

# **MERIDEN ANGLICAN SCHOOL**

## **SEARS REQUEST**

## **BUILT HERITAGE CONSIDERATIONS**

22 OCTOBER 2018  
SH1452  
PREPARED FOR MERIDEN ANGLICAN SCHOOL

**URBIS**

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Project Code	SH1452		
Report Number	01	12.09.2018	Draft for Review
	02	17.10.2018	Report Issued
	03	22.10.2018	Report Issued

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1. PURPOSE

In accordance with Part 4 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (the Act), this report has been prepared to request Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs) to guide the preparation of a State Significant Development Application (SSDA) for the proposed development at Meriden School, Strathfield (the School).

This report has been prepared by Urbis on behalf of Meriden School (the Applicant), and has been informed by the architectural plans prepared by Allen Jack and Cottier.

The proposed State Significant Development (SSD) comprises works on all three school campuses which comprise:

- Demolition of existing music building and construction of a new 4-storey Centre for Music and Drama (Senior School Campus at 10-12 Redmyre Road);
- Demolition of existing single storey office building and construction of a new 2-storey teaching and administration building (Prep School Campus, known as Lingwood, at 16 Margaret Street); and
- Demolition of existing dwelling and creation of new landscaped playground area (Junior School Campus, at 4 Vernon Street).

The proposed development is identified as a State Significant Development as it falls within the requirements of Clause 15(2) of Schedule 1 of the *State Environmental Planning Policy (State and Regional Development) 2011* (the SRD SEPP), being:

### **15 Educational Establishments**

- *Development for the purpose of a new school (regardless of the capital investment value).*
- *Development that has a capital investment value of more than \$20 million for the purpose of alterations or additions to an existing school.*
- *Development for the purposes of a tertiary institution (within the meaning of State Environmental Planning Policy (Educational Establishments and Child Care Facilities) 2017) including associated research facilities, that has a capital investment value of more than \$30 million.*

The primary objective of the proposal is to improve the current school facilities by providing more contemporary teaching spaces, and increasing the playground space in the Junior School Campus. The proposed new teaching facilities will result in an increased capacity of approximately 50 students across all three campuses, increasing the school's current total capacity from approximately 1,500 students to approximately 1,550 students across all three campuses.

The purpose of this report is to provide information to support the request for SEARs. To assist in identifying the SEARs for the preparation of the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the proposal, this report provides:

- An overview of the site and context;
- A description of the proposed development;
- An overview of the relevant heritage context; and
- An overview of the likely heritage impacts and mitigation strategies.

## 1.2. AUTHOR IDENTIFICATION

This report has been prepared by Ashleigh Persian (Senior Heritage Consultant). Stephen Davies (Director Heritage) has reviewed and endorsed its contents.

## 2. SITE AND LOCALITY

### 2.1. THE SITE

Meriden School is located across three campuses which are within close proximity to one another however are not contiguous landholdings. The School comprises:

- The Senior School Campus at 10-12 Redmyre Road;
- The Prep School Campus, known as Lingwood, at 16 Margaret Street; and
- The Junior School Campus, along Vernon Street (and including 4 Vernon Street).

Each of these campuses are highlighted in Figure 1 below.



Figure 1 – Locality map showing all three campuses of Meriden School

Source: Allen Jack & Cottier

The School originated on the Senior School site and has expanded from this site as surrounding properties have become available. Most recently, the School acquired 4 Vernon Street which is proposed to be incorporated into the Junior Campus as a landscaped playground area (as part of the SSDA proposal).

Each of the sites are irregular land parcels, and each of the campuses have level changes:

- The Senior School campus slopes from the Margaret Street frontage towards Redmyre Road;
- The Junior School campus slopes from Margaret Street towards Vernon Street; and
- Lingwood Prep campus has a gentle slope from south to each towards Margaret Street.

## 2.2. THE LOCALITY

Meriden School is located in Strathfield, approximately 13 kilometres (by direct line) west of the Sydney CBD. Strathfield is a mixed suburb within the Inner West suburbs of Sydney. It includes a town centre around the train station, with a range of mixed use activities, medium and high density residential areas, and low density residential.

Immediately surround the site are:

- To the north: Strathfield Plaza, comprising a single-storey retail centre and 8-storey commercial tower. Further to the north is Strathfield Station and the Strathfield Town Square.
- To the east: 3 and 4-storey residential flat buildings. Further east is the southern part of the Strathfield town centre mixed use area.
- To the south: low-scale detached residential buildings, and the Santa Maria Del Monte school campus.
- To the west: low-density residential area, characterised by single and two-storey buildings, and the St Peter and Paul Russian Orthodox Church.

The site is well serviced by public transport, with bus stops on Redmyre Road and Strathfield Railway Station located approximately 200 metres north of the Senior School. In addition, Meriden School operates several bus services to more distant parts of Sydney which have high numbers of children attending the School.



Figure 2 – Locality diagram (Meriden School campuses shown shaded red)

Source: SIX Maps 2018

### 3. HERITAGE CONTENT

Each of the three (3) subject campus sites is subject to a heritage listing. These heritage listings are outlined as follows:

- Meriden Senior School (10-28 Redmyre Road) – whole of the site is listed as a locally significant heritage item (Item 187 under the Strathfield LEP 2012).
- Meriden Prep School (16b Margaret Street) – whole of the site is listed as a locally significant heritage item (Item 176 under the Strathfield LEP 2012).
- Meriden Junior School (various sites including 36-38 Redmyre Road & 4 Vernon Street) – part of the site, confined to five lots along Vernon Street and Redmyre Road, are located within two separate heritage conservation areas, as follows:
  - 4-8 Vernon Street – located within the C16 Vernon Street Conservation Area under the Strathfield LEP 2012.
  - 36-38 Redmyre Road – located within the C14 Redmyre Road Conservation Area under the Strathfield LEP 2012.

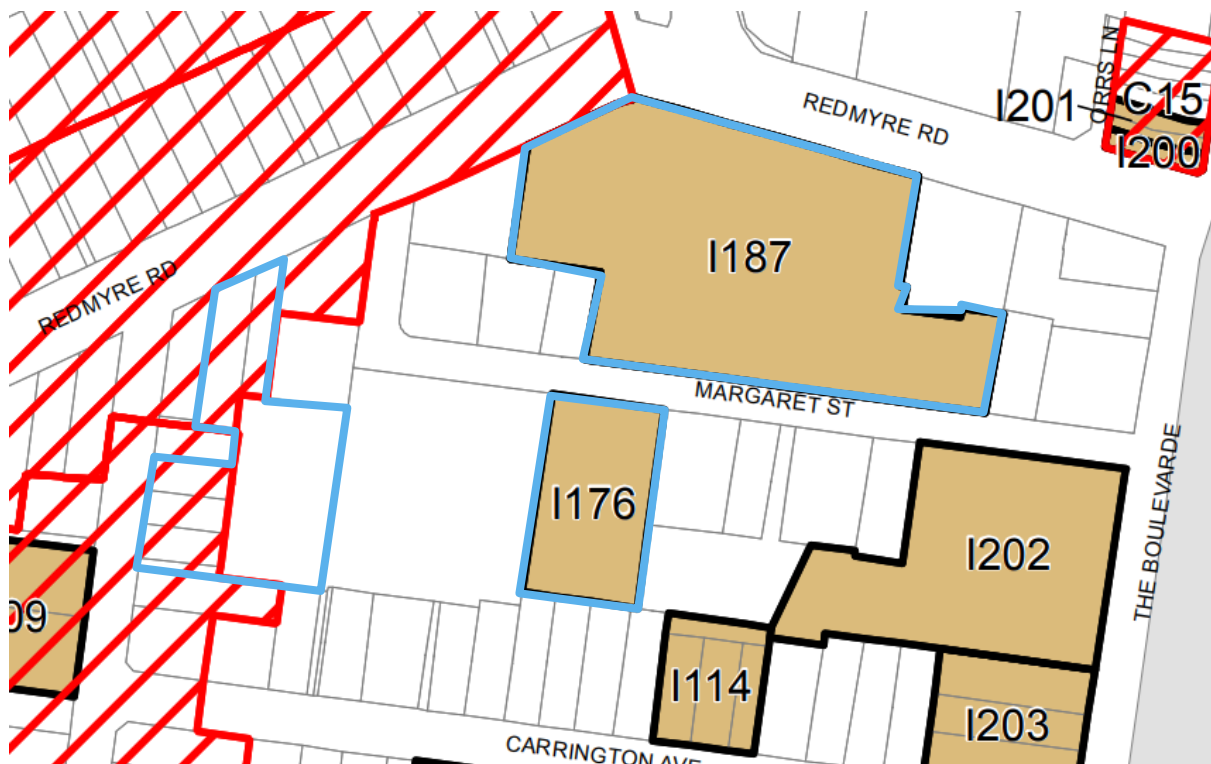


Figure 3 – Heritage map (subject sites outlined in blue)

Source: Strathfield LEP 2012, Heritage Map HER\_005

These heritage listings are explained in further detail below.

#### 3.1. MERIDEN SCHOOL SENIOR CAMPUS

The Meriden School Senior Campus is listed as an individual heritage item of local significance, under the Strathfield Local Environmental Plan (LEP) 2012. The heritage listing described the property as Item 187, 'Meriden School' at 10-28 Redmyre Road, Strathfield. Notwithstanding that there are a range of buildings across the site from various periods (including modern and late twentieth century), the whole of the allotment is heritage listed, as indicated on the diagram below at Figure 4.

