



38 DUDLEY STREET
COOGEE
PEER REVIEW OF HERITAGE ASSESMENT

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1.0 Introduction

Colin Brady of Colin Brady Architecture + Design has been commissioned by Randwick Council to conduct a peer review of a heritage assessment for the existing residence at 38 Dudley Street Coogee. The assessment by Weir Phillips Architects has been submitted to Council in response to an Interim Heritage Order placed over the residence by Council. The subject site was assessed as of Local Heritage Significance by this author in a review of sites at 122 Mount Street and 38-46 Dudley Street conducted in June 2017. The purpose of that assessment was to ascertain the potential for extension of the Dudley Street Conservation Area to incorporate these residences and to assess the heritage significance of the residences either as heritage items and or contributory items to the Conservation Area.

The Review identified the residences at 122 Mount Street and 38-46 Dudley Street to all display substantial aspects of the Dudley Street Conservation Area located to the northwest and by virtue of historic, geographic and visual/aesthetic relationship to the Conservation Area to justify extension of the Conservation Area to include these sites. The assessment also recommended that the residences at 122 Mount Street and 38, 42 & 44 Dudley Street be listed as items of local heritage significance in Randwick LEP. The residences at 40 and 46 Dudley Street were assessed as of contributory significance within the proposed extension of the Conservation Area.

Subsequent to the June 2017 Assessment and the sale of the residence at 38 Dudley Street, elements of original detail, in particular glazing to front and western side window sashes, have been removed and replaced with clear glazed, white powder coated aluminium framed sashes set inboard of the original timber frames.

Further alterations have been carried out to internal finishes and to external stairs rising to the front enclosed porch.

1.2 Authorship

This peer review considers the heritage assessment prepared by Weir Phillips on behalf of the current owner of 38 Dudley Street Coogee. It makes reference to text and images within that assessment in conjunction with additional observations by Colin Brady. No inferences are made as to the professional abilities of Weir Phillips in conducting this peer review, this review providing response to the findings contained within the Weir Phillips Assessment and the authors understanding of the site and history of the area.

In its final form it remains the work of Colin Brady Architecture + Planning. Colin Brady is a registered conservation planner with the Heritage Branch of Environment and Planning NSW, the Department of Environment and Planning, Qld. and previously with the Australian Heritage Commission. A former member of the Historic Buildings Committee of the National Trust of Australia (NSW), Colin Brady has been a Heritage Adviser to Kiama, Wyong and Newcastle Councils and currently provides heritage advisory services to Waverley Council and heritage consultancy to Randwick Council all in NSW.

1.3 Report Limitations

The report has utilized records held by the author, acknowledged sources and the local history section of Randwick Library.

2.0

Summation of Assessment by Weir Philips.

The submission by Weir Philips concludes that the residence at 38 Dudley Street does not qualify as of local heritage significance on the basis that:

No. 38 Dudley Street, Coogee was erected in c. 1929 at a time when the building industry was slowing dramatically with the onset of the Great Depression. As for many late Interwar period bungalows, it is simple in form. The detailing is not distinct enough for the dwelling to be an example of one of the revival styles than in vogue. The detailing of the porch is less finely executed than listed examples, such as No. 1 Day Street, Kensington. The loss of some of its original detailing- leadlight and terrazzo treads to stairs- has had a significant impact upon what is already a simple bungalow.

The detailed assessment above, using the criterion of the NSW Office of Environment and Heritage has demonstrated that the site does not meet the threshold for listing as a local heritage item on the Randwick LEP.

This conclusion is based upon assessment of the residence as it stands and substantially upon comparative assessment with other heritage listed and non listed residences of the period remaining in the Municipality.

The assessment by Weir Phillips is further reviewed as follows.

3.0

Historic Background to the site.

The review of the historic background to the site provided by Weir Philips is comprehensive and builds on the information included in the 2017 Assessment.

It should be noted that a number of aspects of the historic review identify and discuss the residence as being of quality and for owners of financial independence. These include construction of the residence being an exception to substantial reductions in construction in Sydney brought on by the Great Depression beginning in November 1929.

In the same vein the later sales notice at pp.9 identifies the residence having three bedrooms and a maids room, an aspect relatively rare within residences of the Inter -War period where domestic help was increasingly outsourced, with cooks, cleaners, laundry ladies etc. arriving for day work but dwelling elsewhere. Such inclusions were by 1929 a remnant of late C19 better house construction rather than a feature of less established Inter -War construction.

