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# **DACEY GARDEN SUBURB**

a report for  
***Daceyville* Heritage Conservation Area**  
within its historical context

prepared for

**Botany City Council**

by

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## Daceyville within its historical context

The culmination of social reforms mixed with the need to rid Sydney of urban blight and appalling living standards resulted in the construction of a model housing suburb. Conceived as Australia's first public housing experiment based on at the time progressive 'garden suburb' principles, *Daceyville* pre-empted much of the form of 20<sup>th</sup> century suburban development.

### 1. The 19<sup>th</sup> Century City

Industrialisation of the 19<sup>th</sup> century city caused major problems as to how most people lived and worked. While wealthier merchant classes moved to the city's outskirts seeking clean air, sunlight and more sanitary conditions, the inner city was characterised by noxious industries and factories jostling side by side with overcrowded, unserviced tenement row housing. Even for those able to relocate to the city's fringe, unregulated speculators continued to replicate ad hoc and piece meal development without consideration of services, open space, community facilities or residential amenity. Poor water quality coupled with high density populations incubated diseases and so contributed to high infant mortality and limited life expectancies.

#### 1.1 A clean water supply for Sydney

Throughout the late 19<sup>th</sup> century a clean water source for Sydney was a persistent issue. Each decade between 1871 and 1901 Sydney's population increased by roughly 100,000. The gold rushes and soaring immigration resulted in a building 'boom', only to be eclipsed in the 1890s by economic depression, drought, shearers' strikes and general labour unrest. These factors combined to exacerbate housing shortages and concentrated demands for water.

The government attempted to quell the issue by drawing on Sydney's third source of water – the Botany Swamps [now East Lakes] - which operated from 1858. Not only was this the first land to be resumed in Australia for water purposes [from the estate of Simeon Lord], it is also the oldest surviving main in Sydney's water supply system.<sup>1</sup> By 1861 this source too began to deteriorate, as *'fires, the tramping of cattle and horses, and human activity had denuded the area of foliage'* so that the landscape had become *'a tract of barren sand hills'*.<sup>2</sup>

The mixing of raw sewerage with drinkable water sources was further compounded by fragmented responsibilities between various local governments. The issue became so critical that community outcry eventually forced Premier Sir Henry Parkes to introduce a Bill in 1880 to *'create the necessary machinery for carrying out any works'*.<sup>3</sup> Even so it was not until 1888 that the problem of the purity of Sydney's water supply and its separation from a dedicated sewerage system, caused the transfer of control to the newly formed Board of Water Supply.

By 1911 interference with and effective control of the Botany Swamps had become so critical that the Board of Water Supply resumed 267½ acres adjacent to Gardiners Road. Of this, 63¼ acres were then appropriated by the Government in 1912 for the *Dacey Gardens Model Suburb*.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Beasley, Margot *Sweat of their brows: 100 years of Sydney Water Board 1888-1988*, 1988 p7

<sup>2</sup> Beasley *op. cit.* p10

<sup>3</sup> Henry [comp](#) *Water supply and sewerage of Sydney* 1939 *op. cit.* p 1-2

<sup>4</sup> Henry [comp](#) *op. cit.* p51

## 1.2 Inner Sydney slums conditions

While flamboyant speeches were made to usher in the new century and welcome Federation, tens of thousands of inner Sydney citizens and their children lived in oppressed and exploited conditions.<sup>5</sup> Narrow streets with no private or public open space and rear 'night soil' lanes were synonymous with slums. Inner city Sydney in the first decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was not a pleasant place to be.

Pressure on accommodation was enormous. 'Land sweating',<sup>6</sup> by unscrupulous landlords and free market profiteers was rife. Tenants unable to pay exorbitant rents took in 'lodgers', which only further compounded gross over crowding in poorly built dwellings - little ventilation or natural light and virtually non existent private sanitary provisions; the norm being open drains and communal cesspits, resulting in contaminated water from public wells. Hence diseases - pneumonia, bronchitis, diarrhoea, typhoid, tuberculosis - were rife and a part of a 'Sydney'sider's lot'.<sup>7</sup>

Commercial activity, and hence any work opportunities, focussed on the docks, being the nucleus of Australia's booming export trade in food and fibres. Incoming cargo clippers and coastal steamers however were also the source of a health risk – rats. Between 19<sup>th</sup> January and 9<sup>th</sup> August 1900, 103 citizens died of bubonic plague. The epidemic was of such proportions that the North Head Quarantine Station could not cope with the reported cases; so instead the authorities effectively sealed off The Rocks precinct. Due to such sub standard living conditions revealed by the plague epidemic, the Sydney Harbour Trust was established in 1901. At that time estimates put 35% of housing in such a dilapidated and unsanitary state that it was unfit for human habitation.<sup>8</sup> The 'house famine' and deplorable living standards eventually led to squatting and hastily put together 'gunyahs', such as *Eucalyptus Town* on the sand hills near Long Bay.<sup>9</sup>

Growing civic unrest forced apathic politicians and authorities to act. The Australian maritime and shearers strikes of the depressed 1890s strove for an 8 hour working day, and minimal employment regulations. These social reforms ran concurrent with the mood leading up to the Federation of the Australian colonies and of a dawn of a new century. Australia became a 'laboratory for social economics'.<sup>10</sup>

## 1.3 Social movements of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century

It is no wonder therefore that the universal ills of the 19<sup>th</sup> century city spurred on numerous egalitarian and social reforming movements to improve quality of life and living conditions for the urban masses.

Out of this era of reform arose legislation governing basic education, emancipation from slavery, closure of child workhouses, and movements for more representative suffrage and protection of worker conditions. Baden Powell founded the Scout movement whilst benevolent societies, such as Goodfellows Lodges, looked after widows and the sick. There was an explosion self 'improvement' mainly through a network of local Schools of Arts and literary institutes.

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<sup>5</sup> Kelly, Max *Plague Sydney 1900* 1981, p1-2

<sup>6</sup> Land sweating involved squeezing as many dwellings as possible onto a single piece of land

<sup>7</sup> Kelly op. cit. p3

<sup>8</sup> Kelly op. cit. p40

<sup>9</sup> Report Cmsn Inquiry *Housing of workmen* 1913, p22-24

<sup>10</sup> Horne, Donald *Looking for leadership* 2001 p107

## 2. Garden City / Suburb Movements

By the late 1890s Australia was echoing contemporary trends in Britain, Europe and America. Just as news of citizen unrest spread quickly via the telegraph and popular magazines, so too came information about other ways of housing people.

### 2.1 The Arts & Crafts Movement

Around the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Arts & Crafts theories about life style and built form caught the attention of the western world. This Movement grew out of the Gothic revival ideals of key 19<sup>th</sup> century thinkers – Augustus Pugin (1812-1852), graphic designer William Morris (1834-1896), and John Ruskin (1819-1900) who wrote his major thesis *'The seven lamps of architecture'* in 1849. No mid Victorian architect or designer could be untouched by the work and theories of these men.<sup>11</sup>

Among the UK disciples of these men was notable British Arts & Crafts architect, Sir Edwin Lutyens (1869-1944). Lutyens was not only involved in the *Port Sunlight* model village (1888), *Brentham Green* workers co-operative (1901) and the *Hampstead Garden Suburb* (1906). It is Lutyens who has been cited as having influenced the layout and built form designs for *Darceyville*.

### 2.2 British housing models

To gain insights into overseas examples of worker housing, the NSW Government engaged social economist, Professor Robert Francis Irvine, to report on overseas housing options to the *Commission of Inquiry into the question of housing of workmen in Europe and America* and The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works in 1913. The Committee administered the Housing Board which oversaw the establishment of *Dacey Garden Suburb*.<sup>12</sup>

Although British legislation sought to remove the 'evils' of city conditions from about 1850, improve construction standards and provide effective sanitation, model worker housing sprang from a variety of sources - industrialist need to attract workers to the early factory spinning mills, religious idealism, social reformers. From this, mixed with the Arts & Crafts Movement, came the 'garden city' movement in England and Europe, and the 'city beautiful' movement in the United States. Both movements evolved into a more pragmatic 'garden suburb' on a smaller scale, especially in the Australian examples.

Many private factory schemes had religious overtones. The World Heritage Site of *Saltaire Village* model worker housing (1850-1863) outside Bradford, UK totally controlled all aspects of life and work of its tenants.