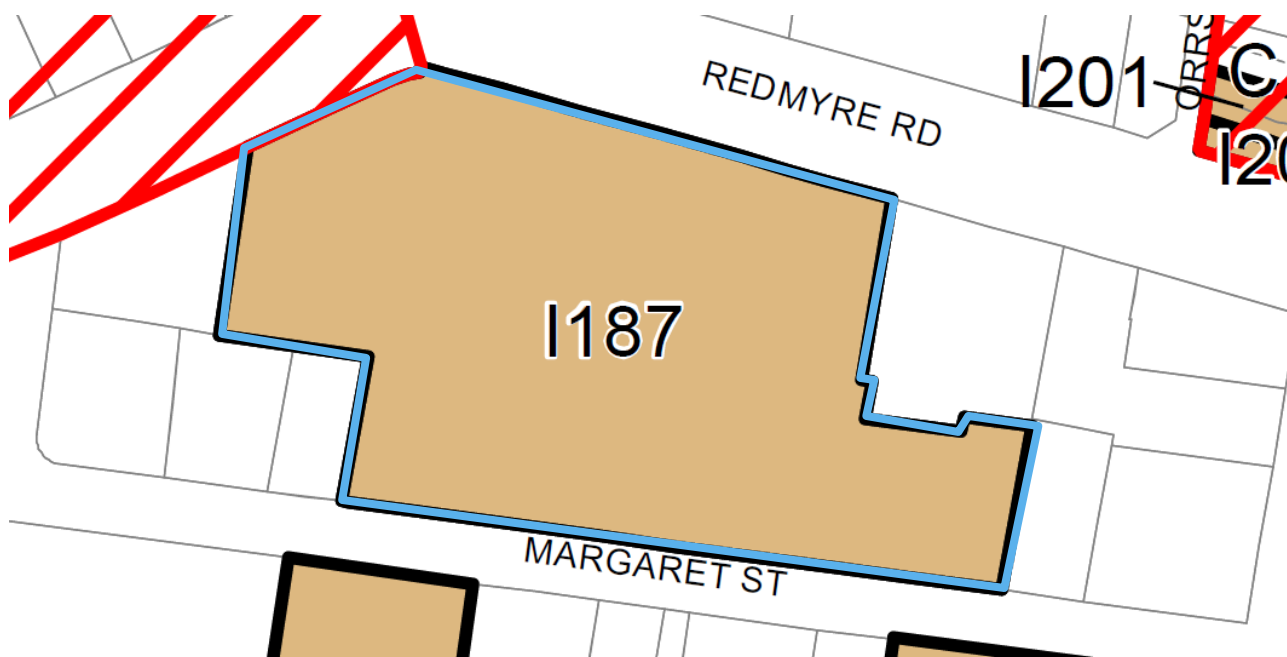


Figure 4 – Heritage map – Meriden School Senior Campus

Source: Strathfield LEP 2012, Heritage Map HER\_005

### 3.2. MERIDEN SCHOOL PREP CAMPUS

The Meriden School Prep Campus is listed as an individual heritage item of local significance, under the Strathfield LEP 2012. The heritage listing described the property as Item 176, “*Lingwood*”—*Victorian house and garden (formerly Branxton)*” at 16 Margaret Street, Strathfield. The extent of the heritage listing covers the whole of the Lingwood allotment, as shown in Figure 5 below.

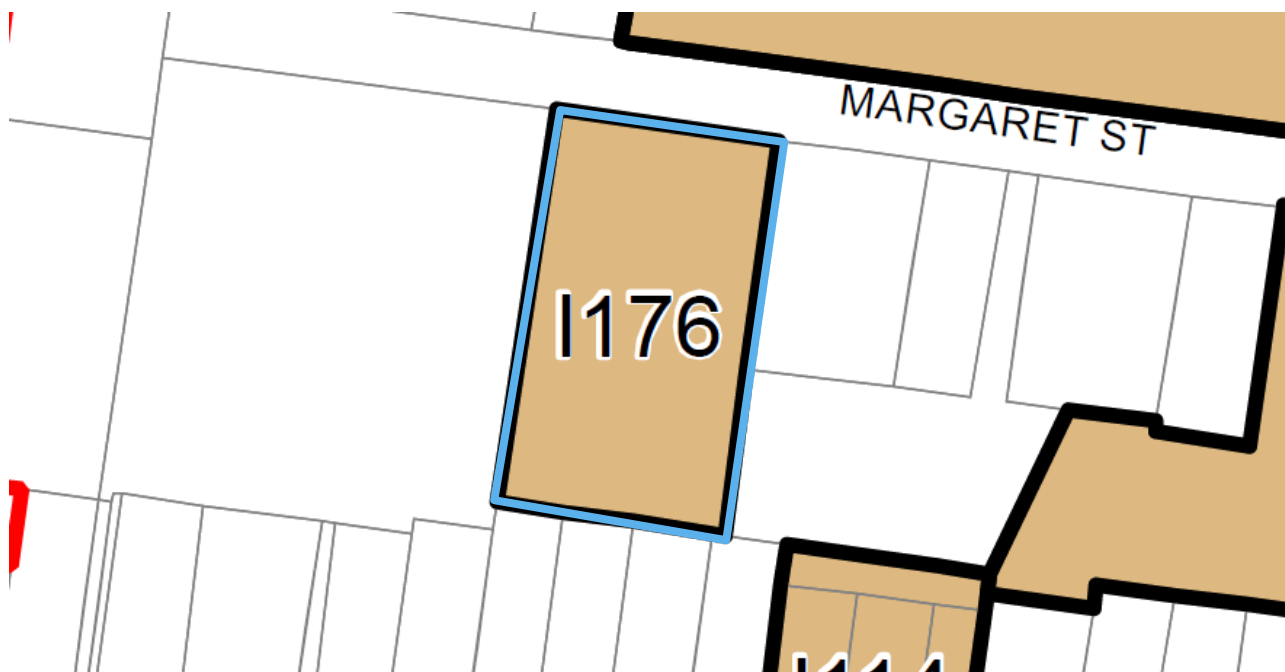


Figure 5 – Heritage map – Meriden School Prep Campus

Source: Strathfield LEP 2012, Heritage Map HER\_005

### 3.3. MERIDEN SCHOOL JUNIOR CAMPUS

The Meriden School Junior Campus is a consolidation of a number of allotments, and is located partially within two adjoining heritage conservation areas. Three allotments to the north of the Junior Campus, along Redmyre Road, are located within the C14 Redmyre Road Conservation Area under the Strathfield LEP 2012. Allotments to the east of the Junior Campus, along Vernon Street, are located within the C16 Vernon Street Conservation Area under the Strathfield LEP 2012.

#### 3.3.1. C14 Redmyre Road Conservation Area

The Strathfield Development Control Plan (DCP) 2005 contains the following statement of significance for the C14 Redmyre Road Conservation Area:

*Redmyre Road is of significance for its historical and architectural qualities. This Conservation Area displays a full range of housing that is dominated by early twentieth century architecture. It features a unified streetscape with predominantly single storey, well-maintained houses. The housing types include Victorian Italianate, Late Victorian/Early Federation and Federation/bungalow. Also featured is the Council Chambers. The central planting of Jacarandas in a grassed median strip and side planting of Brush Box form an important landscape feature to the street.<sup>1</sup>*

The Strathfield Development Control Plan (DCP) 2005 contains additional controls for development within the C14 Redmyre Road Conservation Area:

##### *Additional Controls*

- 1) The characteristic pattern of grass verges, footpaths and street tree planting comprising Jacarandas within the grassed median strip, and Brush Box on the verges, must be retained.*
- 2) New trees using mature Jacarandas on the median strip and Brush Box on the verges, should be planted where there are gaps in the street tree planting.*

#### 3.3.2. C16 Vernon Street Conservation Area

The Strathfield Development Control Plan (DCP) 2005 contains the following statement of significance for the C16 Vernon Street Conservation Area:

*This Conservation Area contains many buildings from the late Nineteenth Century. It is of local significance as the villas retain their form and scale and they combine to provide an attractive streetscape. The villas are predominantly single storey with asymmetrical facades and projecting bays.<sup>2</sup>*

The Strathfield Development Control Plan (DCP) 2005 contains additional controls for development within the C16 Vernon Street Conservation Area:

##### *Additional Controls*

*Existing original projecting bays characteristic of dwellings in this Conservation Area are to be kept and repaired or reinstated where possible.*

The location of these heritage conservation areas is shown in Figure 6 below.

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<sup>1</sup> Strathfield Development Control Plan 2005, Part P, p.34, accessed at <https://www.strathfield.nsw.gov.au/assets/Planning/Part-P-Heritage.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> Ibid



Figure 6 – Heritage map – Meriden School Junior Campus

Source: Strathfield LEP 2012, Heritage Map HER\_005

### 3.4. VICINITY HERITAGE ITEMS

The three Meriden School campuses are located within the vicinity of other heritage items along Margaret Street and Vernon Street, including;

- Item 202, “*Lauriston*”—*Federation house, Santa Maria Del Monte School*, at 49 The Boulevarde (local significance); and,
- Item 209, *Russian Orthodox Church*, at 3-5 Vernon Street (local significance).

The three Meriden School campuses are also located in the vicinity of (and partially within) two separate heritage conservation areas, as follows:

- 4-8 Vernon Street – located within the C16 Vernon Street Conservation Area under the Strathfield LEP 2012.
- 36-38 Redmyre Road – located within the C14 Redmyre Road Conservation Area under the Strathfield LEP 2012.

