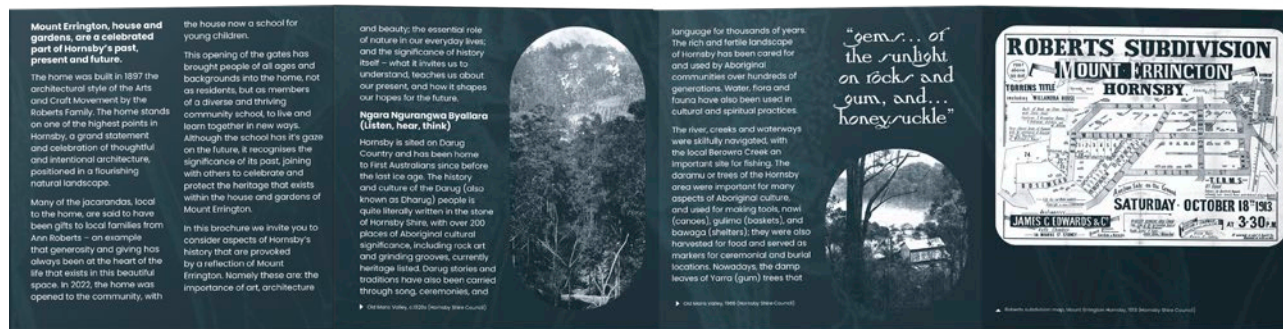
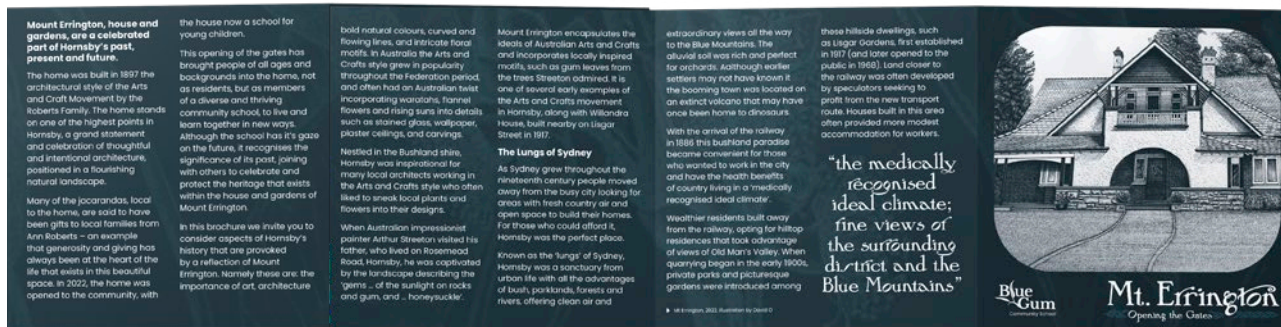
As the brochure will be taken out of the site, it details the heritage significance of the house and the wider area also known as Mount Errington, including Lisgar Gardens and Old Man's Valley.

As seen in the signage, the Arts and Craft and Art Nouveau movements play a dominant role in the visual identity of the brochures as well. The typefaces Arts and Crafts from P22 Type Foundry 'is derived from the Roycroft books and periodicals designed by multi-faceted artist Dard Hunter between 1900–1910.' Blue Gum Community School uses the typeface Poppins from Google for the body copy. This is a legible, contemporary sans serif which won't compete with the display fonts. We have also chosen to use curved, cameo frames for the imagery to evoke the shapes found in posters by Alphonse Mucha and the textile patterns designed by William Morris.

**Themes:** All

**Location:** On site and online

**Audience:** Community, Parents



Brochure cover options (Source: GML Heritage)

## Brochure Text

Mount Errington, house and gardens, are a celebrated part of Hornsby's past, present and future.

The home was built in 1897 the architectural style of the Arts and Craft Movement by the Roberts Family. The home stands on one of the highest points in Hornsby, a grand statement and celebration of thoughtful and intentional architecture, positioned in a flourishing natural landscape.

Many of the jacarandas, local to the home, are said to have been gifts to local families from Ann Roberts – an example that generosity and giving has always been at the heart of the life that exists in this beautiful space. In 2022, the home was opened to the community, with the house now a school for young children.

This opening of the gates has brought people of all ages and backgrounds into the home, not as residents, but as members of a diverse and thriving community school, to live and learn together in new ways. Although the school has its gaze on the future, it recognises the significance of its past, joining with others to celebrate and protect the heritage that exists within the house and gardens of Mount Errington.