Some private developments, such as *Bedford Park* (1875) had considerable influenced on urban design layout and general community expectations.<sup>13</sup> Innovative here was use of street trees planting and lower dwelling densities. Arts & Crafts exponent Richard Shaw designed numerous houses, all in the fashionable Queen Anne picturesque style, while prospective owners could then choose William Morris papers and furniture.

Arts & Crafts architects, Raymond Unwin (1863-1940) and Barry Parker (1867-1947), designed the philanthropic model village of *New Elswick* (1901-1914) near York, for Quaker industrialist Joseph Rowntree. Layout included alternate pairs of semi detached

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<sup>11</sup> Davey, Peter *Arts and crafts architecture* 1996 p18

<sup>12</sup> *Parliamentary Stand Committee on Public Works; minutes of evidence* Fri 24 January 1913

<sup>13</sup> *Parliamentary Stand Committee* op. cit. 1913 p 50 + email 7jan02 Peter Murray, Hon Sec Bedford Park Society  
<[www.bedfordpark.org](http://www.bedfordpark.org)>

cottages surrounded by their gardens, set well back, hedges instead of front fences and street trees. These devices Unwin and Parker used again in Howard's *Letchworth* to complement 'streets showing a love of vista, axis and order'.<sup>14</sup>

*Port Sunlight* near Liverpool (1888) under the direction of reformist churchman William Hesketh Lever, was realized by the Arts & Crafts landscape architect Thomas Mawson (co-author of *Arts & Crafts of garden design* 1900). Lever employed over 30 architects to create *Port Sunlight's* unique style, including Lutyens. The plan included similar features to *Bedford Park* (1875) - attractive and good quality housing, plenty of open space for recreation, schools, hospital, swimming pool, gymnasium, village halls, social clubs, churches as well as an art gallery dedicated to Lady Lever.

Quaker industrialist George Cadbury commissioned noted British Garden City Movement architect, William Alexander Harvey (1875-1951), to plan principals on picturesque lines<sup>15</sup> for *Bourneville* (commenced 1895-1907). Initially instigated to provide semi-detached housing for the relocated chocolate factory managers, *Bourneville* incorporated public open spaces merging with private gardens. The 1898 extension had a definite commercial focus. Freehold demonstration houses sited deliberately in view of the adjacent London - Birmingham railway line.<sup>16</sup> The importance of *Bourneville* demonstrates the diffusion of the garden suburb form down the social hierarchy to the working class.<sup>17</sup>

*Brentham Garden Suburb* (commenced 1901) is reputedly the first estate built on co-partnership principles that inspired the later, larger and more famous *Hampstead Garden Suburb* (1905).<sup>18</sup> Mrs (later Dame) Henrietta Barnett, a rector's wife working in the London East End slums, commissioned architect Unwin and it established the model of dwellings per acre.<sup>19</sup>

*Port Sunlight*, *Bourneville* and *Hampstead Garden Suburb* continue to this day to be managed by dedicated Trusts, concurrent with the local government authorities, and with protection of individual acts of the British Parliament.

## 2.3 Letchworth

The 1913 Inquiry gave much attention to *Letchworth* (commenced 1904-1906). The prime instigator was Ebenezer Howard who had articulated many of the 19<sup>th</sup> century reformers' arguments in his book *Tomorrow: a peaceful path to real reform*, published in 1898 and revised in 1902 as *Garden cities of tomorrow*. Noteworthy is Howard's reference to Colonel William Light's earlier plans for Adelaide c1836. Howard's Garden City principles combined the notion that attractions of both 'town and country' could be achieved to attract residents and businesses whilst being free from the evils of city life.

Housing was not be left to chance, to land speculators or to 'jerry builders'. The 'garden city' was to benefit all inhabitants as a whole with control 'in the hands of a central authority planning'.<sup>20</sup> Using layout plans by Unwin, Howard purposefully sought to prevent 'land sweating' and to secure a suitable environmental amenity where:-

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<sup>14</sup> Davey, P 'Arts and crafts architecture' Phaidon, 1997 p182

<sup>15</sup> Davey op.cit. 1997 p109

<sup>16</sup> Bourneville Trust centenary calendar 2000

<sup>17</sup> Ward, Andrew 'Assessment of garden city planning principles in the ACT', 2000 p4

<sup>18</sup> van Raat, Sue, Secretary of Brentham Garden Suburb Heritage Society email 2dec01

<sup>19</sup> Ward, A 'Assessment of garden city planning principles in the ACT' 2002 p20

<sup>20</sup> Parliamentary Stand Committee on Public Works; minutes of evidence op. cit.

- There were fewer houses per acre [often noted as 12 per acre] with cottages in a garden setting,
- There was provision of gardens to practice horticulture [and to grow fruit trees to aid children's health and so build social cohesion],
- There was provision for open spaces, lawns and parks where old and young could enjoy fresh air and sunlight, including communal spaces at the rear of houses and the village green model,
- Commercial and factory uses were separated from residential areas, and
- A communal life style to sustain varied yet interesting cravings of society.

The difference between Howard's *Letchworth*,<sup>21</sup> and the later blending of aesthetics into a more controlled homogeneity by Parker and Unwin in *Hampstead*, was that:-

'Letchworth was architecturally chaotic [due to the many developers and architects], often no better than a low key, low density suburb. At Hampstead, on the other hand, care was taken to control eaves lines, roof pitches and textures to unify the composition. Below the eaves line, a greater degree of stylistic freedom was allowed but with a restricted palette of materials.'<sup>22</sup>

## 2.4 Other housing models

One American antecedent can be traced to Architect Bruce Price's commission for *Tuxedo Park* (1885)<sup>23</sup> outside New York, especially designed for the very rich with houses in the Queen Anne shingle style.<sup>24</sup> Such exclusive models influenced the *Appian Way* (1903-1922) in Burwood NSW.<sup>25</sup> Other examples noted by the 1913 Inquiry included references to the *Russel Sage Foundation* in New York, the housing experiment at *Forrest Hills*, Long Island and the *Krupp factory worker housing* in Essen, Germany.

With the rise of prosperity following World War One, the motor vehicle enabled the spread of suburbia. The 'garden suburb' ideal of spatial relationships, dwelling forms and community interaction was later to be taken into new untried social engineering directions. Most notable was *Radburn* (1927-1929) in New Jersey USA, designed by Clarence Stein and Harry Wright, which sought:-

'to completely separate vehicles from pedestrians with the use of cul-de-sacs for cars on one side of the dwellings and vehicle free pathways and inner parks giving access to shared community facilities on the other.'<sup>26</sup>

*Radburn* became synonymous with provision of internal reserves, being a development of the garden city principle of rear lot gardens, but gave rise to unforeseen social consequences.

## 3. Garden Suburb philosophy application in Australia

Transfer of expertise from and communications with Britain, coupled with the above antecedents, paralleled the strongly Anglophile nature of Australian society at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. According to Robert Freestone:-

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<sup>21</sup> Howard's views of the physical manifestation of social reform as evolved from the squalor and slums of 19<sup>th</sup> century cities differed from several planners of his day

<sup>22</sup> *Parliamentary Stand Committee on Public Works; minutes of evidence* op. cit. p5

<sup>23</sup> hence the origin of the 'tux suit' for the casual evening wear

<sup>24</sup> Kent, Phillip 'States of Harmony and Estates of Equanimity'

<sup>25</sup> *Appin Way* was developed by industrialist George J Hoskins as an exclusive and picturesque gentleman's residential enclave, inclusive of shares in communal recreation facilities and house designs influenced by pattern book designs of American shingle style mixed with Queen Anne elements

<sup>26</sup> *Parliamentary Stand Committee on Public Works; minutes of evidence* op. cit. p5-6

'The fundamental values of the garden city movement [in Australia] paralleled those of the fledgling planning profession in their mix of public health, morality, social order, aesthetics and land economy such that they became intangibly entangled.'<sup>27</sup>

The British Garden City Association was formed in 1899: conferences were held at *Bourneville* in 1901 and *Port Sunlight* in 1902. In 1909 the British *Housing and Town Planning Act* coincided with the first International Town Planning Exhibition. These events influenced Australian attitudes to planning and house design.