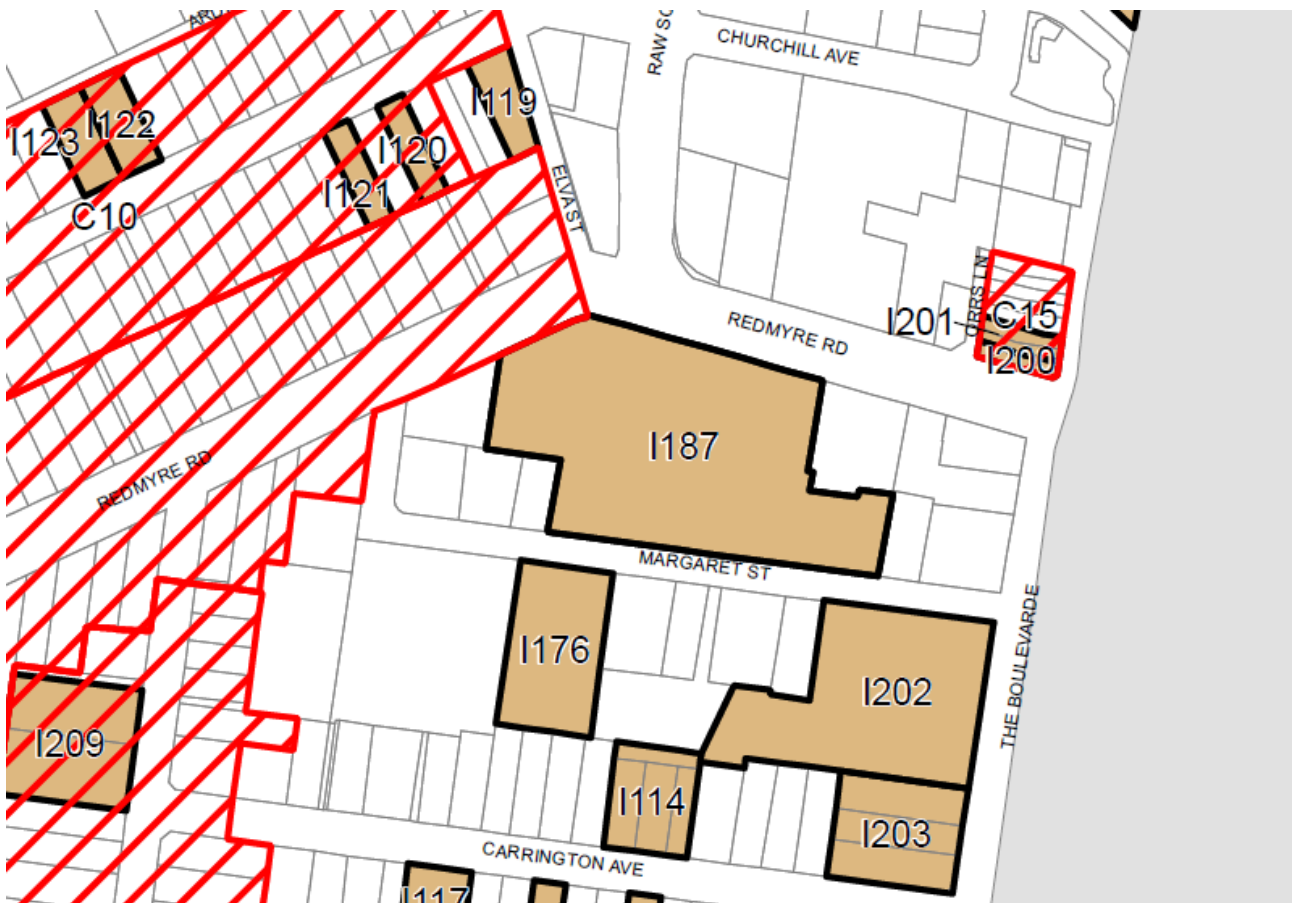


Figure 7 – Heritage map – Meriden School Junior Campus

Source: Strathfield LEP 2012, Heritage Map HER\_005

## 4. HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

### 4.1. MERIDEN SCHOOL SENIOR CAMPUS

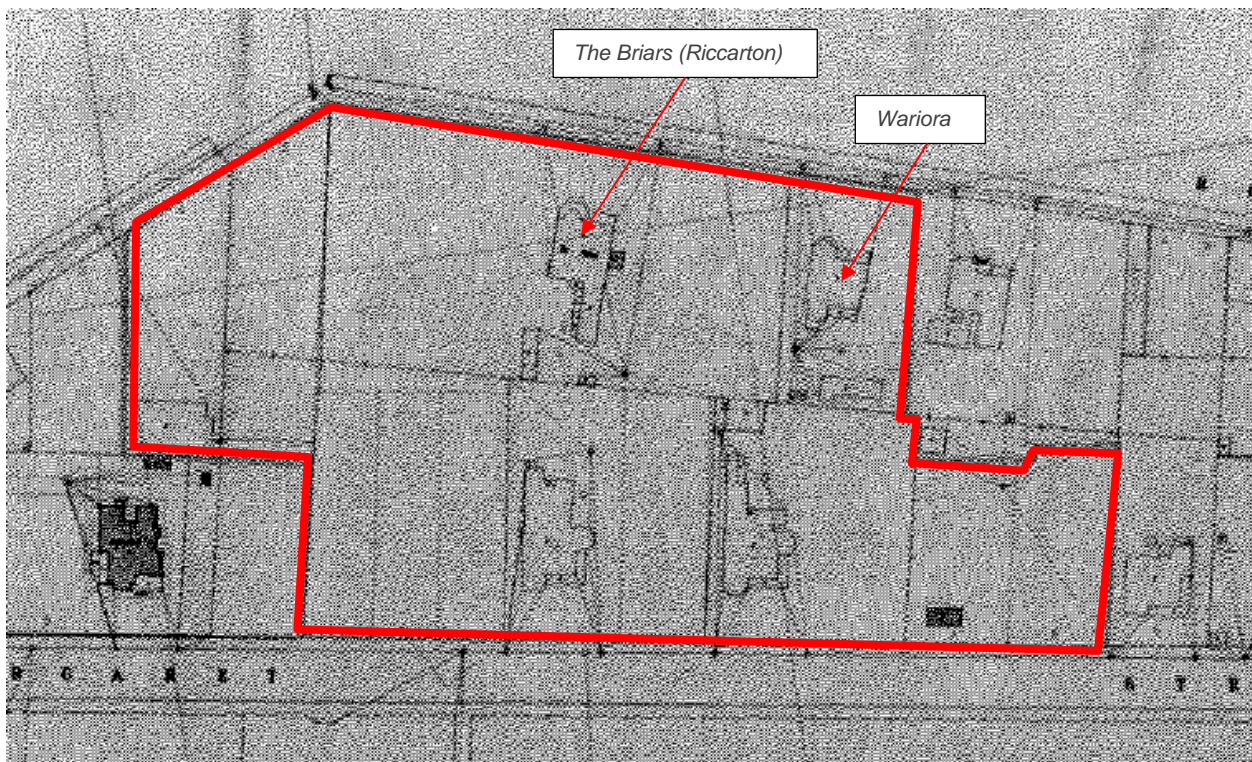
The following historical context has been directly taken from the Heritage Assessment prepared by Paul Davies Pty Ltd in October 2013, with additional information where appropriate.

Meriden School was founded in the mid 1890s (on a different site to where it stands today), by Mrs Jeannie Monckton. The school was named Meriden after a house in England associated with a member of Mr Monckton's family. In 1907, the Monckton family and school together moved to a house in Woodward Avenue, Strathfield. However, in the following year, Mrs Monckton sold the school to Miss Bertha Brailsford Turner, and she and her family moved to Manly.

Miss Turner was born in England around 1863 and came to Sydney in 1902. She had trained in England as a teacher and it is believed she taught at Mrs Monckton's Meriden. Initially, Miss Turner continues to run the school in Woodward Avenue, but in late 1909, moved to the existing site in Redmyre Road.

The original house in Redmyre Road used by Meriden was names Wariora. This late-nineteenth century villa was demolished in 1976 to make way for the school's swimming pool. Wariora was leased initially by the school and was purchased in 1919. The new school proved popular with local families wishing to educate their daughters with a general education, but with attention to music, art, domestic science, dress making etc., and also instruct them in the traditional ways of good manners, good speech and religious observance., Sport was encouraged with tennis being especially popular. By the late 1910s, there were 22 boarders and 101 daily pupils. At that time, the school was affiliated with the Anglican faith, but not part of the diocese, and the girls attended St Anne's Church at the corner of Homebush Road and Beresford Road, Strathfield.

Figure 8 – Survey of the area containing Meriden School site as at 1893 (Senior Campus outlined in red)



Source: Paul Davies Pty Ltd 2013, Heritage Assessment, Meriden Anglican School for Girls, Senior Campus, p.6

Figure 9 – Early photograph of Wariora, the original Meriden School location on Redmyre Road



Source: Foster, A. G, 1920-45, Call Number PIC P860/466 LOC Cold store PIC AGF, accessed at <https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-14277616/view>

In 1914, the neighbouring house, originally named *Riccarton* and then *The Briars*, was purchased for 3,400 pounds. This house still stands, enveloped by Wallis Hall (erected in 1935). *The Briars* was another late-nineteenth century villa and was representative of the development of Strathfield as a place of residence for the middle classes following the opening of the railway station in 1877 at Strathfield. The station originally took the name Redmyre after the large estate subdivided in 1867. The blocks of land within the Redmyre estate were large, allowing for the construction of large villas within gardens. The railway provided an express service to the city from 1892, and from 1894 with the opening of the line to Hornsby, a very frequent service.

*Riccarton* or *The Briars* was built around 1885 for Edward Richard Deas-Thomson. Deas-Thomson (1839-1920) was the eldest son of Sir Edward Deas-Thomson, a former colonial secretary of NSW. He was sent to Oxford to study law, but most of his life was associated in some form with the Anglican Church in Sydney. Prior to selling the property in 1888, Deas-Thomson enlarged the grounds to around 1.5 acres by purchasing neighbouring allotments. When the property was sold in 1888, it was described as a 'superior detached family residence' comprising;

*The Residence – in excellent decorative order, is well removed from the road, and being substantially built of brick, on stone foundations, contains the following accommodation:*

*On the top floor – four bedrooms and dressing-room, first-class bathroom, fitted with shower, plunge (bath), lavatory, and w.c., all complete; 2 servants' rooms, approached by a secondary staircase.*

*On the ground floor – entrance hall, large double drawing-room, dining-room, library, housemaid's pantry, kitchen (with range), washhouse (with copper, range of tubs, %c), larder.*

*Outside are laundry, wood and coal sheds, man's room, %c. There are also extensive fowl-houses and yards, bush-houses, %c.*

*The pleasure ground are exceedingly attractive, and are disposed in well-kept lawns, adorned with flower-beds and intersected by gravelled paths. The timber and shrubs are well matured.*

The property was purchased in 1888 by James Cobban Smith, who renamed it *The Briars*. Smith (1842-1904) was a merchant and partner in the firm of Morgan and Smith or Clarence Street, Sydney. He seems to have been born in England and after a brief time in Melbourne, took up the life of a cotton planter in Fiji in the

1860s. For many years after, he was associated with the colonial administration of Fiji, before returning to Sydney, where he entered the firm of George Morgan & Co, owner by a fellow former resident of Fiji.