In this brochure we invite you to consider aspects of Hornsby's history that are provoked by a reflection of Mount Errington. Namely these are: the importance of art, architecture and beauty; the essential role of nature in our everyday lives; and the significance of history itself – what it invites us to understand, teaches us about our present, and how it shapes our hopes for the future.

### **Ngara Ngurangwa Byallara (Listen, hear, think)**

Hornsby is sited on Darug Country and has been home to First Australians since before the last ice age. The history

and culture of the Darug (also known as Dharug) people is quite literally written in the stone of Hornsby Shire, with over 200 places of Aboriginal cultural significance, including rock art and grinding grooves, currently heritage listed. Darug stories and traditions have also been carried through song, ceremonies, and language for thousands of years. The rich and fertile landscape of Hornsby has been cared for and used by Aboriginal communities over hundreds of generations. Water, flora and fauna have also been used in cultural and spiritual practices.

The river, creeks and waterways were skilfully navigated, with the local Berowra Creek an important site for fishing. The daramu or trees of the Hornsby area were important for many aspects of Aboriginal culture, and used for making tools, nawi (canoes), gulima (baskets), and bawaga (shelters); they were also harvested for food and served as markers for ceremonial and burial locations. Nowadays, the damp leaves of Yarra (gum) trees that are found throughout Hornsby are burnt as part of Welcome to Country ceremonies, creating billowing white smoke to cleanse and to pay tribute to Elders.

### **The Lungs of Sydney**

As Sydney grew throughout the nineteenth century people moved away from the busy city looking for areas with fresh country air and open space to build their homes. For those who could afford it, Hornsby was the perfect place.

Known as the 'lungs' of Sydney, Hornsby was a sanctuary from urban life with all the advantages of bush, parklands, forests and rivers, offering clean air and extraordinary views all the way to the Blue Mountains. The alluvial soil was rich and perfect for orchards. Although earlier settlers may not have known it the booming town was located on an extinct volcano that may have once been home to dinosaurs.

With the arrival of the railway in 1886 this bushland paradise became convenient for those who wanted to work in the city and have the health benefits of country living in a 'medically recognised ideal climate'.

Wealthier residents built away from the railway, opting for hilltop residences that took advantage of views of Old Man's Valley. When quarrying began in the early 1900s, private parks and picturesque gardens were introduced among these hillside dwellings, such as Lisgar Gardens, first established in 1917 (and later opened to the public in 1968). Land closer to the railway was often developed by speculators seeking to profit from the new transport route. Houses built in this area often provided more modest accommodation for workers.

### **Art in Everyday Life**

In late nineteenth-century art and architecture there was a movement away from the formal academic styles of earlier years. The emerging Arts and Crafts movement followed the principle of integrating art into everyday life, blurring the distinction between fine art, and traditional crafts and design. This new style of architecture emphasised craftsmanship, the quality and texture of the materials, and a desire for the interiors to be equally beautiful. Taking inspiration from nature, many designs incorporated bold natural colours, curved and flowing lines, and intricate floral motifs. In Australia the Arts and Crafts style grew in popularity throughout the Federation period, and often had an Australian twist incorporating waratahs, flannel flowers and rising suns into details such as stained glass, wallpaper, plaster ceilings, and carvings.

Nestled in the Bushland shire, Hornsby was inspirational for many local architects working in the Arts and Crafts style who often liked to sneak local plants and flowers into their designs.

When Australian impressionist painter Arthur Streeton visited his father, who lived on Rosemead Road, Hornsby, he was captivated by the landscape describing the 'gems ... of the sunlight on rocks and gum, and ... honeysuckle'.

Mount Errington encapsulates the ideals of Australian Arts and Crafts and incorporates locally inspired motifs, such as gum leaves from the trees Streeton admired. It is one of several early examples of the Arts and Crafts movement in Hornsby, along with Willandra House, built nearby on Lisgar Street in 1917.



Brompton Design District Booklet and Map. (Source: Foundry)



(Source: Découvrez Anymade)



(Source: Lucie Colin)



Park Map. (Source: Beatlogue)



## Device 3: Ongoing student-led projects

Device 2 comprises long-term projects to work on with the students.