As noted, the latter part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century saw a building boom in Sydney. The city became hillsides of narrow terrace row housing serviced by rear 'dunny lanes' and dependent on foot or horses for transport, as characterised by the Rocks, Surrey Hills and Paddington. When tram and railway lines spread out from Redfern, the break up of the semi rural 'gentleman' estates began in earnest but in an unregulated market. Whilst attracting the growing middle classes who could now 'commute', and hence move away from the filthy and unhealthy inner city, country mansion estates were engulfed with ad-hoc, mixed land use subdivisions where sanitation, access to sunlight and open space remained perennial problems. Some early attempts to plan land subdivisions included:-

*Sans Souci* (1887) at the mouth of the Georges River south of Sydney, was a subdivision along lines similar to *Bedford Park* spurred on by an ability to commute to work by the nearby newly opened Kogarah railway station: although ads sought to attract middle class families 'safe from the horrors of city living', it was not immediately successful.<sup>28</sup>

*Harcourt* (1888), Canterbury NSW, was planned by W E Phillips as a 'model' suburb using a street hierarchy and strict building standards; was bankrupt by 1893; no land sales were recorded until 1896 and then only 25 lots were sold by 1900 [only roadways and street planting remain today].

*Kensington* model suburb (1889) was the first subdivision design competition won by government architect Walter Liberty Vernon and Berry Estates' architect Howard Joseland. Their design for the 414ha (1025acre) site was entitled '*Rus in Urbe*' to explicitly link the combined benefits of rural and urban, and as based on the 'City Beautiful' principles. The site gained added prestige by its nearness to public open space of Centennial Park. The 1890's depression prevented implementation of the plan and the estate was eventually subdivided in the usual grid pattern.

*Adelaide Workmen's Homes* (1889), designed by Charles W Rutt for a charitable trust established by bequest from Sir Thomas Elder [35 cottages demolished in 1965 for road works].

Such visionaries faltered due to combined effects of the 1890s depression, drought and labour reform strikes. The stage was set, however, for entrepreneurs such as Richard Stanton to capitalise on the changing society sentiments with his *Haberfield Estates*. Like Titus Salt of Bradford and Lord Haberfield of Bristol [related to Stanton's wife], Stanton was a local mayor. As an Ashfield Councillor, he was critical of unregulated, ad hoc and unsanitary subdivisions engulfing the fringes of the city. The 1913 Inquiry minutes his knowledge of various model housing schemes.<sup>29</sup> By 1900 he foresaw the newly emerging niche market for, not only housing segregated from other landuses, but also with a layout regularity that gave space around each dwelling to provide surety of access to sunlight and privacy from overlooking. He capitalised on new technologies, such as cavity brick walls, landscape designed gardens and William Crapper's invention of an s-bend flushing toilet thereby enabling planned piped sewerage disposal without

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<sup>27</sup> Freestone, Robert *Planning suburban Canberra in the 1920s* in Freeman, Peter p12

<sup>28</sup> Kent, Phillip '*States of Harmony and Estates of Equanimity*'

<sup>29</sup> Stanton had toured in both the USA and Britain, including visits the model spa village of Clifton near Bristol and *Bourneville*, in the mid 1890s.



any need for rear lanes. The vertically integrated *Haberfield* became a run away instant success.

Stanton was well connected with major players in the emerging town planning circles. As co-founder of the Real Estate and Town Planning Institutes [along with J H Maiden, G S Jones, J Sulman, J D Fitzgerald, W Burley Griffin, J C C Bradfield], he worked closely with such well regarded persons. *Rosebery Park* on Gardiner Road Botany, for example was designed by British émigré architect, John F Sulman. Although not fully unrealised, the *Rosebery* layout separated industrial from residential land uses, had detached cottages within garden settings sited along curved streets, and provided central public and communal facilities. Sulman became a dominant figure in the Australian town planning debate; later he became the Canberra Planning Authority chairman and involved in its highly charged controversies surrounding Walter Burley Griffin. By 1911-12 Stanton was managing agent for the *Rosebery*, advertised as a 'model cottage and industrial estate' with marketing targeting the working classes. As with the two principles that had been so successful in *Haberfield*, contracts included covenants to ensure maintenance of housing quality plus land-design-build packages.

The legacy of *Daceyville* as a government housing model can be seen elsewhere in Australia. The British Garden City Association's secretary was New Zealand-born but English trained, Charles Compton Reade (1880-1933). After his lecture tour of Australia in 1915, Reade became the Chief Planner for Adelaide. At the 2<sup>nd</sup> Australian Town Planning Conference and Exhibition held in Brisbane (1918), he presented his plan for a *garden suburb* at Mitcham in Adelaide - *Colonel Light Garden Suburb* - based on the *Hampstead Garden Suburb* model. The Mitcham plan was adopted by the South Australian Cabinet, commenced construction in 1922, and later financed by South Australian State Bank Housing Scheme. It was extended to include a soldier settlement scheme, along similar lines to *Matraville*. The provision of rear lot gardens and minor internal reserves overlooked by discrete housing groups foreshadowed the later *Radburn* model. *Colonel Light Garden Suburb* is now protected by a special Act of the South Australian Parliament (1998).

In 1928 Cadbury Bros. commissioned Reade to design *Antipodean Bourneville* model housing at Claremont, Tasmania. The company owned, single storey houses used local materials of timber walls and iron roofs. Another notable Tasmanian company provided worker housing scheme of the 1920s was at *Lutana*; house designs are modelled on the English Arts & Craft style in a mix of one and two storeys, attached and detached forms, using standardised front fences, materials and building elements.

#### 4. *Daceyville* beginnings

Outbreak of plague in The Rocks finally forced political inertia into action. The 'housing problem' concerned two key questions:-<sup>30</sup>

'How in congested areas and industrial centres to get rid of the results of unregulated housing, overcrowding, high rentals for inferior accommodation and all the evils that flow from them, and

How society may best provide for each individual family with room that has access to sunlight and fresh air, is safe from fire or collapse, is private, sanitary, hygienic and artistic.'

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<sup>30</sup> *Parliamentary Stand Committee on Public Works; minutes of evidence*  
Report Commission of Inquiry – housing of workmen 1913, chapter 'The housing problem'

#### 4.1 Housing Act, 1912

The 1909 Royal Commission into housing needs recommended fulfilling social and hygienic needs by relocating workers into detached, greened suburban houses. In 1911 Irish born John Rowland Dacey (1854-1912), the local State member and NSW Treasurer, introduced enabling legislation for a 'model suburb' be constructed at State Government expense to create healthy, affordable housing to serve as standard for municipal councils and as a monument to the social conscience of the first Labor Government of NSW. Originally proposed by his predecessor A C Carmichael, the 1912 Housing Act established a three man Housing Board in April of that year to oversee the planning for a model housing estate. Chaired by barrister and planning exponent J D Fitzgerald, initially the Board operated under the auspices of the Resumed Properties Department that not only administered *Darcy Garden Suburb* but also the *Observatory Hill* ('*The Rocks*') resumed area,<sup>31</sup> which had only just constructed terrace housing at Millers Point. Although the chosen site was already in Crown ownership,<sup>32</sup> the social respectability of its location was enhanced by it being lauded as the 'new colony at Kensington'.<sup>33</sup>

#### 4.2 Daceyville Inquiry 1913

The *Commission of Inquiry into the question of the housing of workmen in Europe and America* (1913 Inquiry) came about because sectional interests sought greater housing densities and lower building standards for the fledgling *Dacey Garden Suburb*. The Inquiry lead into the '*Daceyville Extension Act No. XIII, 1914*'.

Due to the success of the *Haberfield* garden suburb model, his syndicate management of the nearby *Rosebery* estate, as well as his professional and political connections – Stanton's views were sought by the Inquiry, as did the later 1918 Federal *Inquiry into Housing Conditions*.

The Inquiry's chairman commenced with 'as the proposition submitted [for *Daceyville*] . . . is unique in so far as the Government has ever undertaken a proposition of this magnitude',<sup>34</sup> the Committee was anxious to obtain the information about how the scheme stood financially, whether its configuration was a model suburb, real estate market indicators, and health and hygiene implications of 'garden suburb' layouts. Stanton noted British and American model developments, including similarities with UK tenant's associations. He supported the scheme<sup>35</sup> as well as saying that it was well served and hence accessible by the Anzac Parade tramway, which would 'increase values'.<sup>36</sup> His views focussed strongly on the residential aesthetic presentation of a garden suburb, with strong views regarding building 'up the tone of the neighbourhood',<sup>37</sup> and urged continuance of, for example,

- well designed individualised cottages,
- use of high quality materials, masonry, finishes and design elements,
- well designed internal house layout,
- maintenance of 10'6" ceiling heights, and
- maintenance of cavities between the ground and the floor.