Figure 10 – The Briars in c.1920s, view looking east at the western elevation



Source: Paul Davies Pty Ltd 2013, *Heritage Assessment, Meriden Anglican School for Girls, Senior Campus*, p.7

Figure 11 – The Briars in c.1929, view looking west at the eastern elevation



Source: Paul Davies Pty Ltd 2013, *Heritage Assessment, Meriden Anglican School for Girls, Senior Campus*, p.8

Despite the evident success of the School, over the late 1910s and early 1920s, Miss Turner sought to sell it, with SCEGGS Darlinghurst being considered the most suitable prospective purchaser. Nothing came of this and Miss Turner then resolved to close the School at the end of 1925.

The treat of closure elicited a response from members of the local community to fund the purchase of the School and arrange for a council to manage it on the their behalf, from 1926. The close association between Meriden School and the Anglican Church commenced in 1926 and was affirmed in 1929, when the School was incorporated under the Companies Act of 1899 as a non-profit Association. The Articles of Association stipulated all 15 members of the Council must be of the Protestant faith, and of them at least 11 being members of the Anglican Church.

The purchase in 1926 only included The Briars and the Bungalow; the Bungalow being a weatherboard building that was constructed around 1923 to house the gymnasium and assembly hall, also used as the venue for art classes. In later years, the Bungalow was used for the kindergarten and primary classes, and from around 1959 it was used by staff. The Bungalow building was demolished in 1975 to make way for the Gilhespy Administration Block.

Wariora was retained by Miss Turner's family and after various changes in ownership, was repurchased by Meriden in 1937 and became the school library.

The new School Council appointed Miss Grace Overy to replace the retiring Miss Turner for the start of the 1926 school term. Miss Overy (1875-1940) undertook changes to the curriculum and worked to develop a school ethos modelled on the traditional English private schools for girls. The physical appearance of the School also changed during her tenure (which ended in 1940).

This began modestly with the construction in 1927 of a weatherboard building of three classrooms (since demolished) site behind the tennis court. That building was extended in 1929 by an additional three classrooms (since demolished). The architect for the addition was Thomas P. Sampson, and it would seem likely that Sampson was also the architect for the 1927 building.

In 1935/36, *The Briars* was substantially modified and extended to provide an assembly hall, chapel and sleep-out accommodation for school boarders. The remodelling works enveloped *The Briars*, retaining some internal areas while others were demolished. The end result being that *The Briars* was no longer discernible, and the remodelled building presented as a large uniform interwar brick building.

The School Council thought it was important to remodel the street front of the late-Victorian villa to provide a modern, up-to-date appearance. The foundation stone of the building, Wallis Hall, was laid in November 1935 and the work was completed by March 1936. The following is a contemporary detailed account of the work, possibly provided by the architect:

*The works comprise the erection of an assembly to seat 450 persons. A stage is provided at one side of the hall, off which is a 16ft archway, fitted with sliding doors opening to an octagonal shaped chapel. The chapel will form an apsidal end to the main building, will have an open timbered roof, quatrefoil stained glass windows, and will be fitted with altar rail, table, lectern etc. a new verandah and balcony, each 160 feet in length, library, spacious dormitories, teachers', and class rooms, bathrooms, shower cubicles (divided marble terrazzo partitions), tiled floor, and walls, and other additions, are being made. A feature of the construction is an Innes-Bell Company's engineer (Mr Malcolm Stanley) to give clear space of 40 feet, and a level ceiling, unbroken by beams, to the assembly hall below. The façade of 120 ft facing north to Redmyre Road, will be of brickwork, in graded shades of red. Here is the main verandah and balcony, enclosed with an arched colonnade, flanked with buttressed and domed turrets. The main roof is to be covered with Welsh slates, and the hall floor with polished tallowwood. A modern lighting system is to be installed.*

The cost of this extensive work, put at 4,000 pounds, was underwritten by Frederick James Wallis. Wallis (1865-1960) was a major benefactor and sympathetic patron of the School in this period. He managed the Sydney office of his family's firm James Bell & Co. The architect was Thomas Pollard Sampson and the contractor was Kell & Rigby. The work of Sampson (1874-1961) is currently not well documented. He married Clarice Effie Henderson (1883-1980), the daughter of Charles Alfred Henderson, in 1911. His work was principally residences, especially in the 1910s, with an example being 22-24 Martin Road and additions to the now demolished Austral Club in Darlinghurst in 1912, and a hotel in Blackheath.

Figure 12 – Sketch of the proposed Wallis Hall, 1935



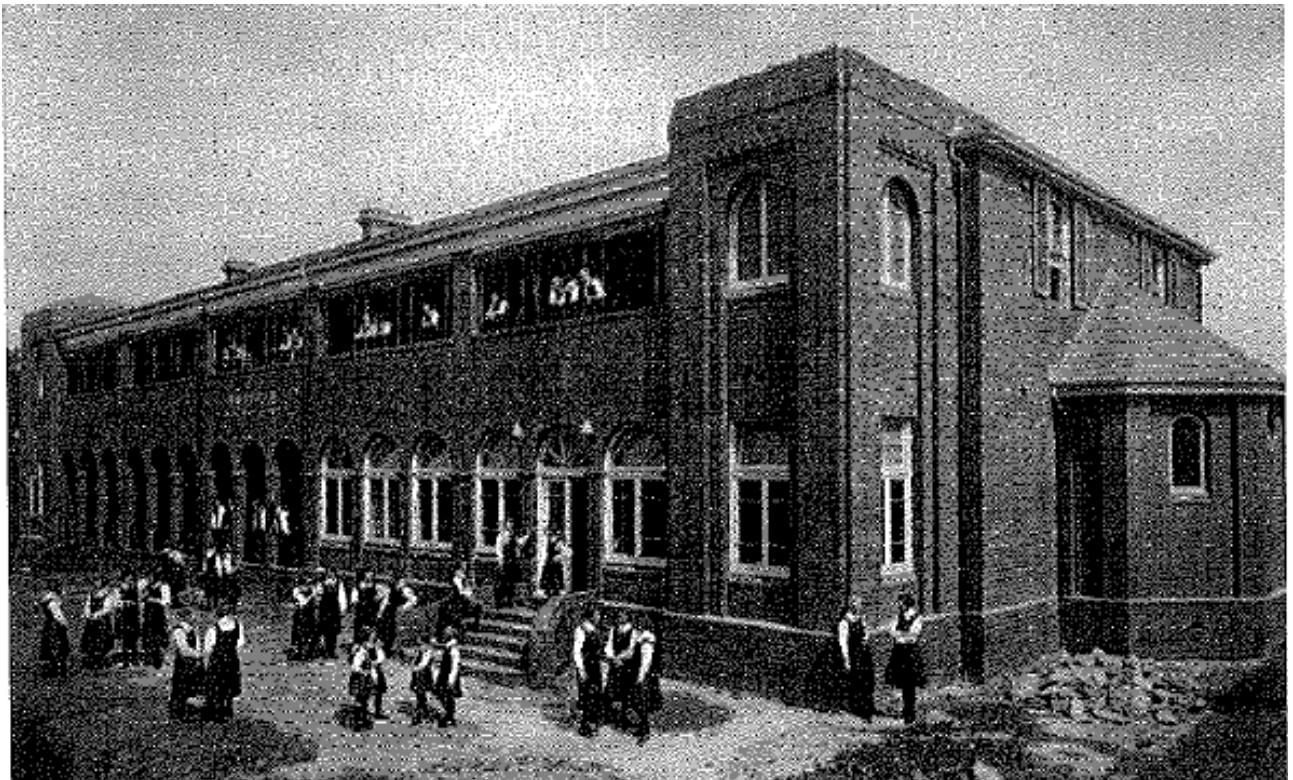
Source: 1935 'ADDITIONS TO SCHOOL.', *The Sydney Morning Herald* (NSW : 1842 - 1954), 10 December, p. 6. , viewed 11 Sep 2018, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article17208271>

Figure 13 – Photograph of the northern elevation of Wallis Hall following completion of the modification works



Source: Paul Davies Pty Ltd 2013, *Heritage Assessment, Meriden Anglican School for Girls, Senior Campus*, p.8

Figure 14 – Photograph of Wallis Hall following completion, 1936



Source: Paul Davies Pty Ltd 2013, *Heritage Assessment, Meriden Anglican School for Girls, Senior Campus*, p.9

Figure 15 – Photograph of Wallis Hall following completion, 1940s



Source: Paul Davies Pty Ltd 2013, *Heritage Assessment, Meriden Anglican School for Girls, Senior Campus*, p.10

Figure 16 – Photograph of Wallis Hall following completion, 1940s



Source: Paul Davies Pty Ltd 2013, *Heritage Assessment, Meriden Anglican School for Girls, Senior Campus*, p.10

In the late 1930s, the School was enlarged by purchases of neighbouring properties. In 1937 the neighbouring house on Redmyre Road, Wariora, was repurchased (it has been leased in 1908, purchased in 1919 and sold in 1925). In 1938, Eldon in Margaret Street was purchased (demolished in 1958 for Turner House). These Margaret Street houses provided additional classrooms and domestic science rooms, and

their grounds contained tennis courts. The demand for tennis courts was insatiable, for in 1939, another Margaret Street property (west of No. 3 Margaret Street), which possessed a tennis court still in use, was purchased.

The health of Miss Grace Overy (Principal 1926-1940) declines in the late 1930s and she died in 1940. The chapel at the western end of Wallis Hall contained a plaque in her memory (since demolished). Her replacement was Miss Elsie Hannam (1901-1990).

While Miss Hanna changed the curriculum, no major physical changes occurred during the first-half of her tenure, which lasted under 1957, owing to the war and post-war restrictions of building. The restrictions did not affect the purchase of land in 1951 sited on the west side of the School that was part of the grounds of Selbourne on Redmyre Road. The purchase increased the playground space. In 1961 Selbourne house was purchased (since demolished).