Similarly the provision of a garage from the time of initial construction remains an aspect of superior housing of the period comparable to the examples included in the Weir Phillips assessment as significant Inter -War houses.

These aspects of documentary evidence are undervalued in the subsequent assessment of significance, which deviates from the initial identification of the rarity and observed quality of the residence for the time of its construction.

4.0

Assessment of Existing Fabric.

Whilst providing detailed description of the site and built fabric, the assessment includes repeated reference to items of fabric now removed. In particular, the recently removed leadlight glazing and the earlier alterations to paving, stairs and enclosure of the front verandah. These are given greater

priority than the remaining original fabric despite the later being the dominant aspect of the site.

Observations of external fabric in 2017 and at a site inspection by the author on Tuesday 16th October 2018 confirm the high quality of original construction and detail. The later inspection confirmed removal of leadlight glazed double hung sash windows and replacement with powder coated aluminium framed glazing set inboard of original timber frames has taken place together with replacement of internal finishes. These alterations post date the 2017 sale of the residence.



Fig.2: Western side elevation looking north showing obscure glazed inserts replacing leadlight glazing.



Figs 2&3: Replacement aluminium sashes to western and northern windows.



Fig.4 Enclosed front verandah showing recent new paving to stairs and also illustrating the quality of stonework employed in the verandah columns.

In contrast there is no discussion of recent restorations to comparable residences.

Whilst reference to the removal of leadlight glazing is repeated through the report, there is little or no identification of the quality of the leadlight glazing clearly seen in images within the report despite this being evidence of the stylistic and aesthetic quality of the original house. Other elements of detailing namely; moulded ceilings, timber joinery, remaining strip timber flooring and fireplaces are given passing note despite these being demonstrative of the quality and character of original construction.

This contradicts later assessment of the residence as not being of high quality. There are further contradictions in the assessment, on the one hand noting the quality of building elements while, on the other, identifying individual elements that do not replicate specific details observed at random on other Inter War residences in the area. There is no recognition that these details are part of a range of detailing characteristic of Inter -War bungalow styles.



Fig.5: Main bedroom with original moulded plaster ceilings
Fig.6: New interior to kitchen.



Fig.7: Original joinery to hallway doors, skirting and architraves with later polished floorboards.
Fig.8: Recent polished stone floor to enclosed front verandah.



Fig. 10: Living room looking north to enclosed verandah. Original moulded plaster ceilings, joinery and beveled glass in lattice framing to sidelights remain in place.

5.0

Assessment of Setting

Pages 30-33 of the Weir Philips report include the statement that there are no heritage items in the vicinity of the site. This appears contradicted by the inclusion of a map showing heritage listed sites in the immediate vicinity. More attention is given to the character of buildings to the opposing side of the street than to the relationship of the residence to adjacent and nearby listed and comparable buildings in the immediate visual curtilage.

Streetscape images including Fig. 62 taken from the middle of Dudley Street to the northwest to illustrate a lack of visual continuity with the Conservation Area – an assertion countered by images of the street viewed from the footpath in the Conservation Area rather than the road. See Fig. 11 below.



Fig.11: 38 Dudley Street at center of image viewed from the eastern footpath of Dudley Street looking southeast.

At p32 it is noted that most of the planting appears to be after 1943. There is no correlation of this observation with the overall description of the Conservation Area of Inter -War housing in the area generally.

6.0

Comparative Analysis

Comparison with other examples of Inter- War construction in the Municipality both heritage listed and not heritage listed has been provided. This forms a key element of the Weir Phillips Assessment. The comparison is unclear in its identification of comparative examples as to what is original fabric and what is the outcome of recent cohesive alteration.

A number of comparative examples appear to have original open front verandahs now enclosed, albeit with leadlight glazing either recreated or sourced from other sites. Enclosure of the front verandah at 38 Dudley Street is identified as a detracting aspect of the building whereas in the comparative cases no mention is made of the apparently later enclosure. Other aspects of the comparative examples – removal of chimneys, retiling of roofs, changes to fences and garages, painting over stonework and removal of leadlight windows have impacted the significance of these houses whether listed or not. These aspects have not been addressed in the comparative assessment.



Fig. 12: Internal image of 14 Mount Street Coogee showing the enclosure of the previously open front verandah. The leadlight glazing has been inserted into an existing battened soffit. [Source- sales imagery for 14 Mount Street]

Selective comparison goes as far as to identifying the street wall/garage of the residence at 14 Mount Street as more notable due to this demonstrating a more engineered response to the challenges presented by topography than the stepped retaining wall in front of No.38 Dudley Street. The difference in setting generating the high wall at 14 Mount Street is not mentioned.