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<sup>31</sup> Report by Housing Board to NSW Legislative Assembly 30 June 1913

<sup>32</sup> Being 7 kilometres [or 5 miles] south from the centre of Sydney and 3 kilometres from Coogee Beach.

<sup>33</sup> *Daily Telegraph* 30 December 1911

<sup>34</sup> *Parliamentary Stand Committee on Public Works; minutes of evidence* op. cit.

<sup>35</sup> *Parliamentary Stand Committee on Public Works; minutes of evidence* op. cit.. p30

<sup>36</sup> *Parliamentary Stand Committee on Public Works; minutes of evidence* op. cit.. p27

<sup>37</sup> *Parliamentary Stand Committee on Public Works; minutes of evidence* op. cit.. Fri 24 Jan 1913

His recommendations strongly supported densities that did not revert back to the 'terrace proposition, the very thing we want to get rid of' and 'semi-detached and triplet class of house being only a rent-producing affair'.<sup>38</sup> He criticised proposals to use weatherboard cladding, lowering the floors nearer to the ground, dispensing with front fences and repetitive attached housing forms to gain a short term economical return. On the vexed issues of mortality rates and sub letting to lodgers, and with the support of Sulman, Stanton gave glowing accounts of the success of *Haberfield* in ridding society of these ills.

#### 4.3 Daceyville layout design principles

Even though the self-sufficiency of the British Garden City model as intended for *Daceyville* was not achieved, layout planning adopted the 'garden suburb' philosophy. In its first report, the Housing Board expressly noted that the 'idea embodied in the scheme is that of a 'Garden Suburb', of which there are now many examples in England and elsewhere'.<sup>39</sup> This conscious adoption of Garden Suburb planning principles was reflected in the official preference for the title *Dacey Garden Suburb* over the more commonly used *Daceyville*.

In his town planning lectures given at the University of Sydney in 1919, Sulman called *Dacey Garden Suburb* 'an exemplar of what a Garden Suburb should be' - a range of cottage designs of sizes and arrangements of rooms, no front fences, vistas created by curved residential streets whilst connecting roads were straight, allotments wedge shaped at the street corners and incidental green spaces interspersed among the housing.<sup>40</sup> There were to be no back lanes or pubs, being synonymous with 'slums'. Atypically to development of that time but similar to *Haberfield* and *Port Sunlight*, the deliberate absence of a licensed pub was indicative of the Government's agenda for social and moral reform.

#### The original plan - Public Works Plan

With the passing of the enabling legislation in early 1912, the Department of Public Works commenced road and kerb works on 6<sup>th</sup> June 1912 under the direction of the Government Architect's Office [then George McRae]. This first plan envisaged a ratio of no more than 12 dwellings per acre [versus that of the Sydney slums at 50 dwelling per acre], with land set aside for over 40 shops, 3 schools, a technical college, 4 churches, School of Arts and other 'charitable and municipal purposes'.

#### The second plan – Sulman Plan

A second working plan succeeded the more traditional Public Works proposal.<sup>41</sup> The resulting design, drawn up by leading town planning exponents Sulman, Hennessy and the Board's chairman Fitzgerald, was adopted by the Housing Board and implemented from the commencement of construction in June 1912. By June the following year 67 completed dwellings had been let whilst another 22 were under construction.<sup>42</sup> The later 1914 *Daceyville Extension Act* allowed for erection of more houses and shops.

The Sulman-Hennessy-Fitzgerald plan reduced the area to 336 acres to accommodate 1437 dwellings at a density of approximately seven houses per acre. Removing

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<sup>38</sup> *Parliamentary Stand Committee on Public Works; minutes of evidence* op. cit., p32

<sup>39</sup> *Housing Board Annual Report, 1912-1913*, p1

<sup>40</sup> Ward, A 'Assessment of garden city planning principles in ACT' 2000 p19

<sup>41</sup> *Sydney Morning Herald* 31 August 1912. [As Dacey was apparently dissatisfied with the Public Works preliminary plan, he met with Sulman, fresh from his Rosebery commission, and Hennessy seeking suggestions for drafting of a second plan, prior to introducing the 1912 Bill.]

<sup>42</sup> *Housing Board Annual Report 1913*

laneways and reducing the number of streets enabled creation of the extra allotment space and ensured that each house had a private garden and yard area. Several features of the earlier design remained, such as tree lined streets and plentiful allocation of green communal spaces.

### The third plan – Foggitt Plan

In 1917 a third scheme was drawn up as a revision of the previous ‘hastily-prepared plan’<sup>43</sup> and it was this plan that greatly influenced the look of the final settlement. By this date William H Foggitt had progressed from being the Housing Board’s to Government architect. In 1918 Foggitt adapted his earlier *Dacey Garden Suburb* house designs for detached ‘cottages’ for the Commonwealth Department of Works and Railways at *Littleton Village* near Lithgow. Similar designs he also used in 1921 for the new *Braddon* and *Ainslie* subdivisions of early Canberra.<sup>44</sup>

Although this final layout was far more curvilinear in its emphasis than the earlier designs,<sup>45</sup> as with its predecessors the function of the street remained both practical and aesthetic. In a reaction to the ‘mean’ streets of inner suburbs, the roadways had footpaths and planted nature strips. Secondary roads enticed an aesthetic concern with the need for variation of outlook and to rid the suburb of the monotony of grid development; while the broader, straight, tree-lined boulevards maintained the effect of longer impressive vistas. With the growing popularity of the motor car, the curving smaller streets of the Foggitt’s design also served to deter traffic thereby creating quiet residential precincts.<sup>46</sup>

Foggitt proposed building 1637 dwellings on a 273 acre site, leaving a further 63 acres for future development. By the time Foggitt’s plan had been adopted, the average allotment had been reduced from approximately 6000 square feet, or less than an eighth of an acre, to 4600 square feet. The Board was quick to note however that the ‘land saved’ had been ‘thrown into parks and open spaces’.

### Civic identity

*Daceyville* was not merely a residential adjunct to the metropolis, it was to contain its own sense of civic identity. In a return to the original Public Works proposal, a large public garden area was used as the focal point for the civic centre in the Foggitt Plan, the significance of which was further emphasised by placement at the geographic centre of the suburb. A ‘bird’s-eye’ artist’s rendition of the completed suburb presented a well-ordered settlement stretching on towards the horizon, with avenues radiating from formal gardens containing monuments and fountains.<sup>47</sup> As a distillation of Howard’s original garden city design and the city beautiful ideals, this illustration demonstrated a combination of tree-lined streets and picturesque suburban variation with elements of ordered symmetry in the axial roads and the formal civic space of the central open spaces.<sup>48</sup>

### Street pattern

As noted, the revised layout was based on a radial street pattern, fanning out in three sectors from its ‘natural entrance’ where the civic centre and a large park were located

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<sup>43</sup> Housing Board *Dacey Garden Suburb* booklet, Government Printer, Sydney, 1918, p7

<sup>44</sup> Ward, Andrew ‘Assessment of garden city planning principles in the ACT’ 2000 p47

<sup>45</sup> eg: for streets to the east of Cook Avenue and Wills Crescent

<sup>46</sup> Hoskins refers to Alan M. Gould, ‘The Model Suburb’, *Art and Architecture*, September/October, 1909, p.139 for contemporary discussion of the aesthetic function of curved streets

<sup>47</sup> Housing Board *Promotional Booklet* 1917 [published shortly after adoption of the Foggitt plan]

<sup>48</sup> Freestone, Robert *Model Communities*, pp.164-69; Rodney Keg *Dacey Garden Suburb — A Study*, Unpublished thesis, Department of Town Planning, University of NSW, 1988; and Anthony Price *Dacey Garden Suburb*, Unpublished thesis, Department of Architecture, University of NSW, 1969

at the junction of Bunnerong and Gardeners Roads. Cook and Banks Avenues were designed as broad boulevards incorporating low grassed medium strips and the canal. Streets were given names which echoed historical associations.<sup>49</sup>

### Reserves

Central to the gardens suburb philosophy was provision of recreational and aesthetic space. *Astrolabe Park* is an essential part of the original concept as was *Haig Park*.<sup>50</sup> Several reserves were positioned at various places throughout to make best use of land considered unsuitable for building and to reflect the natural topography; a viewing point for residents and visitors to 'experience a vista of the suburb' was set aside, being a feature Sulman had included in his original *Rosebery* design.<sup>51</sup> One playground was entirely enclosed within residential squares, allowing children in surrounding houses to access the area directly from their backyards, anticipating the later *Radburn* experiment.

