



Portion 499 Parish of Field of Mars

## ‘A SUITABLE GROUND FOR BOWLS, CROQUET AND TENNIS’

**PROPOSED NEW REAL TENNIS COURT BUILDING  
AT THE CHELTENHAM RECREATION CLUB  
60-74 THE CRESCENT, CHELTENHAM NSW 2119**

**CULTURAL HISTORY OF THE PLACE  
ASSESSMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE  
PREPARATION OF STATEMENT OF HERITAGE IMPACT**

### **PART A : STATEMENT OF HERITAGE IMPACT**

**Prepared for the Sydney Real Tennis Club Inc.**

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**Allan Willingham MRSV, FRHSV, M.ICONOS  
Heritage Consultant Architectural Historian Tennis Historian**

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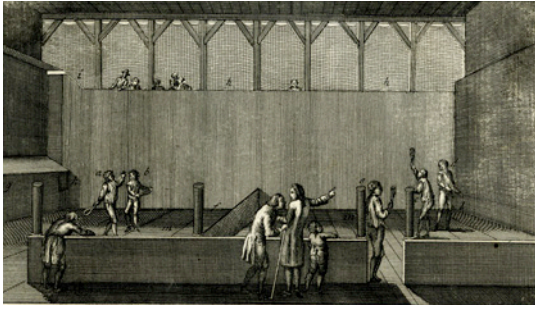
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### **PART A : STATEMENT OF HERITAGE IMPACT**

#### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

The following Cultural Heritage Report and Statement of Heritage Impact has been prepared in response to a request from the Sydney Real Tennis Club Inc., for advice concerning the merits of their proposed real tennis court development at the Cheltenham Recreation Club, 60-74 The Crescent, Cheltenham, NSW 2119 when tested against heritage legislation. The title adopted for this report, being 'a suitable ground for bowls, croquet and tennis', stems from a condition imposed by William Henry (Bill) Harris [II] in June 1913, when he donated a large parcel of land to the newly established Cheltenham Recreation Club Limited for use as a sports ground. This Club, which was officially opened on 28 November 1914, continues to the present day and is the registered owner of the land upon which it is now proposed to erect a new real (royal) tennis court building, a very rare building type in Australia.

#### **1.1 Instructions and Research Brief**

I have been briefed to prepare a Statement of Heritage Impact (SOHI) or Heritage Impact Statement (HIS) to accompany a Development Application (DA) to the Shire of Hornsby [PL Reference 63/2019]. This current application is for planning consent to construct a new real tennis court building and allied facilities contiguous to the existing two-storey brick clubhouse owned and occupied by the Cheltenham Recreation Club Limited. (CRC). In the course of preparation of this detailed report, I have been requested to further document and review the cultural histories of the properties at 60-74 The Crescent and 203 Beecroft Road, Cheltenham 2119 so as to facilitate a better understanding of the level of cultural heritage significance which should properly be ascribed to these places. Such a precursor to the preparation of the requisite Heritage Impact Statement is necessary as both places have not been the subject of any detailed conservation study or cultural heritage assessment to date. Whilst some readers may consider that the objectivity of my work is compromised by the fact that I am a real tennis player of long-standing and have been an Interstate member of the Sydney Real Tennis Club for many years, I have prepared the following extensive report as an impartial and expert professional consultant, and not as an advocate, in this matter.



In effect, this request for specialist heritage advice and the preparation of a Statement of Heritage Impact stems from the minutes of a pre-lodgement meeting between representatives of the Sydney Real Tennis Club Inc. (SRTC), and officers of the Shire of Hornsby, held on 3 October 2019 [Shire of Hornsby, ‘File Note of Meeting’ dated 3 October 2019]. Therein, officers of the Shire of Hornsby advised that a detailed and comprehensive Statement of Heritage Impact is required to accompany a Development Application (DA) and that this SOHI should be prepared by a qualified and experienced landscape heritage specialist and be in accordance with specific guidelines and relevant statutory planning controls adopted by the Shire of Hornsby. In preparing the following report, I have had regard to a number of Council documents which provide guidelines for the preparation of a ‘heritage report’ as part of a comprehensive Development Application. I have otherwise perused the Draft DA documents.