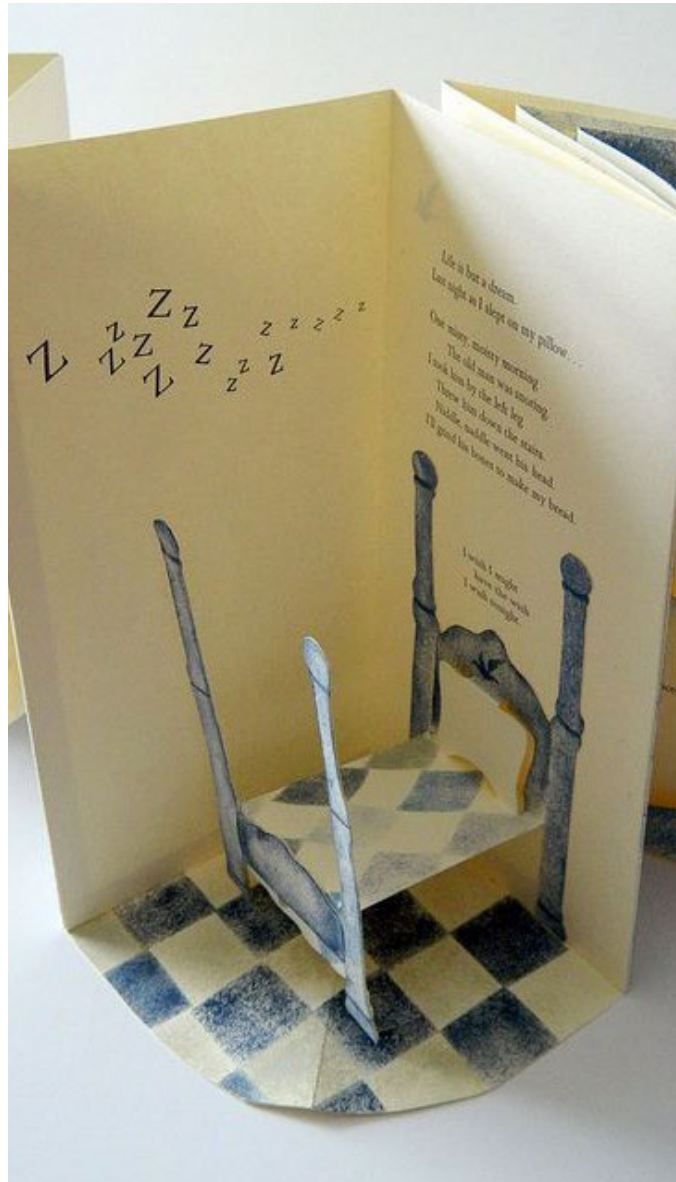
For example, one project could be based on a playful imagining of the former house, how it was occupied and by whom. The house could be depicted in playful illustrative form with reimagined figures.

These projects could include the use of Darug language. Further and ongoing consultation with HATSIC and other Traditional Owner groups would be required.