### Private gardens

Due to the mainly detached house forms, most of the suburb's green space existed in the front and form of yards and front gardens. As in *Bourneville*, equally important were lots deep enough to sustain private vegetable and fruit gardens. Most specifically private gardens were a spatial link between the community and its constituent elements - the individual and the family.

Up-keep of private gardens was considered integral to the success of the development as a whole, for gardening was seen as a means both to promote healthy and moral home-life, and facilitate a broader civic pride in the community. So important was the maintenance of the gardens to the Board, a clause compelling tenants to 'keep the garden in good order' was included in all leases. Later a garden competition with financial rewards was introduced and ultimately a surcharge was added to rents to maintain open spaces.

It is ironically these spaces have largely been lost as being deemed 'backlands' in the 1980s and hence re-subdivided to provide increased dwelling yields.

### Fenceless front property boundaries

In recognition of the importance of the gardens, the Board sought to unify public and private space by dispensing with front fences. It was the first instance of the planned use of open front gardens in Australia. The front property alignments were simply marked by a low concrete plinth, whilst a standard 3 feet high ornamental twisted wire dividing fence ran along side boundaries to the front building line; back gardens were enclosed by 5'6" timber palings.

Private gardens became integral to the aesthetic composition of the overall suburb. The fenceless garden therefore became both a metaphorical and practical means of connecting individual respectability of the citizen to the well being of the overall community. By removing the most obvious signifier of private property, the Board contributed to the undermining of the link between the ownership of property and social stability as suggested by the policy of leasehold.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> Solander, Endeavour, Cook of Captain Cook's expedition whilst *Astrolabe* and *Boussole* were ships of the La Perouse expedition: Joffre was a famous French general; Wills an explorer; curved General Bridges Drive facing *Daceyville* Reserve named in 1915 after the Australian awarded the Victorian Cross.

<sup>50</sup> Haig Park was named in honour of the WW1 British Commander-in-Chief at Gallipoli

<sup>51</sup> Hoskins, I *Garden suburbs or suburbs with gardens* 2002 p15

<sup>52</sup> Hoskins, I op. cit. p16

## Landscaping

To ensure that public reserves and gardens were properly landscaped and maintained, the Board enlisted the help of the State's foremost expert on horticulture and landscaping, the Director of the Botanical Gardens - J.H. Maiden. Following his advice and labour from Gardens' workers, *Daceyville's* parks and streets were landscaped. Fashionable landscape species were chosen; main boulevards lined with eye catching *Washingtonia* palms, while streets were planted with native *Brush box*.<sup>53</sup>

## Public infra structure

With the passing of the 1912 Act, works immediately commenced on the infra structure for the model suburb. The 1912 Commissioner's report notes the provision of:-

- The draining of the swamps was achieved by a large concrete channel which carried water through the Estate emptying at the southern end: low lying portions had been filled in and levelled to improve sanitary conditions;
- Water & Sewage Board provision of sewer and drainage systems with each dwelling having its own sewer 'WC';
- Gas laid on for cooking purposes;
- An electrical sub station erected at the [suburb] entrance by Sydney Municipal Council to supply power to the houses for lighting purposes: and arrangements made with Mascot Council to light the streets with electricity from same sub station.

All streets were kerbed and guttered, roads and sidewalks were sealed with tar, sidewalks turfed. Red tinted concrete was used for private footpaths and driveways where provided, such as to the *Police Station*.

## Early public buildings

Central to civic pride and to encourage self-learning amongst the working classes, was construction of the *School of Arts* and community hall (1916) located between Cook and Banks Avenues. Constructed at a cost of £3,000 it also serviced a picture theatre, a typical multi-use in the 1920s and 30's for such buildings. To its west was the *Police Station* (1920), with separate entry to the two storey residential portion, and then a row of six *shops* at 1-11 General Bridges Drive with residences above. N°3 Wills Street was originally constructed as a *baby health centre* (1918-1919) at a cost of £2,000. The main building of *Daceyville Public School* (1921) was conceived as 'a commodious 2 storey building with wide verandah and balcony' for ventilation and health with accommodation for 8 classrooms and 4 cloak rooms at a cost of £14,000.

The Arts & Crafts styled *Electricity Substation* was constructed with a sandstone base and lintel details, face brick with upper level roughcast, central air vent feature, slate roof, gables to each elevation and corner parapets.

In the 1913 plans, 7.5 acres of land was allocated for church purposes. The *Roman Catholic Church* purchased 7½ acres in 1919 but moved to the Will Street site in 1921. The first church opened in May 1920, doubling for educational purposes until *St Michael's School* opened (1939); Marist Brothers took over its administration in 1957. Other church buildings included the Presbytery (1925), Marist House (1955), Catholic Education Office and a convent in Haig Ave (c1929), although the original picket fence was removed in 1957.<sup>54</sup> Following the World War One a pension housing scheme containing 12 units was constructed at 1-3 Wills Street.

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<sup>53</sup> Hoskins, I op. cit. p15

<sup>54</sup> Freestone, R < [www.fbe.unse.edu.au/daceyville.stm](http://www.fbe.unse.edu.au/daceyville.stm) >

### Daceyville house designs

From the outset dwelling design received careful consideration in forms, materials, heights and layout arrangements. The range of cottage designs of sizes and arrangements of rooms are based on the English vernacular Arts & Crafts cottage and California Bungalow with adaptation in the local 'federation style'.

Initially in 1912 three designs were prepared by the Government Architect's office [then George McRae].<sup>55</sup> About the same time the Federal Government advertised for an international competition for the new national capital of Canberra. With growing criticism about lack of housing variety, the Board similarly sought competitive input to obtain encourage diversity of housing design for semi-detached and grouped houses. Much debate concerned the need for 'architectural adornment' whilst keeping 'the cost within reasonable limits', that is between £300 and £475 per dwelling. Entries included the architectural firms Wilson Neave & Berry as well as McRae. Whilst the winning entry was by S G Thorp<sup>56</sup> of the firm Peddle and Thorp,<sup>57</sup> it was the Board's then supervising architect, Foggitt, whose designs also featured in the building stock.<sup>58</sup>

Historical research and fabric analysis indicate that there were a number of generic designs were developed for Daceyville and at least 20 designs survived into construction. Of these at least 12 different types in Daceyville survive into the dawn of 21<sup>st</sup> century. The sample of 1913 generic design examples noted below, indicate the desire of the Government to provide an array of types to suit different family accommodation needs at this time.<sup>59</sup>

1913 Type	Accommodation	Rental	Building cost inc kerbing, guttering, asphaltting footpaths, turfing, sewerage connection, etc
A	4 rooms, kitchen, etc	17/-	£ 595
B	2 bedrooms, living room & kitchen combined	14/6	£ 505
C	3 large rooms, kitchen etc (cottage)	18/6	£ 640
Competition design	3 large rooms, kitchen, etc (house)	21/-	£ 640
D	3 rooms, kitchen, etc	16/-	£ 500
E	3 rooms, kitchen & wash house combined	16/-	£ 525

Early houses used innovative building materials and techniques. Architectural features of the original Government Architect Office designs included tuck pointed brick work, roughcast rendered walls, tiles roofs and local federation style joinery details.<sup>60</sup> While earlier house models were substantial, changing government priorities brought about a reduction in the size and quality. Built form and materials were characterized by:-

- large roof planes, emphasised horizontality, sometimes extending over and braced as verandah and window hood, clad in imported tile and slate
- chimneys
- exposed timber rafters ends to eaves

<sup>55</sup> eg: semi detached buildings at 47-49 Gardeners Road containing 3 and 4 bedroom dwellings [1913]

<sup>56</sup> eg: 1-7 Solander Road [1913]

<sup>57</sup> Dept Housing 'Dacey Gardens walk' n.d. c1987, item 5 notes 'Unusual in that this arrangement contained both a single storey cottage with adjoining two storey dwelling making this the first of such constructions in the suburb'.