I am an accredited heritage practitioner with over 50 years experience in the fields of architectural, cultural, landscape, and building history research and documentation, heritage building conservation, cultural heritage assessments, and the preparation of conservation studies for local government areas or specific heritage places throughout Australia. I also have extensive experience in preparing independent expert witness statements for planning, conservation, heritage and development applications in Victoria. I have been a member of ICOMOS since joining this International organisation in Paris in 1976 and have used *The Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance*, *The Burra Charter*, 2013 (Burra Charter) and the associated series of Practice Notes to guide my practice as an Australian heritage consultant since 1979.

I first studied landscape architecture as an under-graduate in the University of Melbourne in 1967. I am a continuing member of the Australian Garden History Society (AGHS) and have participated regularly in their conferences and meetings, including presenting a paper entitled ‘Grooming the Great Plains of Australia Felix : Homestead Traditions in Western Victoria’ [AGHS, 30<sup>th</sup> National Conference at Geelong, 17 October 2009]. I am also a member of the Camperdown Botanic Gardens and Arboretum Trust (Victoria) and recently appeared as an expert witness on their behalf at a VCAT hearing in Melbourne concerning an inappropriate development in the culturally significant arboretum, a place I identified as significant in 1998.

As well, I have a large collection of horticulture and gardening books and regularly use these sources in my research as well as informing my own garden designs for historic houses and heritage places restored and adapted under my direction. In the period 1978-1980, I was director of the Australian Heritage Commission National Estate Project to research, document and establish an appropriate level of cultural heritage significance for some 1,350 historic buildings and places in Victoria (University of Melbourne). In this study, I was, with other team members, also responsible for assessing the cultural significance of a number of historic gardens and public reserves in Victoria listed in the Register of the National Estate. This work, after editing, was published in *The Heritage of Australia*, Macmillan, 1981.

As a real tennis player of long-standing in Australia, and an architectural historian with an established knowledge of the architectural history of the tennis court, worldwide, I have on occasions provided informal advice to the designer of the current SRTC tennis court development proposal and reviewed the conceptual development of the current design brief as it has evolved in the past two years. In this independent advisory role, I have largely relied on my knowledge of recently built tennis courts in England (Radley and Wellington) and France (Bordeaux) [Figs. 2.3 and 2.4]. as well as recent research undertaken for a Ph.D in the University of Melbourne to inform my views (submission in 2021, my topic being ‘The Tennis Court : An Architectural History’).

In the course of preparation of this report to the Shire of Hornsby, I have also had reference to my notes, observations and albums of photographs taken when I visited and played on extant real tennis courts in Scotland, England, France, America and Australia, in the period from 1976 to 2019. As well, in this extended period, I have visited and recorded the architectural and construction details of a number of abandoned or otherwise converted tennis courts in Italy, France and Ireland. I have used this background information in the process of assessing whether the current real tennis court proposal, as developed by the Sydney Real Tennis Club Inc., is in accordance with long-established design and planning parameters for tennis court architecture, worldwide, avoids design mistakes evident in the Cope-Williams Romsey real tennis court, and is an appropriate development on part of the site of the Cheltenham Recreation Club Limited. To further assist in progressing the Development Application, I have included illustrations of tennis courts in play, worldwide.

## 1.2 Acknowledgements

The inability to personally travel to Sydney and attend the subject site at Cheltenham and then make my own physical survey and observations concerning the landscape character of both the CRC property and the adjacent residential site of Edensor has frustrated this work, but has been addressed by using extensive photographic and other data assembled by Mr. Sav Cremona of the Sydney Real Tennis Club. I am very grateful indeed for all of his assistance in this regard.

Research to establish the architectural, cultural and social history of the two properties at 60-74 The Crescent, and 203 Beecroft Road, Cheltenham 2119, has been undertaken using extensive online resources and my own research database and professional tennis and architecture reference library. In the process, I have had ready access to primary source data held in the Cheltenham Recreation Club Limited archives, and I have benefitted from the assistance of Mrs. Anita McMahon, manager at the CRC. I have used the resources of the News South Wales Land Registry and the State Library of New South Wales extensively and have also referenced the online data prepared by the Beecroft-Cheltenham History Group (BCHG). I have been assisted by Mr. Roderick Best, of the BCHG, who responded to my initial enquiries earlier this year and provided valuable advice concerning local history sources in the Shire of Hornsby, including information concerning the W. H. Harris [II] family of Edensor.