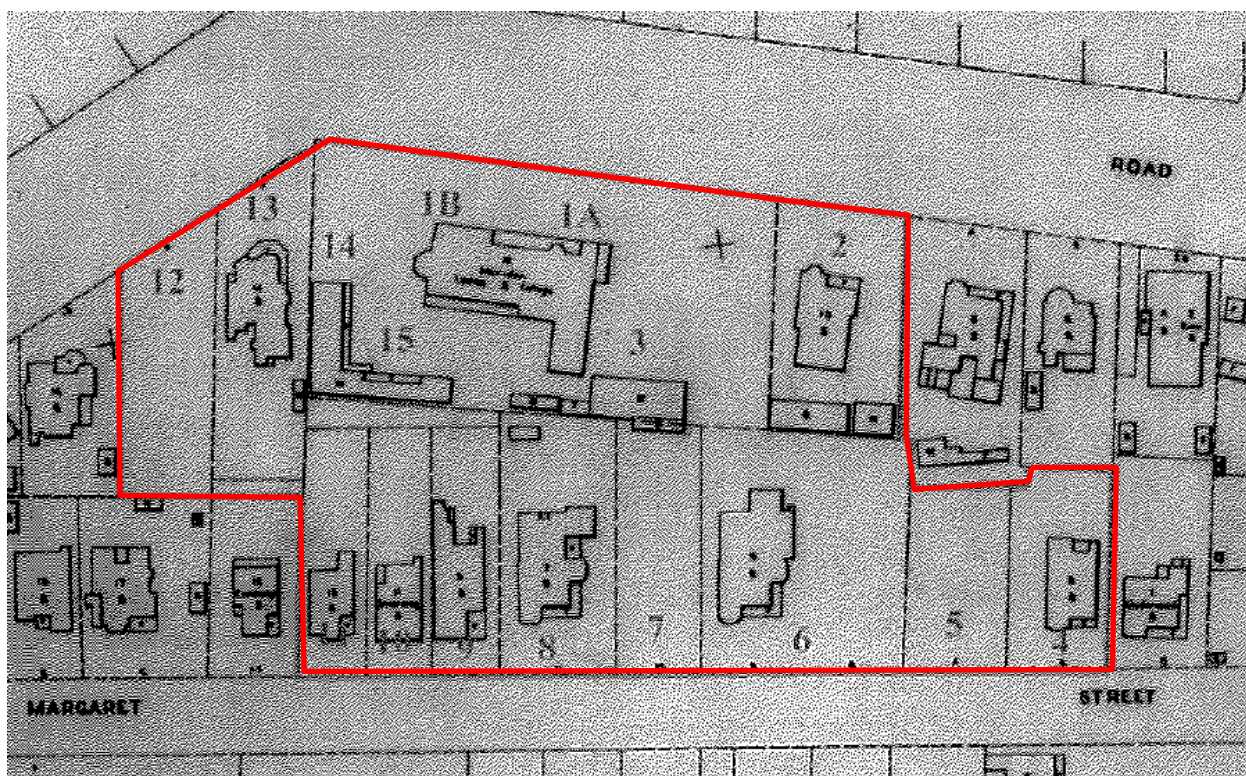
Figure 17 – 1943 historical aerial of Meriden School Senior Campus



Source: SIX Maps 2018

By the mid-1950s, there was an urgent need for general classrooms and more specialised teaching rooms. This demand was gradually satisfied by the building of the Ethel B. Wallis Memorial Gymnasium in 1954 and the Science Block in 1955 (demolished in 1997 for the SM Morton Science Wing).

Figure 18 – Annotated water board plan, 1952



Source: Paul Davies Pty Ltd 2013, *Heritage Assessment, Meriden Anglican School for Girls, Senior Campus*, p. 14

The architects for both buildings were the longstanding and well known architectural firm Peddle Thorp and Walker, established in 1889 by James Peddle. Samuel George Thorp became a partner in the early 1910s and in 1924 H. Earnest Walker became the third partner. Under the leadership of Graham Thorp, the firm dominated the commercial development market in Sydney from the 1950s, with the best-known example of their work from that period being the AMP Tower at Circular Quay completed in 1962.

The Science Block was sited on part of the Jeroun site in Margaret Street purchased in 1937. Jeroun house was demolished in 1957 for the building of Hope House. Jeroun's neighbour, Eldon, purchased in 1938, was demolished in 1958 for the building of Turner House. These new developments increased the number of available classrooms.

An existing house at No. 3 Margaret Street was purchased in 1955 and it was converted into classrooms for art, dressmaking etc (since demolished). In later years, it was the music tuition room. This house was built in 1907 for barrister Tom Rolin of Sydney. Rolin purchased the allotment in May 1907 and arranged for the building of the cottage, which was completed by November 1907 and tenanted by a Frenchman name Henry Charles de Muralt who named the house Youla.

Miss Hannam resigned in 1957 and, after a short period with an acting headmistress and the brief term of Miss James, Miss Joy Fox was appointed in 1961. Miss Fox was the first Australian born and educated headmistress of Meriden. Prior to Miss Fox's appointment, the School had purchased two additional sites; Strathnoon at the corner of Redmyre Road and Vernon Street in 1959 (now the Junior Campus), and 13 Margaret Street in 1960.

Co-incidental with the appointment of Miss Fox, Colin Hudson was appointed the chairman of the School Council. Mr Hudson was the managing director of Loveridge and Hudson, stone merchants, and had been Mayor of Strathfield over the late 1940s. Hudson's term lasted in one form or another until 1968 and during that time the School undertook an ambitious building program, inclusive of:

- 1961 Turner House on Margaret Street extended.
- 1961 Library built on site of 9 Margaret Street.
- 1964 Science Building extended.

- 1966 Hope House on Margaret Street extended.
- 1968 Wallis Hall and the boarder's quarters extended.
- 1968 Hudson House built (located in the Junior Campus).

Towards the end of Hudson's term as chairman, in 1966 Miss Sheila Morton was appointed headmistress. Miss Morton's tenure lasted until 1984 and as such she was the longest serving headmistress in the School's history. Miss Morton implemented the changes necessitated by the adoption of the recommendations of the Wyndham Scheme, which included an expansion of secondary education from five to six years, the replacement of the Leaving Certificate by the Higher School Certificate, and placed a greater emphasis on science and mathematics. The Library for example was extended in 1970. Sport became more varied in the options available, but the limited sports fields at Meriden hampered this.

Since 1970 there have been a number of new developments and alterations to existing buildings and facilities. The expansion of the School facilities necessitated the demolition of the Bungalow (1975), Wariora (1976), Selbourne (1978), the house at 11 Margaret Street (1992), the 1920's weatherboard classrooms (1993) and Science House (1996).

The Wallis hall was also refurbished from 1992. The work was inclusive of refurbishment in 1993 of the assembly hall, Hannam Room, and canteen, refurbishing and extending the library in 1993, and establishing the Independent Learning Centre in 1997.

These works are tabulated below.

- 1975 Gilhespy Administration Block built (necessitated demolition of the Bungalow, built c.1923).
- 1976 Swimming pool built (necessitated demolition of Wariora).
- 1978 Playing fields extended by the demolition of Selbourne.
- 1982 Arts and Crafts Building built (part site of Wariora).
- 1984 11 Margaret Street purchased (future site of the Year 12 Common Room, demolished 1988).
- 1992 Year 12 Common Room erected on the site of 11 Margaret Street.
- 1992 Arts and Crafts Building (built 1982) extended for the Design and Technology Building.
- 1992 Rear extensions and Clock Tower added to Wallis Hall, Wallis Hall refurbished 1992-97.
- 1992 New storeroom constructed to the south-east of the Ethel B Wallis Memorial Gymnasium (against the eastern site boundary).
- 1993 Weatherboard classrooms demolished to form open space.
- 1994 Pool shelters built.
- 1996 Performing Arts Studio and Sports Pavilion erected on the site of 13 Margaret Street (purchased 1960).
- 1997 SM Morton Science Wing built (on site of Science House erected 1955).
- Pre-2009 Denise Thomas Building (Junior Campus).
- Pre-2009 Junior School Administration Office (Junior Campus).
- 2010 New pottery room added to the eastern end of the Ethel B Wallis Memorial Gymnasium (replacing 1954 annex).
- 2010 Blackman Auditorium (Junior Campus).
- 2015 Sports Centre and Lecture Theatre (Margaret Road Senior Campus).
- 2016/17 The Foundry (Senior School) to the immediate south of Wallis Hall, linking to Hope House.
- 2016/17 Wallis Auditorium and Chapel (extension to the Wallis Hall).

- 2016/17 Hudson Library (extension to Wallis Hall).
- 2017 The Cottage Uniform Shop and MOOSH facility (Junior Campus).
- 2018 Lingwood Pre Campus Stage 1 – new classrooms to the rear and side of Lingwood House.

In 2016, the School undertook major alterations and additions to the *Wallis Hall*, including partial demolition, and construction of a whole-of-school auditorium adjoining the building to the west. These works necessitated the demolition of part of the interwar portion of *Wallis Hall*, and the construction of a multi-storey western addition. The auditorium's seating area extends into the western end of the *Wallis Hall* ground floor. Above, the Hudson Library area extends across the first floor of this western portion of *Wallis Hall*, and extends to the west and south into the new extension area. The Hudson Library space has previously been entirely refurbished and presents as a contemporary space behind the former *Wallis Hall* façade, with later partitions and fit-out.

The Heritage Assessment, Meriden Anglican School for Girls prepared by Paul Davies Pty Ltd in 2013 states that the significance of Wallis Hall is as follows:

*Wallis Hall has been extensively altered and extended at the rear in the 1990s. The majority of the building is considered to be of little/neutral significance, with the remnants of the c.1885 house The Briars at the eastern end of the building being of moderate significance, and the Chapel fitout and stained glass windows considered to be of high significance on historical, aesthetic and social criterion.*

The above statement was prepared prior to the 2016 auditorium works which demolished the Chapel portion of the building. The Wallis hall building has been substantially altered since the above 2013 heritage assessment was undertaken.