<sup>58</sup> eg: semi detached dwellings at 13-23 Boussole Road [1914]

<sup>59</sup> Report by Housing Board to NSW Legislative Assembly 30 June 1913 p2

<sup>60</sup> Dept Housing 'Dacey Gardens walk' n.d. c1987, item 4 at 19-21 Gardeners Road (1913)

- rubble or free stone foundations (also used for kerbs and gutters) from Government quarries
- external elevations broken up by change of expressed materials, such as face brickwork, single or triple brick proud corbel, fine and course roughcast into shingled gables or air vents expressed within the roughcast in gables
- cavity wall construction
- doors and windows in timber frames; vertical break-up of window detailing; casement windows with transoms over; casement with highlights above in plain and coloured glass to street; windows in pairs or triples; double hung sash to side elevations; masonry sills, some with shingled window hoods
- materials: exposed face bricks from Government kilns, calcium silicate bricks, concrete 'Sampson blocks', asbestos cement, terra cotta-slate-corrugated iron roofs, local hardwood timbers, imported pine and plywood
- sleep-outs and verandahs
- verandah balustrading - stuccoed with capping, some with timber thin picket gate to front verandah; or timber joinery.

#### 4.4 Government ownership of Daceyville

*Daceyville* was presented as the showpiece and model of town planning and social engineering. The Board was quick to realise the public relations potential. Both the architectural and infant town and country planning professions were very supportive, as use the NSW Labor Council.<sup>61</sup> Noted with pride are inquiries 'as to the working of the Suburb' being evidence that 'the experiment is being watched with considerable interest throughout the Commonwealth and beyond'.<sup>62</sup> When members of the Empire Trade Commission visited the suburb in 1913 to officially bestow the title, *Dacey Garden Suburb*, its members expressed 'surprise' at the rapid transformation of 'sandy waste' into a settlement of 'neat little cottages made attractive by well-kept gardens'<sup>63</sup> - an explicit reference to the social purpose of the garden suburb.

The Board was not empowered under the 1911 Housing Act to exercise bias 'as to the class of tenant', the only disqualification being 'possession of land having any building thereon'. Thus anyone could apply irrespective of financial means.<sup>64</sup> The first lettings were via a ballot from 600 applications covering a range of occupations - 'a grocer, butcher, draper, fancy goods merchant, greengrocer and bootmaker - at a weekly rental of £2.'<sup>65</sup> The local shops were first let in 1917.

World War One effectively truncated the initial mood of enlightened social planning and hence the development of *Daceyville*. Changes in government policy and a revision of the Sulman-Hennessy-Fitzgerald plan by Froggitt to match limited financial, manual and material resources of the government meant that, by 1917, only 240 of the planned

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<sup>61</sup> Hoskins, I op.cit. p19 records that 'also noted are some specific criticisms of the scheme. For instance, Richard Stanton referred to the Sulman, Hennessey, Fitzgerald plan as 'stiff' and 'simply laughable', in 'Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works Report on Laying out an Area of Land and Erecting Thereon Certain Dwelling-Houses Under the Housing Act', *NSW Parliamentary Papers*, Vol.II, Part 1, 1913, p.29. Robert Irvine criticised the same plan for the monotonous regularity of housing design and the absence of grouping. The latter point was addressed in Froggitt's scheme, *Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Question of the Housing of Workmen in Europe and America*, p.56'

<sup>62</sup> *Housing Board Annual Report*, 1916-1917, p2

<sup>63</sup> *Sydney Morning Herald*, 23 April 1913

<sup>64</sup> John Fitzgerald, Barrister and Housing Board member, to Cmsn Enquiry 1912, p 21

<sup>65</sup> Dept Housing 'Dacey Gardens walk' n.d. c1987



1437 dwellings had been constructed. At its peak in the 1920s there were some 300 houses and a population of 1400.<sup>66</sup>

The *Daceyville* public housing model persisted however being applied elsewhere. Between 1918 and 1925 the nearby 40 acre *Matraville Soldier Settlement* was intended for World War One injured soldiers, sailors and war widows. Unfortunately 6 Amiens Avenue<sup>67</sup> is the sole surviving example of the 91 cottages – the others being demolished in 1977 by the Department of Housing for high density flats.<sup>68</sup> Smaller Housing Board estates followed such as at *Gladesville* and *The Warren* in Marrickville.<sup>69</sup>

Following the demise of the Housing Board in 1924, the *Dacey Gardens Estate* was administered by the Public Trustee to 1940, then the Resumed Properties Branch until 1949. In 1948 both Banks and Cook Avenues were closed at General Bridges Crescent to form the present reserve; rows of *Phoenix* palms define the original avenue centre lines. In 1949 the newly formed Housing Commission, now the Department of Housing, assumed control. The site between Bunnerong Road and Banks Avenue, originally intended as shops, was developed as one and two bedroom flats in 1952. In 1974 the estate was gazetted as a ‘housing area’.

The post World War Two years saw the deterioration of the physical condition of the houses. The cessation of the inter-family transfer of occupancies further reduced incentives to maintain the properties. With the announcement of plans to extend the Eastern Suburbs Railway to Kingsford in the 1960s, comprehensive redevelopment of *Daceyville* was prepared by the Department of Housing causing bitter controversies within the wider community. Eventually the railway extension was abandoned whilst recognition of *Daceyville*’s heritage significance by the National Trust in 1978 led to reappraisal of redevelopment proposals.<sup>70</sup>

From these controversies arose a major Department of Housing urban renewal project. Although the majority of dwellings remained in public ownership, this project covered 12 hectares and 500 dwellings. A 1979 housing survey indicated that a dozen of the original houses had been, or were about to be, demolished.<sup>71</sup> The 1980 works comprised ‘rehabilitation’<sup>72</sup> of some existing dwellings,<sup>73</sup> infill of new buildings on vacant lots,<sup>74</sup> and construction of new town-houses and one bedroom apartments via the re-subdivision of existing lots through ‘backlands’ development.<sup>75</sup>

Contrary to the original density intent of ‘*Dacey Garden Suburb*’, arguments cited for these works<sup>76</sup> claimed that ‘re-subdivision of existing lots has provided opportunities for

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<sup>66</sup> Freestone, R < [www.fbe.unsw.edu.au/Daceyville.stm](http://www.fbe.unsw.edu.au/Daceyville.stm) >

<sup>67</sup> N°5 Amiens Ave, Matraville was refurbished as a community center in 1977

<sup>68</sup> Randwick Council Heritage Study Inventory sheets - Soldier settlement home, public school & Memorial reserve

<sup>69</sup> Freestone, R ‘The planned suburb’ in *Local Community History* 2001 p13

<sup>70</sup> Dept Housing ‘Dacey Gardens walk’ n.d. c1987

<sup>71</sup> Cox Tanner Pty Ltd *Dacey Garden Suburb survey of elements* 1979 p4

<sup>72</sup> Cox Tanner op. cit., introduction

<sup>73</sup> eg: a third bedroom added to 2 bedroom semi detached cottages at 2-23 Cooks Avenue;

5-7 Cook Avenue where c1917 two bedroom semi detached cottages were converted to 5 single bedroom pensioner units in 1987; 36 Astrolabe Road where original two houses were joined together in 1983 and modified as one 5 bedroom house for disabled tenants; and 47-49 Gardeners Road.

<sup>74</sup> eg: 25-29 Endeavour Road; 66-72 Astrolabe Road group of townhouses with rear parking and landscaped common open space; and 18-34 Astrolabe Road containing two x 3 bedroom and one x four bedroom dwelling and paved driveways provided for vehicle access to the rear, and

<sup>75</sup> eg: 59 pension units at 25-39 Boussole Road and 22 one bedroom units at 9-11 Solander Road

<sup>76</sup> The example given involved the two storey rear extensions at 14-16 Cooks Avenue facing Haig Park whilst maintaining a single storey appearance towards the street; these works also inserted rear vehicle access on each lot backing onto and accessed via Haig Park.

increased dwelling yield'<sup>77</sup> and that works sought 'to preserving the unique streetscape of the garden suburb'.<sup>78</sup>

About this time various aspects of public domain and shared features began to be undermined. For example concrete kerbs and ornamental wire dividing fences were provided in lieu of the traditional fenceless front alignment; the *baby health centre* was converted into three pension units and combined with adjoining units at 1-3 Wells Street; the *hall* was destroyed by fire in 1985 and replaced by a three storey apartment building in 1990, with echoes or interprets the character of the former structure. Most recently in 2001 proposals sought adaptive reuse of the *Police Station* as multiple student bedsit and communal accommodation.

Heritage Asset Management Guidelines were compiled for maintenance, upgrading and refurbishment of the Estate. The Department of Housing undertook some landscaping works in 1987, such as at Haig Park. Despite introduction of intrusive perimeter vehicle driveway in order to formalise access previous made for car parking to rear yards, a central 'village green' was provided with a small oval play area.

