

C5 Federal Fyle, Ashfield Heritage Conservation Area



Figure 1. Federal Fyle Heritage Conservation Area Map

Key Period of Significance: 1879–1940s

HCA TYPE 3: MIXED RESIDENTIAL STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Federal-Fyle Heritage Conservation Area is of local heritage significance.

The area is of historical significance as an area developed after 1879, predominantly in the Federation to Inter-war period, with its variety of housing periods and styles reflecting the different subdivisions and periods of subdivision during its development, some of which involved building covenants to ensure development of higher quality housing.

The area is of aesthetic significance for its varied streetscapes within the development period 1879-1940s encompassing predominantly detached single storey houses in Victorian Filigree, Federation Queen Anne and Inter-war California Bungalow styles, however also including Federation period semi-detached and detached weatherboard houses and one 2-storey Inter-war Art Deco style flat building. The early 20th century street tree plantings of brush box in the carriageways of Oak Street and Federal Avenue increase the aesthetic appeal of these streetscapes.

Key Character Elements

Subdivision and public domain elements:

- Pre-1943 brush box street tree plantings in the road carriageway in Oak Street and Federal Avenue
- Relatively wide carriageway in Oak Street, Federal Avenue, Bruce Street
- Narrower road carriageway in Wallace Street

Elements that contribute to the consistency of the streetscape (visible from the public domain):

- Predominantly detached face brick single storey housing Federation Queen Anne and Inter-war California bungalow styles
- Some 1920s-1930s brick single storey bungalows
- Some Federation Queen Anne and Inter-war period semi-detached pairs of housing (Nos. 18-20, 22-24 Federal Avenue, Nos 1-3 Federal Avenue)
- Inter-war Art Deco style 2-storey brick flat buildings (example 8A Oak Street)
- A few detached Victorian period masonry houses (examples 4, 6, 8 Ormond Street, 19 Wallace Street)
- A few single storey detached weatherboard houses circa 1890-1910 (examples 9, 11, 13 Wallace Street)
- Original details such as:
 - Front verandahs or balconies with original detailing
 - Original roof forms with original cladding of slate, corrugated steel (Victorian period) or slate, unglazed terracotta tile or corrugated steel (Federation period), or unglazed terracotta tile (Inter-war period) and original chimneys
 - Gable ends facing the street with original timber shingled, roughcast stucco or imitation half-timbered finishes (Federation, Inter-war periods)
 - Face brickwork or weatherboard walls (Federation, Inter-war periods)
 - Rendered brickwork or weatherboard walls (Victorian period)
 - Original timber-framed windows and timber panelled doors consistent with the periods and styles of houses
- Original front fences - timber picket, low brick, brick & timber picket, or timber framed wire mesh, for Federation and Inter-war period houses; timber pickets or cast-iron palisade fences for Victorian period houses

Non-Contributory Elements

- Recent or heavily altered houses with difficult to reverse uncharacteristic alterations (examples 8A-8B Bruce Street, 5 Bruce Street, 15 Elizabeth St, 4-6, 7, 14 Federal Avenue, 21, 27, 34 Oak Street, 5 Ormond Street, 23, 25, 14, 28 Wallace Street)
- 1960s-1970s residential flat buildings (examples 7, 7A Bruce Street)
- Changes to materials: Cement rendering of face brickwork to Federation, Inter-war period houses; modern roof cladding and loss of chimneys (examples concrete roof tiles)
- Carports in front gardens (example 18, 22 Federal Avenue)
- Front verandah enclosures (14 Bruce Street, 17 Elizabeth Street)
- Modern front fences of unsympathetic design and materials, particularly high solid masonry front fences.

Historical Development

This area occupies part of what were three original grants. Most of the land was in William Faithful's 1799 grant. A little of it was in John Forrester's grant of 1794, and a little more in one made jointly to four grantees, Thomas Rowdon, John Jones, Francis McKewen and John Butcher, in 1795. Such are the complications of land development that by about 1820 the area still spread over parts of two large land holdings, viz, Joseph Underwood's Ashfield Park Estate and Henry Kable's (or Cable's) farm¹. In the following decades the area was further subdivided for residential exploitation by many interesting entrepreneurs, some of whose activities will be mentioned.

Elizabeth Street, the southern edge of the conservation area, was formed in 1838 and named for Elizabeth, eldest daughter of Elizabeth Underwood. It did not reach its present form here until nearly a century later. Bruce Street was formed in 1841 along the east boundary of Faithful's grant. Wallace Street, parallel with the north boundary of Faithful's grant, was also laid out also in 1841. Ormond Street appeared 1879,² Federal Avenue in 1899, and Oak Street in 1903, facilitating the complete subdivision of the area³.