## 4.2. MERIDEN SCHOOL PREP CAMPUS (LINGWOOD)

**The following historical context has been directly taken from the Meriden Anglican School for Girls: Heritage Impact Statement prepared by Weir Phillips Heritage in December 2017, with additional information where appropriate.**

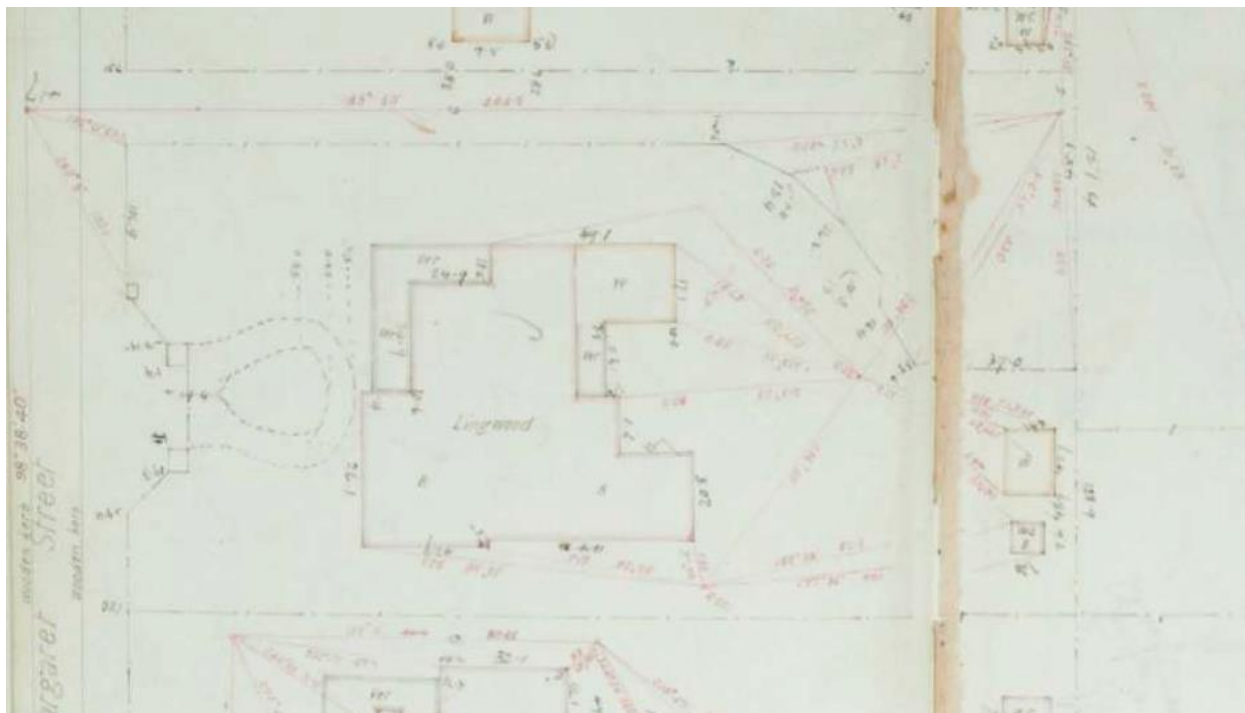
Vernon subdivided the above 2 acres 1 rood and 25 ¼ parcel of land (including the subject site) creating a lot that was 3 roods and 20 ¼ perches in size (being Part of Lots 15 and 16 D.P. 93). This land was conveyed to James Horace Aldous on 21 April, 1884. Title was soon after transferred to Susanna Mary Aldous, married woman, on 13 October, 1885. This last subdivision created the existing boundaries of the subject site.

Aldous is first listed in Sands' Directories in Margaret Street in 1885. This suggests a construction date of c.1884 for the main building on the site. Sands' Directories first record a name for Aldous' property- Lingwood- in the directory of 1887. Clewer and Lingwood would be the only two properties listed on the southern side of Margaret Street for some time to come.

Aldous continued to be listed by Sands' Directories as the resident of Lingwood until 1894. Little is known about Aldous; title deeds simply describe him as a 'gentleman.' He is likely to be the same James Horace Aldous taken into partnership in the company of Messrs. Horace Woolnough and Co., a company established in the mid nineteenth century that were initially known as importers of straw hats and millinery and who later moved into general drapery.

The oldest survey of the site found to date is a survey carried out by William M. Thomas of the Detailed Survey Branch of the Metropolitan Water, Sewerage and Drainage Board in December 1890. Note the weatherboard wing to the rear (eastern side) of the dwelling since demolished and replaced with a brick addition, and the two small weatherboard structures close to the rear boundary, one of which was a wc. The 'tear-shaped' driveway is clearly in evidence at this time.

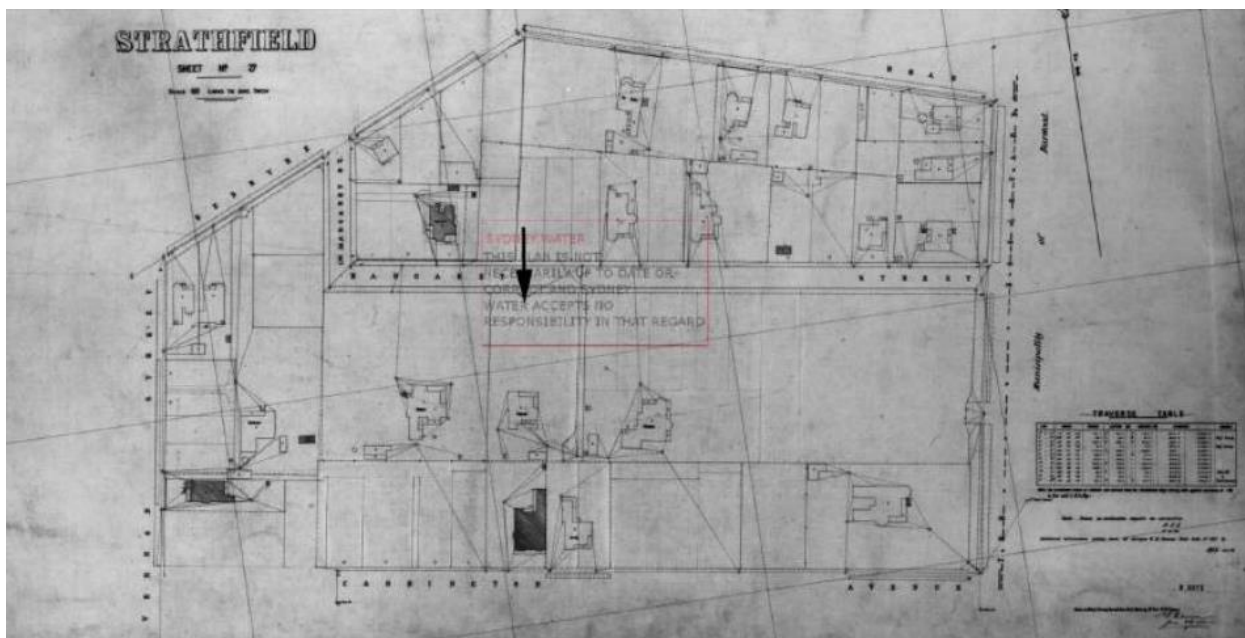
Figure 19 - M. Thomas, Detailed Survey Branch, M.W.S.D. & B, Field Book Survey, Strathfield, Sheet 27, December 1890



Source: Sydney Water Archives, PWDFB 1877

Figure 5 reproduces the full survey of Margaret Street that was produced from Thomas' surveys of individual properties, showing the extent to which the street had developed by this time. The street, in particularly the southern side of the street, is clearly a place of large residences set on substantial allotments; there are a number of vacant lots. The arrow points to Lingwood.

Figure 20 - S.F. Peterson, Detailed Survey Branch, M.W.S.D. & B, Strathfield, Sheet 27, June 1892



Source: Sydney Water Archives, PWDS1544-S978. Annotation by WP Heritage

Lingwood was transferred to Edwin Randolph Magnus, a dental surgeon, on 14 April, 1894. Sands' Directories identify him as the occupant of the site. Magnus was a dentist of note.

Magnus' ownership was relatively short-lived and Lingwood was put for sale in 1896. The advertisement described the property as follows:

*A most beautiful and enjoyable residential property, known as Lingwood, fronting Margaret Street, within four minutes' walk of the station and adjoining the well-known residences of Messers Fraser, Bird and Harry Levien.*

*The house which stands embosomed in its most delightful and attractive pleasure-grounds, contains the following accommodation, and is built of brick on stone foundations, with slate roof, entrance hall, 3 reception rooms, 3 bedrooms, servant's room, bathroom with hot and cold water, kitchen with 2 stoves, laundry with fitted tubs, sink and copper, wood and coal bins. There are also W.B. stabling and a man's room.*

*The grounds surrounding the house (over ½ acre in area) are miniature botanical gardens, and are most charmingly disposed in well-kept lawns, flowering beds, bush house, shrubberies, &c., the whole in the most perfect order. Also vegetable garden, fowl run, carriage drive and side entrance. The land has a frontage of about 146 ft to Margaret Street, by a depth of about 261 feet. Title Torrens.<sup>3</sup>*

Despite these inducements, the property did not sell for another two years.

On 26 September, 1898, Lingwood was transferred to merchant James Lyle Young. Young, however, did not own the property for long, putting up it and some of its contents for sale upon his 'departure from this state' in 1902, when the advertisement for this sale makes particular mention of the 'heavy cedar work' and 'steel ceilings' within the dwelling.

On 8 August, 1902, Lingwood was transferred to warehouseman James Kebblewhite. Kebblewhite, the manager of well-known furniture maker, Beard Watson, would own the property until 1919. Kebblewhite is listed as the occupant by the Sands' Directories of 1905 and 1910. In 1913, he auctioned the contents of the dwelling. By 1915, the dwelling was tenanted; Arthur H. Lord is identified as the occupant of Lingwood.

The setting of Lingwood began to change during the above period as the number of dwellings in Margaret Street increased. By 1915, there were five listings in Sands' Directories on the southern side of the street and five on the northern side of the street.

Lingwood was conveyed to contractor William Mitchell on 26 June, 1919. Mitchell occupied the property until at least the last published Sands' Directory of 1932-3. As set out below, Mitchell and his heirs would be the last owners to occupy the property as a private residence.

Street numbers were allocated to the properties in Margaret Street in the late 1920s as the number of dwellings within the street increased. Lingwood became, and remained, No. 16 Margaret Street.