**Themes:** All

**Location:** On site

**Audience:** Students

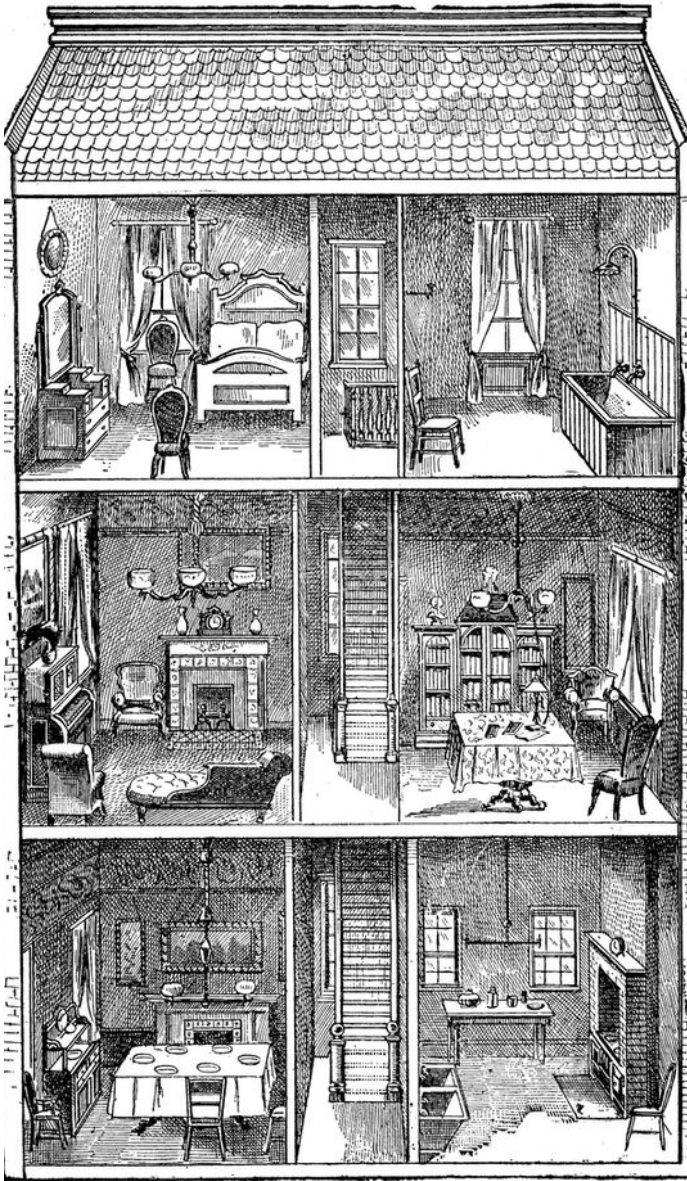


Artist: Kimberly Maher (Source: Pinterest)



(Source: Surface Design)





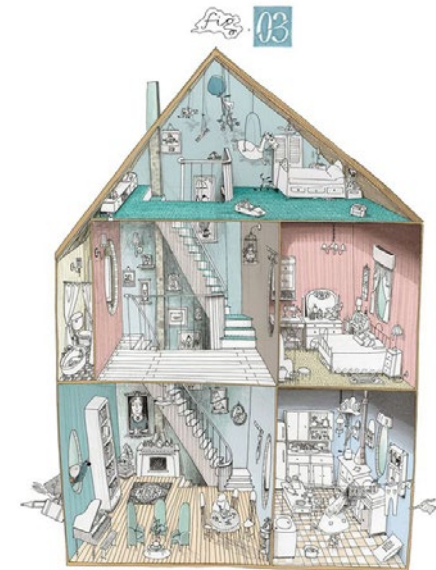
An illustration of a multi-level doll house. (Source: Lit2Go Audiobooks)



Reading Chair Pop-Up Tutorial. (Source: layersofink.blogspot.com)



jodie Barker, Hay Street. (Source: Art Pharmacy)



Carlos Diaz Consuegra, Casa de pájaros. (Source: behance)



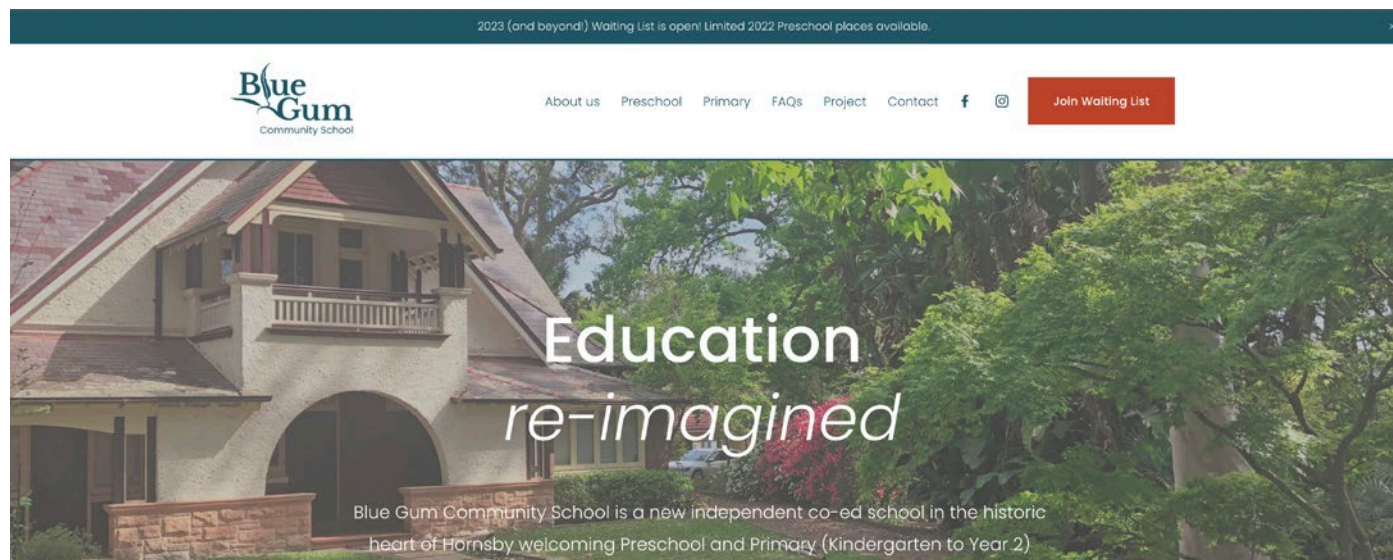
## Device 4: Website content

Using the existing website, the website content would further build on the brochure and thematic history of the house.