Fig.13: Stone retaining wall with garage entry at 14 Mount Street resulting from the steep slope and lack of a rear lane.



Fig.14: Stepped stone retaining wall to 38 Dudley Street returning about Mount Street and continuing the detail of the entry stairs and verandah columns of the residence. .



Fig.15: 1 Day Avenue Kensington

The recently restored and extended residence at 1 Day Ave above is considered significant in the Weir Phillips Report on aesthetic criterion whilst the unrestored residence at 38 Dudley Street [Fig.13 below] is not. This is based upon variation in detailing to the verandah columns and gable infill. The differences are limited, assessment ignoring the removal of leadlight glazing to the right hand window at 1 Day Street, whilst noting this as a determining factor at 38 Dudley Street. The comparison does not comment on the recent paint scheme at 1Day Street which enhances elements that are obscured by the monochromatic paint finishes at 38 Dudley Street.



Fig.16: 38 Dudley Street Coogee.

The comparative assessment includes a number of Inter -War residences not listed as of local heritage significance and located within the Randwick Council Area. These are briefly described as follows:

Inter War Residence	Style	Characteristics	Consideration as a heritage Item
155 Mount St	Inter-War Georgian Revival	Exterior limited to face brick Limited detailing windows altered	Marginal
155 Oberon St	Limited Inter War Georgian influence	Exterior limited to face brick. Late Inter War construction Poorly extended	No
148 Brooke Street	Inter War California Bungalow	Well detailing in face brick and stone. Face brick work to verandah interior painted.	Would qualify for listing
64 Denning Street	Inter War Functionalist	Highly compromised example	No
47 Denning Street Coogee	Inter War Old English	Subdivided into three dwellings and poorly extended	Would qualify if additions removed.

7.0

Influence of the Inter War Georgian Style in the design of 38 Dudley Street Coogee

At pp. 42 the Weir Phillips Assessment discusses the identification of the subject residence and its aesthetic influences. The assessment in part agrees that the Inter War Georgian Style has influenced the design of the residence and then drifts into a discussion on the most prevalent forms of Inter- War residences in Coogee. The importance of this is not clear. The residence is a stylistic variant of the Inter -War bungalow and its aesthetic influences are readily identified. That other stylistic variants of the Inter -War bungalow are more prolific in Coogee would appear to strengthen the significance of the subject building on the basis of rarity and preclude any assessment that argues Inter- War bungalows influenced by the Inter- War Georgian style are 'not rare' in Coogee.

At pp. 43 the Weir Phillips Assessment continues the argument that the residence is or is not influenced by the Inter War Georgian Revival Style whilst again conceding that :

*Characteristics that are agreed upon include hipped roofs; porticos with classical precedents, such as classical columns; vertical proportioned timber framed double hung windows, frequently multi-paned and paired with timber shutters; quoining; string courses, round headed fanlights/toplights or motives; and boxed eaves. The Encyclopaedia of Australian Architecture speaks of 'simple forms with elegant, but contained embellishment.'*²⁰

This and the subsequent assessment under the criteria of Heritage assessment [established by the NSW Heritage Branch Dept. of Environment and Planning] appear contradictory in the Weir Phillips report.

It should be noted that the introduction to the Heritage Branch assessment guidelines emphasizes that the basis for assessment within the guidelines and the associated guidelines identifying items that do not meet the threshold for heritage listing are not exclusive and should not be interpreted as the only justification for listing or not listing a site. There is no discussion of the value of the subject residence relative to the adjacent Dudley Street Conservation Area or its proposed extension incorporating the residences at 38 Dudley Street and those to the east as far as Mount Street. The significance of the Dudley Street Conservation Area [identified in the Weir Phillips Assessment] includes the aesthetic significance of ...

fine quality groupings and individual examples of large Federation and Inter-War period detached houses. Several styles are represented, including Federation Bungalow and Queen Anne and Inter-War Mediterranean and Functionalist.

The subject residence clearly fits within this category being one of 'several styles' namely Inter-War Georgian and of fine quality in its construction, detail and refined simplicity.

8.0

Comparison with the Dudley Street Conservation Area.