The visual curtilage around the *Daceyville Garden Suburb* has been less homogenously managed. Because of the changing government priorities following the Great War, some remaining blocks were sold for private development. Localities such as the western side of Astrolabe Road remain privately owed and this is marked by introduction of front fencing in contrast to the open nature of the original Garden Suburb design.

The key elements of the Garden Suburb concept displayed in *Daceyville* include:-

- Separation of landuses, with commercial uses located within the central 'gateway' forming a built form terminus to the main avenues, whilst key communal institutions around the circumference,
- Communal open spaces, some of which were internal serving the adjoining houses,
- Effective and artistic layout of curvilinear street pattern with vistas and foci, with along straight roads buildings set back at corners,
- Paved roads with kerbs and gutters installed prior to dwelling construction,
- Public domain landscaping including boulevard presentation of the main routes, nature strips, street trees and curved radii kerbs to street entries,
- Concurrent services provision – water, sewerage, gas and electricity - and avoidance of back lanes,
- Low dwelling densities to afford opportunities for spacious living predominantly for a single family on individual allotments and in a 'garden setting',
- Dwelling designs focussed on access to fresh air and natural sunlight and to maintain high standards of morality and social stability; resulted in a stylistic consistency creating a unifying overall effect,
- Minimal dwelling building standards and stylistic consistency of the housing stock to establish a cohesive visual environment, and having a minimum frontage,
- Dwellings sited to established front building lines with side setbacks, and with special attentions to corner triangular and wedge shaped lots to avoid the need for fences to screen back yards from public view, and
- Undefined front gardens with no front fences and only side dividing twisted wire fences and then timber palings beyond the front building line to allow the intermingling of individual private and public space into one overall 'garden suburb'.

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<sup>77</sup> eg: item 9 at 14-16 Cooks Avenue and G at 36 Astrolabe Road

<sup>78</sup> eg: item 6 at 9-11 Solander Road

## 5. Statement of significance

The first major public housing project in NSW, and which incorporated 'Garden City' principles, became a precursor of 20<sup>th</sup> century suburbia - curved streets, fenceless front boundaries, materials, technologies (sewer, electricity, etc) were used here for the first time together'.<sup>79</sup>

### Public housing

*Daceyville* is significant at a State level as Australia's first public housing model which has remained in public ownership since its inception despite changing housing demands throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century. This is demonstrated by its aesthetic, social and technical intactness of its built forms and spatial relationships.

Historically as Australia's first low cost public housing project, *Dacey Garden Suburb* was a test case for state intervention in the real estate market for the purpose of social reform and the role of government as an efficient and equitable provider of social services, including housing.

This publicly funded venture raised the notion of responsibility of government to its citizens to include the provision of housing along with other essentials such as water, sewerage and transport, and for this to be managed for collective ownership through government

Intended as an example for state and private developers in the economical provision of well planned, residential zoned land for all 'the people', *Daceyville* was intended to be, and was presented as, the showpiece model of a new Australian effort in town planning.

More than any of its private antecedents, *Daceyville* was to be an effective and practical translation of the broad reformist principles of the garden suburb movement and the emerging town planning profession.

### Garden suburb

*Daceyville* is the first place in Australia where the application of the ideals of radial and curved streets, consistent architectural detailing, allocation of open space and public precinct come together because it was initiated by the government of the day which thus could afford the philanthropic influences of model town planning, such as open space and lower densities, although by 1913 attempts were being made to increase its commercial viability and densities whilst lessening development standards.

Significance at a State level is derived from the consistency of architecture demonstrating influences of the Arts and Crafts Movement. *Daceyville* possesses a distinct sense of self containment within the surrounding neighbourhood. Buildings generally low rise and of similar character owing to the unified development of the garden suburb from 1912 to c1920.

### Associations

Significance also derives from associations with prominent persons historically central to the emerging town planning movement at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, including politician J R Dacey, architect/town planner John Sulman, developer Richard Stanton, horticulturist J H Maiden, barrister J D Fitzgerald and architect W H Froggit. *Daceyville* represents a major milestone progression in Sydney's housing development from The Rocks, Paddington and Haberfield.

*Daceyville* translates the ideals of Howard's *Letchworth* and the influence of key British architects, such as Lutyens, into Australia as well as pre-empting developments such as *Colonel Light Gardens* in South Australia, *Radburn* experiment in the USA, and planning for Canberra.

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<sup>79</sup> existing SHI Statement of Significance

## 6. Chronology - the garden suburb philosophy

- 1784** In Scotland David Dale founds 'model town' of *New Lanark*; extended by son-in-law Robert Owen
- 1810** In UK John Nash designs '*Blais Hamlet*' model agricultural village to house pensioners in differing designed cottages on the NW outskirts of Bristol; this leads to his Royal commission to design *Regent's Park* north of London
- 1836-37** In South Australia Colonel William Light lays on a formal grid pattern
- 1850** In UK Sir Titus Salt's builds *Saltaire* 'model village'
- 1851** In UK John Samuel Phene, builder, plants an avenue of street trees at *Margaretta Terrace*, Chelsea, London: visited by Prince Consort and Queen Victoria, thereby gaining popular support
- 10 **1854** South Melbourne VIC Andrew Clarke designs at *St Vincents Gardens*, townhouses around a central private recreation ground along the lines of Edinburgh's New Town squares
- 1869** USA *Riverside* 'modern' suburb constructed near Chicago; Alexander Stewart uses the term 'garden city' for housing estate at *Hempstead* Long Island, USA
- 1870-90** Paddington NSW land speculation and boom time development of distinctive Australian row housing based on English Georgian and Regency terrace models
- 1872-76** Ebenezer Howard travels from England to the United States, with brief stay in Chicago where he visits rural co-operative experiment settlements
- 1875** London UK *Bedford Park* 'modern' suburb constructed near Turnham Green tub station; Richard Norman adapts 19<sup>th</sup> century style he calls 'Queen Anne' & Shaw use semi detached dwellings
- 20 **1879** In UK Benjamin Ward Richardson publishes *Hygeia, or the City of Health*
- 1879** In UK Quakers the Cadbury Brothers construct a new factory alongside the River Bourne, south of Manchester, which is renamed '*Bourneville*'; some housing provided for factory managers
- 1885** Architect John Sulman [later Sir] arrives in Australia from England:  
American architect Bruce Price commissioned to design *Tuxedo Park* outside New York specially for the very rich with houses in the Queen Anne shingle style
- 1888** *Harcourt*, Canterbury NSW, planned by W E Phillips as a 'model' suburb using a street hierarchy and strict building standards; bankrupt by 1893; no land sales recorded until 1896; only 25 lots sold by 1900 (only roadways and street planting remain today)
- 30 **1888** Near Liverpool UK, W H Lever builds *Port Sunlight* worker housing, with 'free churchman' associations; architects include arts and crafts exponent Edwin Lutyens (1869-1944)
- 1889** NSW 1<sup>st</sup> subdivision design competition won by Walter Liberty Vernon and Howard Joseland with the surveyors Oxley and Mocatta for 414ha (1025acre) model suburb at *Kensington*, south-east of Sydney; winning design based on 'City Beautiful' principles; 1890's depression prevents implementation of the plan; estate eventually subdivided in the usual grid pattern
- 1889** *Adelaide Workmen's Homes*, designed by Charles W Rutt for a charitable trust established by bequest from Sir Thomas Elder; demolition of 35 cottages in 1965 for road works
- 1889** In Melbourne VIC *Hopetown* model suburb planned but not built
- 1890** Sulman addresses Melbourne ANZAAS Conference on *The Laying out of towns*
- 1893** USA City Beautiful Movement formed; its ideals presented at the Colombian Exposition, Chicago
- 40 **1898** NSW *Centennial Park Subdivision Act* passed based on garden suburb principles but houses not built until after 1906
- 1898** In UK Ebenezer Howard publishes 'To-morrow: A Peaceful Path to Real Reform' in which he explained his vision of self contained towns as a marriage of town and country; each town spaciouly laid out to give light, air and gracious living; communal ownership of all land as the key to a new social and industrial system. Howard supported the use of covenants on the land to allow the originator of a scheme to retain control of the estate for the public good. This publication has been described as '*most influential in the history of modern town planning, introducing the concept of garden cities*'
- 50 **1895 to 1907** In UK George Cadbury commissions noted British garden city movement architect William Alexander Harvey (1875-1951) to work out overall planning principles for general and public housing at *Bourneville*, a Quaker model housing project initially founded to house factory workers