Figure 21 to Figure 23 provide an undated panorama of Lingwood Margaret Street. The clothing worn by the people in the photographs suggests that this photograph was taken c.1900-1919. This photograph shows a brick building forward of Lingwood, which may or may not form part of the existing building in this location; a tennis court on the eastern side of the dwelling; and well-established formal gardens and lawn to the front of the dwelling. In a separate assessment, James Quoye outlines the development of the landscaping on the site, which he describes as being in the gardenesque style:

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<sup>3</sup> 1896 'Advertising', The Sydney Morning Herald (NSW : 1842 - 1954), 1 January, p. 8. , viewed 11 Sep 2018, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article14031524>

Figure 21 – Panorama of Lingwood c.1900-19, part 1



Source: Weir Phillips Heritage 2017, *Meriden Anglican School for Girls: Heritage Impact Statement*, p.15

Figure 22 – Panorama of Lingwood c.1900-19, part 2



Source: Weir Phillips Heritage 2017, *Meriden Anglican School for Girls: Heritage Impact Statement*, p.15

Figure 23 – Panorama of Lingwood c.1900-19, part 3



Source: *Weir Phillips Heritage 2017, Meriden Anglican School for Girls: Heritage Impact Statement, p.15*

Figure 24 – Historical 1943 aerial of the Meriden School Prep Campus



Source: *SIX Maps 2018*

Lingwood passed by transmission to George Mitchell (barrister) and Arthur Senstone (chartered accountant) on 4 May, 1944. Shortly thereafter, on 23 August, 1944, the property was transferred to The Presbyterian Church (NSW) Property Trust.

The Presbyterian Church (NSW) Property Trust purchased the property for the use of the Presbyterian Ladies College, who had relocated to Strathfield when their Croydon Street site was required by the RAAF during World War II.

P.L.C. had been established in 1888 under head master Dr. John Marden, at Fernlea, 'a gentleman's residence' in Ashfield. The School was the first school to be established by the Presbyterian Church in New South Wales. In 1891, the school moved to Shubra Hall in Croydon.

In 1942, P.L.C. vacated their Croydon school for a RAAF radar unit. The school moved to rented premises in Ashfield and approached nearby girl's school Meriden (see below) for assistance in housing the school's boarders and in the sharing of some facilities. This Meriden was happy to provide. P.L.C. later leased two Victorian period mansions, Lauriston, at the corner of Margaret Street and The Boulevard, and Welbeck, No. 18 Margaret Street. Lingwood was leased to provide a centre for school activities.

Although plans were made during World War II to move P.L.C. permanently to Strathfield, the School moved back to Croydon at the end of World War II. Lingwood, however, was purchased for use as a preparatory and kindergarten school that could then act as a feeder to the main school.

The official history of P.L.C. explains why the name Lingwood was changed to Branxton:

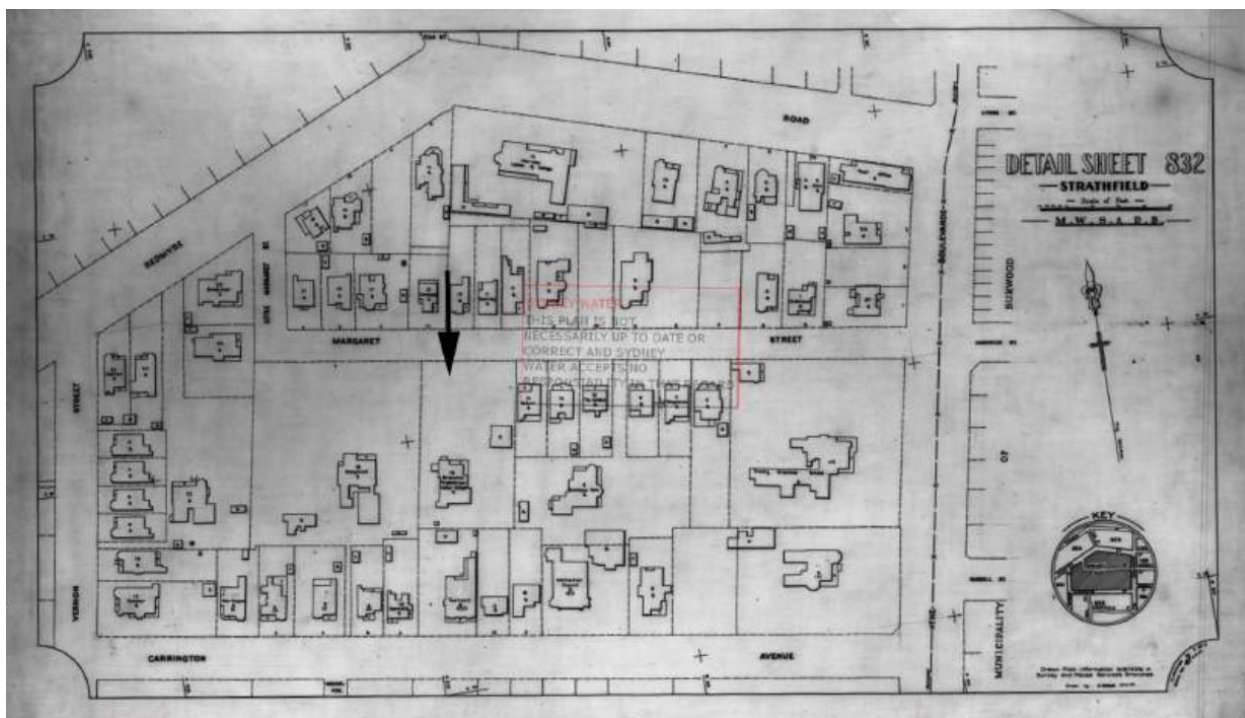
*'...negotiations were entered into with Miss Margaret Thompson, the owner and principal of 'Branxton,' a private school in Homebush Road, Strathfield. Subsequently, it was agreed that Miss Thompson close the Homebush Road site, and move her school to Margaret Street where it would retain the name Branxton and from 1946 would come under the control of P.L.C. Council. Miss Margaret Thompson was assisted by her sister, Miss Kathleen Thompson.*

*While Branxton became officially linked with P.L.C in 1946 it did, in fact, have an informal link with the College before that date. Branxton was established in 1905 by Miss Jessie Thompson, elder sister of Margaret, who was dux of P.L.C. in 1897. Branxton was a name selected at random because it appealed. The school originally operated in Albert Road, Strathfield...'*

In 1946, there were 67 pupils enrolled at Branxton. This number increased steadily through the late 1940s and early 1950s, so that, by 1956, there were 83 pupils at the school.<sup>34</sup> Margaret and Kathleen Thompson remained in charge at Branxton until the end of 1959, when they retired. Margaret was active in the wider education community, founding the sub-Normal Children's Welfare Association and establishing a special school, the forerunner to Eureka House. She was later awarded an M.B.E. As detailed in the separate heritage landscape report, the gardens were simplified during this period.

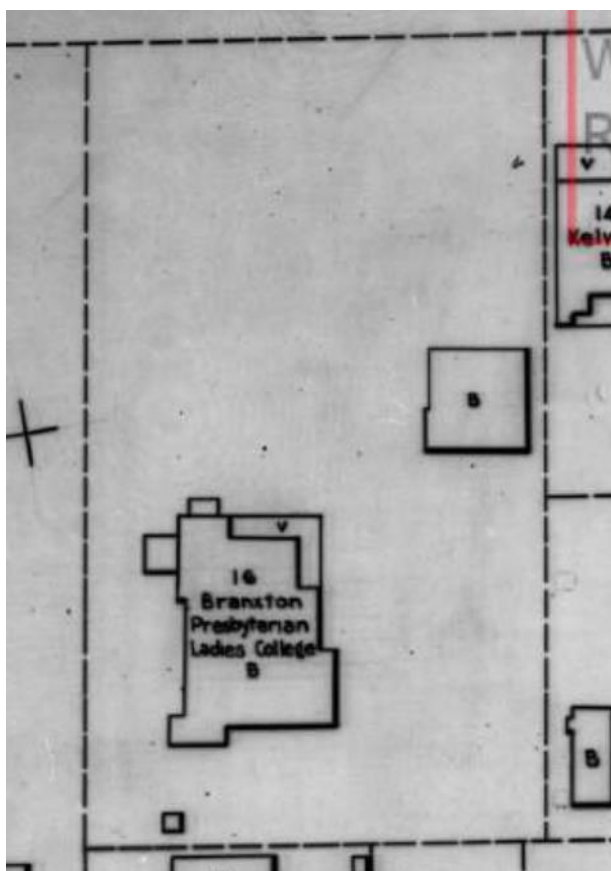
Figure 25 reproduces a plan of the property dated 1952. A small addition has been made to the western side of the building. The stable block is no longer in evidence. The classroom block that now stands at the rear of the site had not yet been constructed.

Figure 25 - A. Oldfield, Survey and House Services Branch, M.W.S.D. & B, Strathfield, Detail Sheet 832, 25.3.1952



Source: Weir Phillips Heritage 2017, *Meriden Anglican School for Girls: Heritage Impact Statement*, p.19 (Sydney Water Archives, DS832.)

Figure 26 - A. Oldfield, Survey and House Services Branch, M.W.S.D. & B, Strathfield, Detail Sheet 832, 25.3.1952



Source: Weir Phillips Heritage 2017, *Meriden Anglican School for Girls: Heritage Impact Statement*, p.19 (Sydney Water Archives, DS832.)

Although P.L.C. had contemplated selling Branxton when Margaret Thompson retired in 1959, the property would be retained for over thirty years. The composition of pupils varied during this period. Until 1974, Branxton provided for the lower primary students: kindergarten, transition, first and second, with some pre-schoolers. In April 1975, the first and second classes were moved to the Primary School at Croydon. At the end of that year, kindergarten and transition children were also moved to Croydon. Branxton became a pre-school centre; the first Director of Braxton Pre-School, Mrs. Jennifer Clarke, was appointed in January, 1976. Figures Figure 27 to Figure 32 provide a selection of photographs of the property during the period when it was owned by P.L.C., from the School's Archives.



Figure 27 – At the entrance, undated. Branxton: A Magic Place, 1996.

Source: Courtesy of P.L.C.Sydney Archives



Figure 28 – The Maypole at Branxton, 1958. This photograph provides a construction date of between 1952 (it is not shown by Figure 13, above) and 1958 for the classroom at the rear of the site.

Source: Courtesy of P.L.C.Sydney Archives



Figure 29 – Branxton in 1968.

Source: Courtesy of P.L.C.Sydney Archives



Figure 30 – Classroom at Branxton, 1968. This photograph appears to have been taken in the front brick building.