In the 1870s this roughly triangular area was still not subdivided for residential development, and the only interior roads were Bruce and Wallace Streets. Elizabeth Street ended near Wallace Street, where, as Matilda Street,⁴ it turned south across a bridge over the railway lines and connected to Liverpool Road. The present junction of Elizabeth Street and Liverpool Road, north of the railway, was not made until the 20th century⁵. This extension of Elizabeth Street⁵ required the demolition of some of the outbuildings of the house 'Studley', which addressed Bruce Street.

Before residential subdivision the landholders were Fyle, Haigh, Henson and Jones, whose names appear on the subdivision plan made for the 1879 auction sale of the surrounding land. Some of the activities of these four follows.

John Fyle (1814-1887), who died at his residence Ashfield on July 5 1887⁶ was a brickmaker who became a well-known citizen and alderman, with large holdings in Ashfield dating from 1839⁷. Part of his land was auctioned in 1914 as the Fyle Estate No 1, comprising six allotments. Four of these were at the southwest end of Wallace Street; the other two addressed the road that became the extension of Elizabeth Street,

on one of which stood a dwelling. Another parcel, larger in extent, was auctioned in 1917 as the Fyle Estate No 2. It comprised 30 allotments facing Oak and Wallace Streets⁸. Estate No 2 was covered by a building covenant which provided that:

any building erected shall be constructed in a proper and workmanlike manner, to be of brick or stone or concrete, the roof to be of slate or tile, to cost not less than £450.

This requirement ensured the high quality of building which is still evident today in Oak and Wallace Streets.

Benjamin Haigh owned the large block of land at the north-east end of what is now Oak Street, but then accessed from Wallace Street, and on this he built a substantial residence. The site was eventually acquired by the Corinthian Bowling Club and in more recent years became the venue for the present complex of town houses.

William Henson was an alderman of the first Ashfield Council who also became an MLA. His house, 'Gliula', the site of which is now No 21 Elizabeth Street, was built in about 1867. After his death in 1903 the subdivision bearing his name, then comprising 24 allotments, was auctioned. The east boundary of the one on which 'Gliula' was situated influenced the bend in Oak Street where it joined Elizabeth Street⁹. The large oak trees on Henson's property are believed to have given the name to Oak Street¹⁰.

- Jones: little is known about this man (he was not the John Jones of the 1795 grant) except that he was the owner of the land at the corner of Bruce and Wallace Streets, later acquired and subdivided by Robert Hudson as mentioned later. A subsequent owner was W A Cramsie, of Glen Innes¹¹. Cramsie's name also appears on the H E C Robinson map as the owner of the land on the east side of Federal Avenue that included the property 'Balranald', which was offered for private sale as the Balranald Estate, of nine allotments, by Stanton & Son¹².

Other purchasers acquired and subdivided parts of these holdings. Among them were Robert Hudson, who owned the land at the corner of Wallace and Bruce Streets mentioned earlier, on part of which, in the 1880s, he built the house 'Woniara', now No 19 Wallace Street, a heritage item. On the H E C Robinson map, about 1912, the remainder of his block, not then subdivided, was shown in the ownership of the London Bank of Australasia.

John Ireland: the piece of land owned by Ireland at the north-east end of Oak Street, adjoining Haigh's land, was subdivided by Ireland's descendants into nine lots, six facing Oak Street (which was extended to serve them) and three facing Wallace Street. These nine blocks were purchased by a builder, Arthur William Coleman, who is believed to have built the houses now standing on them¹³.

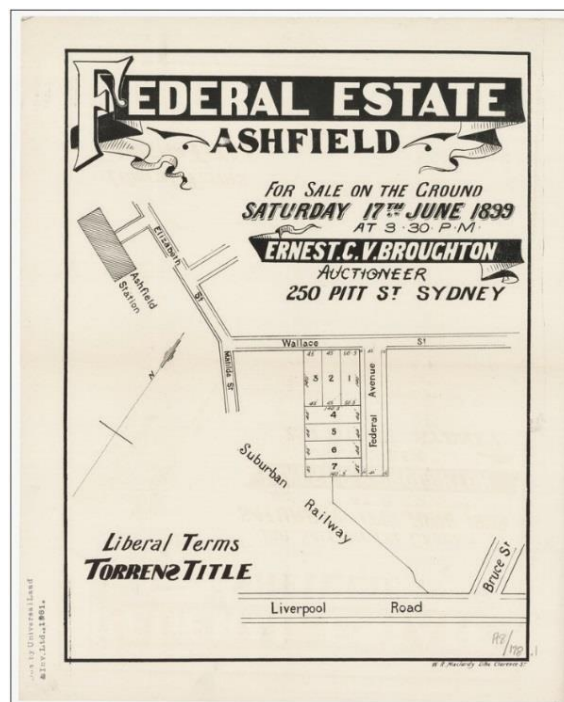
William Adams, one of the early owners of this land, was the man possibly responsible for creating Federal Avenue¹⁴.