The Statement of Significance for the adjacent Dudley Street Conservation Area and its proposed extension, which includes the site and residence at 38 Dudley Street, is recorded as follows:

Aesthetic Significance:

The conservation area includes fine quality groupings and individual examples of large Federation and Inter-War period detached houses. Several styles are represented, including Federation Bungalow and Queen Anne and Inter-War Mediterranean and Functionalist. The most outstanding individual examples are the Federation Queen Anne style houses at Nos 16, 22, 34 and 36 Dudley Street and Nos 1 and 7 Thomas Street. Their large and bowed windows take maximum advantage of views.

The houses are situated on elevated sites, with views of the Pacific Ocean to the east and north over the adjacent Baker and Leete Parks. The front gardens, fence designs, sandstone kerbing, steep and undulating topography, and the palm, pine and fig tree plantings in the parks, all contribute to the aesthetic quality of the setting.

Historic Significance:

The existing houses demonstrate the process of development of the area in the first few decades of the twentieth century. The social class and aspirations of the original occupants are demonstrated by the design of these large houses, on desirable sites with ocean views.

Social Significance:

The conservation area has social significance because its physical qualities are appreciated by its residents and the general community. The conservation area continues in its traditional residential use.

The Weir Phillips report focuses on specific housing styles out of those present in the range of Inter - War housing evident in the Conservation Area.

9.0 Assessment Under NSW Heritage Division Criteria

The assessment provided within the Weir Phillips Report incorporates the assessment provided in the draft Heritage Data form prepared by this author in 2017.

This leads to an adversarial rather than an unbiased assessment. From the outset the contradictory argument as to the aesthetic influence of the Inter War Georgian Style forms a substantial aspect of assessment under;

Criterion (a)

An item is important in the course, or pattern, of New South Wales' cultural or natural history (or the cultural or natural history of the local area)

And

Criterion (c)

An item is important in demonstrating aesthetic characteristics and/or a high degree of technical achievement in New South Wales (or the local area).

Under both criteria, having previously acknowledged the Inter- War Georgian Stylistic influence in the design of the residence, the Weir Phillips assessment provides contradictory argument as to the aesthetic character and quality of the residence. The contention that the fabric is not of higher quality than other dwellings in the area is refuted in the Weir Phillips comparative assessment where the residence is seen to be comparable to other listed residences and of comparable quality with listed residences in the immediate streetscape.

The only differing factor is the degree of restoration evident in the comparative listed residences. Retaining the capacity for reinstatement of removed fabric or provision of more cohesive new fabric and detail, both Criterion (a) and (c) are found to support local significance.

10.0 Conclusion

The heritage assessment by Weir Phillips for 38 Dudley Street provides a detailed background history to the site including the impact of the Great Depression on residential construction during the Inter - War years. The history is limited in discussing the evolution of styles through this period, relying on stylistic checklists from varied sources, rather than an explanation of the evolving simplicity of forms culminating in the Inter War Functionalist Style of the later 1930's.

This increasing simplicity is portrayed as a negative in the assessment with no identification of the Inter- War Georgian and Mediterranean styles as the turning point from the California Bungalow with its remnant Federation influences. This pattern is evident in the Dudley Street Conservation Area and its proposed extension, where ongoing historicist taste is seen to have its final expression in the Inter-War Old English style employed adjacent to emerging streamlined Functionalism. As the description of the Conservation Area states:

The existing houses demonstrate the process of development of the area in the first few decades of the twentieth century. The social class and aspirations of the original occupants are demonstrated by the design of these large houses, on desirable sites with ocean views.

The Weir Phillips assessment places substantial emphasis on the removal of original detail at 38 Dudley Street, namely leadlight glazed windows, the enclosure of the front verandah and changes to internal finishes. It does not note that these are also aspects of comparable listed residences included in the assessment or are of reversible nature.

The basis for recent removal of leadlight window glazing and associated sashes and changes to internal finishes are not discussed in the Weir Phillips assessment. The removal of high quality leadlight glazing and replacement with unsympathetic metal framed glazing is simply identified as a reason for not listing the residence rather than a recorded aspect of the site able to be reinstated as has been done in others of the noted residences in the comparative assessment.

Based upon the accepted history of the site; the relationship to the Dudley Street Conservation Area and adjacent streetscape; and detailed consideration of comparative listed buildings in the Randwick District, there is compelling evidence that the residence at 38 Dudley Street Coogee satisfies Criterion (a) Historic Significance and (c) Aesthetic Significance of the established assessment criteria. As such the residence at 38 Dudley Street Coogee is considered to be of local heritage significance.



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