This would provide information on walking tours, maps of the area, extra photos, blogs from the students, updates on the student's projects and any new information discovered or unearthed.

**Themes:** All

**Audience:** Community, Parents



### Blue Gum Community School is open!



#### The vision.

Blue Gum Community School purchased 1 Rosemead Road in 2019. The purchase reflected the school's intention to re-imagine the stunning heritage listed home and gardens of Mount Errington as a small preschool and primary school for the children of the Hornsby community. Situated on over 3600sqm, on a site surrounded by stunning



#### The history.

Mount Errington, built in 1897 for the Roberts family, is the chosen site for the proposed school. The home and gardens at 1 Rosemead Road are steeped in significance as one of the original homes of Hornsby. The original features of the home, largely intact from its original build, were a major drawcard influencing the school's decision to purchase the



#### The approval.

On 9 March 2021 the [IPC granted development consent](#) to Blue Gum Community School to proceed with the proposal to establish a small, not-for-profit school in Hornsby, providing education for children in Preschool (32 places for 3-5 year olds) and Primary School (Kindergarten, Year 1 and Year 2).

A screenshot of the current Blue Gum Community School website. (Source: Blue Gum Community School, <https://bluegum.nsw.edu.au/project>)



## Device 5: Open day and events

Part of the underlying ethos of Blue Gum Community School is to embrace the local community.

Through open days and events such as History Week and the Australian Heritage Festival, the history and importance of Mount Errington to Hornsby can be shared with the broader community.

By hosting open days and events, Blue Gum can create relationships with local and Sydney-based community groups such as Hornsby Shire Historical Society, HATSIC, the History Council of NSW and Sydney Living Museums.

**Themes:** All

**Audience:** Community, Parents, Students



Blacktown Native Institute. (Source: Museum of Contemporary Art)



School children at Woodford Academy dressed in aprons and kitchen hats. (Source: Woodford Academy Facebook page)



Heritage tour. (Source: Parramatta Park)

# Implementation and next steps

This section provides a preliminary outline of the next steps for interpretation planning to fabricate and install devices. We understand that the devices may be staged and prioritised depending on consultation and authorisation of content and preliminary concepts.

## Blue Gum’s Next Steps

- Contact a production company to develop shop drawings for outdoor signage stands based off the designs in this report and upcoming Design Documentation.
- Contact printers for the brochures and signage.
- Contact a local mural artist.
- Based on this interpretation plan, begin developing student-led projects and website content.
- Communicate with local and Sydney-wide community groups to organise open days and events, eg Sydney Living Museums, History Council of NSW, Hornsby Shire Historical Society.

## Implementation

Implementation will be reliant on funding and will be staged over time. As such we have identified various time frames for each priority level:

- high—implement within one to two years; and
- moderate—implement within two to five years.

Device Type	Priority	Timing
Signage and mural	High	Mid-late 2023
Brochure	High	Mid-late 2023
Student-led projects	Moderate	Ongoing
Website content	Moderate	Ongoing
Open days and events	Moderate	Ongoing

1 Karskens, Grace, Watson, Leanne Mulgo, Wilkins, Erin , Seymour, Jasmine , Wright, Rhiannon , 'The Dyarubbin Project: Aboriginal history, culture and places on the Hawkesbury River', Dictionary of Sydney, 2021, accessed 2 June 2022 [http://dictionaryofsydney.org/entry/the\\_dyarubbin\\_project\\_aboriginal\\_history\\_culture\\_and\\_places\\_on\\_the\\_hawkesbury\\_river](http://dictionaryofsydney.org/entry/the_dyarubbin_project_aboriginal_history_culture_and_places_on_the_hawkesbury_river)

2 P22 Arts and Crafts', from Adobe Fonts website, viewed 7 July 2022, <https://fonts.adobe.com/fonts/p22-arts-and-crafts>, The font was designed by Dard Hunter, James Grieshaber, and Richard Kegler. From P22 Type Foundry.