Sources:

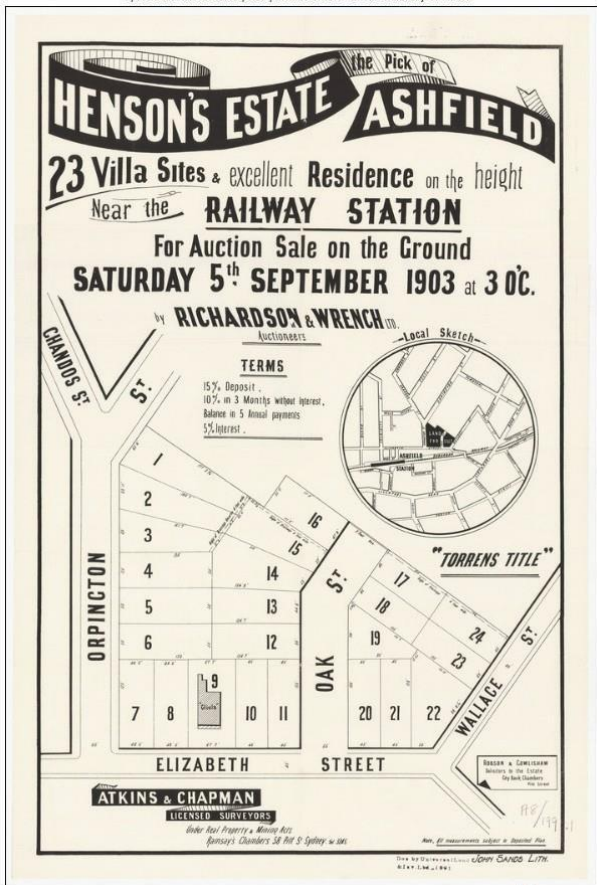
- ¹ Ashfield Heritage Study 1993, vol 1, pp 32, 36.
- ² Ashfield Heritage Study 1993, vol 1, Appendix G; Higinbotham & Robinson map of Ashfield, 1883.
- ³ Ashfield Heritage Study 1993, *ibid*; H E C Robinson map of Ashfield, north ward, c 1912.
- ⁴ This street is so shown on the Federal Estate subdivision plan of 1899 done for Ernest C V Broughton, auctioneer, A8/228, in Ashfield Council Archives.
- ⁵ Subdivision plan by Richardson & Wrench, 1879, in Ashfield Council Archives. The old bridge across the railway is still shown on the Fyle Estate No 2 subdivision plan.
- ⁶ The Sydney Mail and NSW Advertiser, 16 July 1887 p152, death notice
- ⁷ Nora Peek and Chris Pratten, *Working the Clays: The Brickmakers of the Ashfield District*, (Ashfield, 1996), pp.9-10
- ⁸ Fyle Estate No 1, 7 March 1914, number not known; Fyle Estate No 2, 21 April 1917, A8/151; both auctioned by J A Somerville & Co: subdivision plans at Ashfield Council Archives.
- ⁹ Subdivision plan for Henson's Estate, auctioned 5 September 1903 by Richardson & Wrench, A8/421 in Ashfield Council Archives.
- ¹⁰ Reported by a granddaughter of William Henson; Ashfield Heritage Study 1993, vol 1, p 191; the Richardson & Wrench subdivision plan of 1903 shows 'Henson's Estate, the Pick of Ashfield'.
- ¹¹ Ashfield Heritage Study, 1993, vol 2, reference No 287.
- ¹² H E C Robinson map of Ashfield North Ward, undated but about 1912; the subdivision plan for the Balranald Estate, undated, is No A8/393 at Ashfield Council Archives.
- ¹³ Ashfield Heritage Study 1993, vol 1, p 191.
- ¹⁴ Ashfield Heritage Study, 1993, vol 2, reference No 091; H E C Robinson map of Ashfield, North Ward, undated but c 1912.