- 1899 In UK Garden City Association founded; conferences were held at *Bourneville* 1901 and *Port Sunlight* 1902; secretary is New Zealand born but British trained Charles Reade
- 1901 Real estate agent and former Ashfield Council Mayor Richard Stanton commences development and active marketing of *Haberfield* as a 'garden suburb'; subdivision based on landuse separation, kerb & guttering, nature reserves, services provision, no back lanes, residential allotment covenants, minimum building standards; vertical integrated packaging inc finance, landscaping, design & construct; along then fashionable English-American 'Queen Anne' style, by Haberfield Proprietary Company architects, D Wormald and later J Spencer Stansfield
- 60 1901-14 Near York UK, Arts & Crafts architects, Barry Parker (1867-1947) and Raymond Unwin (1863-1940) designed model village of *New Elswick* model village for Joseph Rowntree City Trust
- 1902 In UK Howard re-issues his 1898 paper under new title *Garden Cities of Tomorrow* & includes reference to William Light's plans for Adelaide: Howard's Garden City Pioneer Company formed
- 1902 In UK architects Raymond Unwin and Barry Parker develop *New Earswick*, garden village near York along social and picturesque principles of the Arts & Crafts movement
- 1902-3 In Adelaide SA architects Edward, Davies & Rutt build semi-detached workers cottages in Rose Street, Thebarton; still survives as low income rental housing under charitable trust management
- 70 1903-1922 *Appian Way* Burwood NSW, 8 hectares developed by industrialist George J Hoskins as an exclusive and picturesque gentleman's residential enclave, including shares in communal recreation facilities and residents selected 'to ensure the quality of the neighbourhood'; houses designed by William Richards, influenced by pattern book designs of American shingle style with Queen Anne elements; all except 2 are single storey with alternate roofs in slate or terra cotta
- 1904 In UK Howard's Garden City Pioneer Company commences building *Letchworth Garden City* on land purchased in 1903; layout design by Unwin in association with Parker:  
At Haberfield Stanton re-subdivides all lots to increased one side setback access to a motor home, foreshadowing the demand for motor cars.
- 1905 USA *Garden City*, Chicago proposed but no construction in the 'garden suburb' style until 1912
- 1906 London UK *Hampstead Garden Suburb* layout design by Unwin
- 80 1906 Howard forms the 'Garden City Association of America' in association with church and financial interests providing advice only but no actual development
- 1906 In Victoria Hugh MaKay builds *Sunshine* – a fully service industrial village including land, construction, finance and community educational, health and recreation facilities
- 1907 *Seaforth*, NSW is first topographically inspired development
- 1907 May 2 In UK First sod turned at *Hampstead Garden Suburb* by Mrs (later Dame) Henrietta Barnett:  
August 4 *Hampstead Garden Suburb* Act passed by British Parliament
- 1908 Stanton founds Western Suburbs Real Estate Association (forerunner of NSW Real Estate Institute)
- 1909-1929 Hungarian *Wekerle Housing Estate*, Budapest, built - one of the largest and most significant garden cities in Europe with layout and design by competition
- 90 1909 At Croydon NSW *Malvern Hill* developed as a more traditional grid layout suburb but with siting and building covenants, and houses in the Edwardian 'Queen Anne' style
- 1909 In UK International Town Planning Exhibition held: British Housing and Town Planning Act passed
- 1910 Stanton is a co-founding member of the Town Planning Association NSW (now the Royal Australian Planning Institute) with Sulman as President [and in Tasmania / Queensland / Victoria 191; South Australia 1915, Western Australian 1916]
- 1911 Stanton develops *Rosebery* at Botany NSW as 'model industrial estate' with layout design by architect Sulman; industrial and residential uses segregated; marketed to the working classes with covenants to ensure maintenance of housing quality; Stanton offers design and build packages; layout plan never fully realised
- 100 1911 Australian Commonwealth Government announces a world wide competition for the design of a national capital at Canberra:  
Walter Burley Griffin constructs 9 acre *Trier Centre* housing estate near Chicago - 'the street as a public garden'

- 110 **1912** Dacey Garden Suburb, now **Daceyville**, commenced being NSW's 1<sup>st</sup> public housing public housing; designed initially by NSW Public Works Dept (William Foggit under Government Architect George McRae); layout improved by Sulman; curtailed by Great War  
Walter Burley Griffin wins layout design competition for *Canberra* but committee with Sulman as chairman directs Griffin to revise plan in 1916: Griffin lays out *Leeton* in southern NSW  
Planning for *Prozorovska*, near Moscow is first Russian Garden City  
John Hennessy, Sulman's partner, addresses the Institute of Architects of New South Wales on the 'most up to date and important subject of the garden suburb'
- 1913** Sulman & Hennessy design *Merewether* Newcastle garden suburb in Newcastle NSW but only the first few streets adhered to the plan
- 1914** Griffin lays out town plan of *Griffith* in southern NSW
- 1914-15** Australasian Garden Cities and Town Planning Association lecture tour by Reade
- 1915** Stanton gives evidence to Royal Commission on '*Housing Conditions of the People in the Metroplis and in the Populous Centres of the State*' in Victoria; findings not published until 1917
- 1915** Reade takes up 1<sup>st</sup> government town planner position in Australia for South Australian government
- 1915** Canadian twin cities planned for *Ottawa* and *Hull*
- 120 **1916** In NSW 40 acre *Matrville Soldier Settlement* constructed (all but one house later demolished by NSW Dept Housing for high density flats)
- 1916** Russian garden cities of *Kuznetsk* in Siberia planned and 1917 *Barnaul*
- 1917** 1<sup>st</sup> Town Planning Conference held in Adelaide and organised by Reade
- 1918** William Foggit designs detached 'cottages' for *Littleton Village* near Lithgow NSW, adapted from his house designs for *Dacey Garden Suburb* and later used again in early Canberra suburbs of *Braddon* and *Ainslie*
- 1918** Griffin sets up Great Developer Shareholders Association to develop *Castlecrag* NSW
- 1918** In Brisbane Read presents plans to 2<sup>nd</sup> Australian Town Planning Conference and Exhibition for a *garden suburb* at Mitcham - *Colonel Light Garden Suburb*; commenced construction in 1922 and later with South Australian State Bank Housing Scheme finance
- 130 **1918** In NSW surveyor Henry F Halloran has Griffin to draw up plans for *North Arm Cove* Port Stephens; 1920 subdivides *Tanilba Bay* with street name theme synonymous with World War One
- 1919-1930** Griffin and his wife Marion develop *Castlecrag* developed along utopian garden city ideals
- 1919** NSW Local Government Act passed and incorporates *garden suburb* principles of front building lines, side setbacks, minimum allotment sizes, etc
- 1920s** In Tasmania, *Electrolytic Zinc* Comodel workers village of semi-detached rental properties built at Lutana near Hobart; designs drawn directly from contemporary British public housing literature
- 1920** In UK *Welwyn Garden City*, Hertfordshire, launched as 2<sup>nd</sup> Garden City based on the Howard's ideals; despite token government support, little was ever built as designed
- 140 **1921** In Canberra, Federal Capital Advisory Committee resolves to provided kerbs and guttering 'for all roads as they were completed' and at the 'chairman's suggestion [Sulman]' sewer lines, water pipes and wires at the rear of blocks'
- 1921** At *Toongabbi*, NSW garden suburb principles applied by Arthur Rickard (original concentric road layout still discernible); Rickard was previous involved with Haberfield as designer and developer of the *Northcote Estate* and took over the sale of the *Dobroyd Point Estate*
- 1924-28** In USA *Sunnyside* is first American 'Garden City' constructed by Stein & the City Housing Corporation (which later went on to develop *Radburn*, New Jersey being one of the most influential 'garden cities' housing developments of the 20<sup>th</sup> century because it incorporated planning for the motor car in its design; only 2 blocks as planned ever built)
- 150 **1928** At Claremont, Tasmania, Cadbury Bros. Factory commissions Read to design *Antipodean Bourneville* model housing; company owned housing in timber and iron rejected by workers, few built
- 1934** At Ivanhoe, Victoria, Albert Victor Jennings (A V Jennings) constructs *Beaumont Estate* using some garden suburb principles

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<sup>80</sup> \* materials provided by Botany City Council