Source: Courtesy of P.L.C.Sydney Archives



Figure 31 – Branxton in 1973. Note the size of the tree and the gutter edging to the driveway, which is gravel.

Source: Courtesy of P.L.C.Sydney Archives



Figure 32 – Branxton in 1973. This appears to be taken on the tennis court to the east of Lingwood.

Source: Courtesy of P.L.C.Sydney Archives

During the above period, there were significant changes in the setting of the site. After the adoption of the Strathfield Planning Scheme Ordinance in 1969, there was considerable building activity around town centres of 'walkup' flats, usually up to three storeys in height, near the town centres of Strathfield, Homebush and Homebush West. Between 1969 and 1971, the number of units in Strathfield LGA increased by 100%. Residential flat construction continued into the 1990s. Today, there are residential flat buildings to either side of Lingwood.

Lingwood was sold to Meriden in 1996-7.

Meriden was established by Jane Monkton as a school for boys and girls in Agnes Street, Strathfield, in 1897. In 1907, Meriden moved to Woodward Avenue; the School was sold to Bertha Turner in 1908. The School was later moved to The Boulevard and, finally, to leased premises, Wariora (renamed Meriden), on Redmyre Road in 1909, where it continued to grow and expand. Turner purchased the adjoining property, including a house called The Briars in 1914, and another property, Wariora, in 1919.

Meriden was one of many small private schools established in Strathfield in the late nineteenth/early twentieth centuries to cater for the area's wealthy residents:

*The Sands' Directories for Strathfield around the turn of the century listed some of the many schools in the area. They included the Bjelke-Petersen Brothers' School of Physical Culture and Medical Gymnastics...The Bedford School for Girls...The Hayfield Preparatory School..., Wooroonook..., The Miss E.E. Cumming's private school..., the school of Alpen Herr Hugo..., Eton College, Mrs. W. Hardie's Ladies' school..., Mrs. C. Ford's Private School....and Miss L. Ellis Newnham's High School....'*

During the early 1920s, Miss Turner sold Meriden to a newly formed School Council, made up, initially, of local citizens and others associated with the School. The School was taken over by the Church of England in 1929.

The new School Council continued Monkton's and Turner's tradition of a liberal, wide ranging education for girls. Music, art, literature, sports and domestic skills were taught in conjunction with the 'Three Rs.' As the School grew, the campus was expanded through the purchase of Jeroun (1937) and Eldon (1938), fronting Margaret Street. Further land was purchased in Margaret Street during the period 1950-1980.

Meriden also owned Wadham House at No. 9 Wallis Avenue, Strathfield. The latter was a small preparatory school for boys and girls purchased by Meriden in 1957. This purchase re-introduced boys to the youngest classes at Meriden. The Nursery School was discontinued as the numbers dropped. The remainder of the students moved back to the main campus when Wadham House was sold in 1967.

Meriden had long been interested in purchasing Branxton and had approached P.L.C. on a number of occasions:

*'Over the years Meriden had contemplated potential uses for the site...Suggestions had ranged from a house for the Principal to a senior college, but now the purchase had finally been made it was*

*announced that this, the third campus, would initially be used to reopen the pre-kindergarten class in 1997 and to provide a senior annex.'*

Branxton was renamed Lingwood and re-opened on 17 September, 1997. The occasion is commemorated by a plaque attached to the wall near the front door.

Major redevelopment works were undertaken to Lingwood in 2017 and 2018, providing for the restoration of Lingwood house, as well as the construction of classrooms to the rear and east of Lingwood house.

## **5. PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT**

The proposed SSDA comprises development on each of the three Meriden School campuses. The primary objective of the proposal is not to increase the number of students the school can accommodate, but rather provide new and improved teaching facilities, and additional open space. The following sections detail the proposed development on each of the campuses.

### **5.1. SENIOR SCHOOL CAMPUS – NEW CENTRE FOR MUSIC AND DRAMA**

The SSDA will seek approval for the demolition of the existing music building, and construction of a new 4-storey building incorporating a new music academy, drama facilities, music teaching rooms and staff facilities.

The demolition of the existing music building located towards the south-western corner of the Senior School Campus will accommodate the new Centre for Music and Drama. The orientation and design of the new building will also result in additional open space being provided within the campus.

Due to the proximity of the building to the Margaret Street frontage, the new Centre for Music and Drama will significantly improve the streetscape presentation of the school to Margaret Street.

### **5.2. LINGWOOD PREP SCHOOL – NEW TEACHING AND ADMINISTRATION BUILDING**

The Lingwood Prep School site is currently undergoing redevelopment and the proposed new two-storey teaching and administration building will contribute to the new school facilities on the campus.

To accommodate the new Teaching and Administration Building, the existing single-storey building currently used as the Business Office will be demolished. The new building will be two-storey and designed with maximum flexibility to accommodate a wide range of uses, and to adapt with the demands of the school.

The design of the building is simple, refined and modern which will not complete with the heritage significance of the site.

### **5.3. JUNIOR SCHOOL – NEW LANDSCAPED PLAYGROUND**

The SSDA seeks approval for the demolition of the existing residential dwelling at 4 Vernon Street to make way for a new landscaped playground area for the Meriden Junior School. While the building falls within the '*Vernon Street Conservation Area*', the building itself is not identified as a heritage item.

The landscaped playground area will provide additional open space for the Junior School which can be used for students during recess or lunchtime, as well as for an outdoor classroom.

## 6. HERITAGE CONSIDERATIONS

This section of the report provides an outline discussion of potential heritage issues arising from the proposed works. Preliminary comments on potential heritage impacts are provided for each portion of the overall proposal, as well as recommendations to avoid or mitigate adverse impacts.

### 6.1. SENIOR CAMPUS – CENTRE FOR MUSIC AND DRAMA

The proposed Centre for Music and Drama (CMD) is to be located on the Senior Campus site fronting Margaret Street, opposite Lingwood (Prep Campus). The works will necessitate the demolition of an existing mid-twentieth century staff room building of no particular heritage significance.



Picture 1 – Building to be demolished

Source: Urbis



Picture 2 – Building to be demolished

Source: Urbis

The new building will comprise a four-level building built into the natural topography of the site, presenting to Margaret Street as a generally three-level building. While the whole of the Senior Campus is a listed heritage item, buildings of significance are generally limited to the Redmyre Road frontage, and include the Wallis Hall building, which includes the 1930s school building which encompasses the late-Victorian Villa. Further design development will provide for further mitigation of potential visual impacts to the streetscape and views from Lingwood.

The proposed works to the Senior Campus should:

- Respond to the character of the streetscape along Margaret Street, and the adjacent buildings within the Senior School, including the strong masonry form of Hope House.
- Respond in particular to the important connection between the Senior Campus and the Prep Campus (Lingwood) on the southern alignment of Margaret Street. The proposal should consider the visual and physical connection between the sites, as well as the role of open landscaped space.

An archival recording of the building to be demolished may not be necessary in this instance, as the building is a typical example of its typology.

### 6.2. PREP CAMPUS – NEW TEACHING AND ADMINISTRATION BUILDING

The works to the Prep Campus involve the;

- Demolition of the existing business office to the eastern side of the site; and
- Construction of a new two-level teaching and administration building.

Lingwood House has been used for a school since at least 1944, and has undergone a number of alterations and additions to facilitate this use. The existing office building to the eastern side of the site is not original to the Lingwood holding, and does not appear on early surveys of the property. The new two-level building is

proposed to follow on from the approved additional classroom development currently under construction at the Prep School, to complete the suite of school facilities on this campus.

The proposed works to the Prep Campus should:

- Retain as much of the existing vegetation along the Margaret Street frontage as possible, including larger tree specimens;
- Provide additional screening vegetation where appropriate to Margaret Street, to make the new building recessive, and to integrate the building into the landscaped nature of the Lingwood site;
- Ensure the new building is setback to align with the predominant building line of adjoining development, to maintain a consistent streetscape presentation;
- Ensure the new building utilises materials which are compatible with the significance of Lingwood;
- Integrate articulation to the western façade of the new building to prevent a large blank wall, and promote interesting design outcomes; and
- Retain existing significant fabric and features within the broader Prep Campus, including the Lingwood house and carriage drive form.

An archival recording of the small office building to be demolished may be required to ensure proper documentation of this structure prior to demolition.

### 6.3. JUNIOR CAMPUS – DEMOLITION AND NEW PLAY AREA

The subject dwelling at 4 Vernon Street is located within the Vernon Street Heritage Conservation Area, a conservation area which is significant for its collection of Victorian villas with projecting front window bays. The subject dwelling is not of this significant typology for which the conservation area was created, and is instead a typical Federation-period bungalow, which has been altered throughout its life.

Meriden School requires additional outdoor play area for their students, and are seeking demolition of the dwelling at 4 Vernon Street to facilitate the provision of this important space. The new outdoor play area will provide a multi-use area for various activities, including minor shade structures and seating areas.

The proposed works to the Junior Campus should provide for an archival recording of the existing dwelling, its exterior, interior and setting, prior to demolition.



Picture 3 – Building to be demolished

Source: Urbis



Picture 4 – Modified interior of building to be demolished

Source: Urbis

## 7. CONCLUSION

The overall proposal across the three Meriden School sites has been considered from a heritage perspective.

It is intended that the proposal will;

- Retain and conserve significant fabric across the Senior Campus and Prep Campus;
- Allow for the demolition of later, non-significant built elements where appropriate, to facilitate the ongoing practical use of the school and to provide enhanced amenity to its pupils; and
- Incorporate high quality design to ensure new built elements make a positive contribution to the heritage items and the Margaret Street streetscape, as well as responding to the important cross-campus relationship between the Senior Campus and the Prep Campus.

Further design development of proposed new built elements, including the Centre for Music and Drama and the new teaching facilities on the Prep Campus, will help to mitigate potential heritage impacts of the proposal, including streetscape character and views from heritage items. Archival recording of elements to be demolished may be appropriate with regard for their level of significance, and may mitigate the potential heritage impact of the loss of later, non-significant built elements.

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This report has been prepared with due care and diligence by Urbis and the statements and opinions given by Urbis in this report are given in good faith and in the reasonable belief that they are correct and not misleading, subject to the limitations above.





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