Above: Fyle Estate No. 1 subdivision plan 7 March 1914 Source: Ashfield subdivision plans online, NSW State Library Call No. Z/SP/A8



Above: Federal Estate subdivision plan 17 June 1899 Source: Ashfield subdivision plans online; NSW State Library Call No Z/SP/A8/178.1



Above: Fyle Estate No. 2 subdivision plan April 21, 1917.
 Source: Ashfield subdivision plans online, NSW State Library Call No. Z/SP/A8



Above: Henson's Estate subdivision plan 5 September 1903. Source: Ashfield subdivision plans online, NSW State Library Call No. Z/SP/A8



Above: Balranald Estate subdivision plan (undated).
 Source: Ashfield subdivision plans online; NSW State Library Call No Z/SP/A8

Building Ranking Definitions

Building ranking No.	Building Ranking Definition
HI	Heritage items: Buildings individually listed as heritage items in the LEP
1	Contributory 1: Buildings that clearly reflect the Key period of Significance for the HCA and are key elements of the character of the HCA
2	Contributory 2: Buildings that have been altered but are still identifiable as dating from the Key period of Significance for the HCA. They retain their overall form from the original date of construction and, even though altered, are contributory to the HCA character
3	Neutral: Buildings that are either heavily altered to an extent where the construction period is uncertain, or are from a construction period which falls outside the Key Period of Significance for the HCA, but which reflect the predominant scale and form of other buildings within the HCA, and therefore do not detract from the character of the HCA
4	Detracting: Buildings from a construction period which falls outside the Key Period of Significance for the HCA that have scale or form that is not consistent with the key characteristics of the area

Federal Fyle

Number	Street	Ranking	Name	Style and Observations
4	Bruce Street	1		
6	Bruce Street	1		
8A	Bruce Street	2		
10	Bruce Street	2		Federation
12	Bruce Street	1	Twickenham	Federation
14	Bruce Street	2		Federation
11	Bruce Street	HI		California Bungalow
9	Bruce Street	2		Federation
7	Bruce Street	4		Post-War
7A	Bruce Street	4		Post-War
5	Bruce Street	4		Victorian
3	Bruce Street	HI		California Bungalow
1	Bruce Street	1		Federation
21	Elizabeth Street	1		Inter-War/Victorian
19	Elizabeth Street	1		Federation/California Bungalow
17	Elizabeth Street	HI		Federation
15	Elizabeth Street	2		Federation
2	Federal Avenue	1		Federation
4-6	Federal Avenue	3		
8-10	Federal Avenue	1		Art Deco
12	Federal Avenue	HI	The Wrights	Federation
14	Federal Avenue	3		
16	Federal Avenue	1		Federation
18-20	Federal Avenue	HI		Federation
22-24	Federal Avenue	HI		Federation
26	Federal Avenue	1		Federation
13	Federal Avenue	1		Federation
11	Federal Avenue	1		Federation
9	Federal Avenue	1		Federation
7	Federal Avenue	3		
5	Federal Avenue	1		Federation
1-3	Federal Avenue	1		Art Deco
37	Oak Street			Late 20 th Century
35	Oak Street	1		Federation/Californian Bungalow

Number	Street	Ranking	Name	Style and Observations
33	Oak Street	1		Federation/Californian Bungalow
31	Oak Street	1		Federation/Californian Bungalow
29	Oak Street	1		Federation/Californian Bungalow
27	Oak Street	1		
25	Oak Street	1		Federation/Californian Bungalow
23	Oak Street	1		Federation/Californian Bungalow
21	Oak Street	3		Federation/Californian Bungalow
19	Oak Street	1		Federation/Californian Bungalow
17	Oak Street	1		Federation/Californian Bungalow
15	Oak Street	1		Federation
13	Oak Street	1	Allawah	Federation
11	Oak Street	1		Federation/Californian Bungalow
9	Oak Street	1		Federation
7	Oak Street	1		Federation
5	Oak Street	1		Federation
3	Oak Street	1		Federation
1	Oak Street	1		Federation
2-4	Oak Street	1		Federation
6	Oak Street	1		Federation
8	Oak Street	1		Federation
8A	Oak Street	1		Art Deco
10	Oak Street	1		Federation
12	Oak Street	1		Federation
14	Oak Street	1		Federation
16	Oak Street	1		Federation
18	Oak Street	1		Federation
20	Oak Street	1		Federation
22	Oak Street	1		Federation
24	Oak Street	1		Federation