# Appendices

**Appendix A—Condition F26 response**

**Appendix B—Design Documentation**

**Appendix C—Interpretation Signage**

**Appendix D—Mt Errington Brochure**

**Appendix E—Mural Brief**

**The Blue Gum Community School Heritage Interpretation Plan was prepared by GML in response to Condition F26. Specific built heritage requirements included in the condition are documented below.**

## Condition F26

*Within three months of commencement of operation, the Applicant must submit a Heritage Interpretation Plan to acknowledge the heritage of the site to the satisfaction of the Planning Secretary. The plan must:*

- a. be prepared by the Project Heritage Architect in consultation with the Strategic Planning Branch of Council;

The Blue Gum Community School Heritage Interpretation Plan was prepared by GML in consultation with Strategic Planning Branch of Hornsby Shire Council who reviewed and provided feedback on the report and design concepts.

- b. include details of the heritage walk proposed along the pedestrian pathway from William street to the rear of the dwelling;

## Gate Structures

Location (Daily / both access)

- The location of the Heritage interpretation elements has been specifically selected to complement the heritage significance of Mt Errington on a daily basis.
- Located between the William Street entry gate and the Carpark Pedestrian gate, the elements will capture students, parents and visitors entering via William Street, the car park drop off space and be visible to students, parents and visitors entering via Rosemead Road.

## Sense of Place / framing

- The design of the entry gate structures and location of the interpretation elements aims to create a defined sense of place within the centre of the site that faces the new outdoor landscape of Mt Errington whilst framing vistas for students, parents and visitors entering and leaving the site.

- 
- c. include details of interpreting the tennis court;

The tennis court has been interpreted through the signage at the front of the site.

The open pergola structure is a galvanised pipe language and structure that references the tennis court enclosure.

- 
- d. include details of relocating the existing timber gate and posts on Rosemead Road;

The open pergola structure and Entry gates from William Street and the car park have been developed in accordance with DA Condition B4 and DA Condition F26.

The design has been developed to integrate car park pedestrian access, access via the new William Street entry gate and the open pergola shade structure providing additional shade to the outdoor play area.

In addition, the design was developed to incorporate the elements proposed within this HIP in accordance with DA condition F26.

A combination of DA requirements and design development has led to the current design which aims to create a function element that integrates a sense of arrival and place that recognises the heritage significance of Mt Errington.

## Response to Existing Mt Errington Heritage Significance, Character and Detailing:

### • Scale

The design has been kept at a human scale that is clearly secondary to the scale and grandeur of Mt Errington.

The heights of the elements are consistent with the DA approval

### • Threshold

The entry gate structures have been designed to reference the distinct threshold that occurs when entering Mt Errington via the existing veranda spaces.

The gate structure design also aims to frame views across the outdoor area, existing gardens and the Heritage interpretation elements proposed along the William Street pedestrian entry path - similar to the existing framing of vistas that occur across the verandas of Mt Errington.

### • Detailing

The entry gates are directly informed by the detailing of the exiting verandas of Mt Errington.

The timber post size, curved beam detail, roof pitch and soffit detailing are translated into a smaller scale built element, that aims to deliberately introduce the arrival experience of Mt Errington.

### • Colours

The colours of the gates match the existing colours of the veranda structures of Mt Errington



• **Materials**

The gate materials (Timber and Slate) have been proposed to match the existing materials of Mt Errington's open verandas.

The open pergola structure is a galvanised pipe language and structure that references the tennis court enclosure. This open structure will support a planting canopy above.

**Response to existing Mt Errington Garden Character:**

• **Spatial + Landscape Character**

The open pergola and gate structures will create a spatial character that is consistent with the vertical language of the existing tall tree landscape and post and beam architecture on the site.

• **Natural + Built Shade**

This site has been designed to continue the character of natural and built shade found on the existing site via the overhead leaf canopy that creates a dappled shadow across the ground plane and the built shade of the Mt Errington verandas.



View from ground floor to stair landing, showing balustrades and timber handrails. (Source: GML Heritage)

- 
- e. include details of preserving the existing first-floor balustrade and timber handrails; and

See following figure.

- 
- f. incorporate interpretive information into the site including naming of elements within the site.

GML has provided design concepts including signage, brochure and web content that provide information about the history, naming and Aboriginal values of the site.