The ready assistance of Ms. Noni K. Boyd, Mr. Robert (Bob) Irving and Mr. Harry Stephens in my quest to define the life and career of Richard Eric ‘Dick’ Apperly is also gratefully acknowledged as is the contribution of Mr. Michael Fitzgerald, president of the SRTC and members of his committee. I am also indebted to Mr. Stephen Apperly of Kew, 3101, second son of Dick Apperly, and his wife Cassandra, for providing background information concerning the Apperly and Hirsch families and their respective lives in Sydney and Melbourne. The discovery of Dick Apperly’s résumé of his life and career to 1966 has been particularly helpful, as little was otherwise known of this aspect of his endeavours as an architect.

The National Library of Australia research engine Trove, has been used to glean much valuable information from contemporary NSW newspapers, journals and gazettes over the period 1810-1954, and The British Newspaper Archive likewise has been searched for data held in overseas newspapers. The records on both Ancestry and FamilySearch websites have been regularly used to flesh out genealogical and biographical data concerning members of several families associated with the development of Portion 499 in the Parish of Field of Mars, County of Cumberland. I have also used the Julie Harris Archive held in the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences, Sydney, to advantage. All references used are clearly cited in my text. All of the errors and omissions which may otherwise be found in this text are my own.

### 1.3 Basis of Report to the Shire of Hornsby

This report to the Shire of Hornsby has been prepared in two specific sections. Part A is the Statement of Heritage Impact, which stand-alone statement has been prepared in accordance with the Guidelines for the preparation of ‘Statements of Heritage Impact’, published by the New South Wales Government. Part B, which informs Part A matters, deals first with background information concerning the history of ownership of the subject development site, to include extensive cultural heritage data relating both to the existing residence known as Edensor at 203 Beecroft Road, Cheltenham, and the various buildings and structures erected at the Cheltenham Recreation Club Limited, at 60-74 The Crescent, Cheltenham.

A review and summary assessment of the cultural heritage significance of the existing ‘William H. Harris Memorial Clubhouse’ and the surviving ‘Croquet House’ at the Cheltenham Recreation Club has been prepared following extensive research and documentation of the cultural history of the subject places (Sections 4, 5 and 6), followed by an assessment of the cultural heritage significance of the existing environs and landscape of the proposed development site fronting The Crescent, Cheltenham 2119 (Section 1.6).

The following extensive report encompasses all of those relevant cultural heritage matters earlier raised at the pre-lodgement meeting between representatives of the Sydney Real Tennis Club Inc. (SRTC), and officers of the Shire of Hornsby, held on 3 October 2019. These six specific directions (a) to (f) as set out below, have served as an effective catalyst in the preparation of this wide-ranging report concerning the history of the subject site from the time of the first land grant to the present day, to include clearly defined sequences in the ownership and subdivision of Portion 499 in the Parish of Field of Mars, an architectural history of the various buildings and structures erected on this land since the time of the first Crown Grants in 1889 (Portion 499) and 1893 (Portion 500), the pattern of landscaping and development of the site for recreation and sporting activities as well as charting all of the major physical changes to the buildings and grounds made at the subject site since 1913.

The Shire of Hornsby, in their October 2019 ‘File Note of Meeting’ has, inter alia, tabulated their requirements as follows:

The Heritage Impact Statement should include, among other things:

- (a) A history of the site and its change over time from first land grant to the present including sequences of subdivision, building, change and demolition;
- (b) An assessment of the landscape heritage significance of the site, the 1920s pavilion building and any other elements that may [be] affected by the proposal directly or indirectly;
- (c) A heritage impact assessment of the proposed demolition of built and landscape elements;
- (d) A heritage impact assessment of the proposed new building and landscaping works on the identified landscape heritage values of the place, especially in terms of height, bulk, envelope, setbacks, form and materials;
- (e) A heritage impact assessment of the proposed demolition and proposed new building and landscaping works on heritage items in the vicinity and the Heritage Conservation Area; and
- (f) Identification of measures that could assist to mitigate any adverse heritage impacts such as compiling research about and archival recording of the site prior to demolition and works, and perhaps undertaking an Interpretation Plan about the history and heritage of the site and incorporating its recommendations into final design/landscaping.

In effect, the above stipulations really encompass matters normally set out and otherwise addressed in a comprehensive Conservation Management Plan (CMP), prepared in accordance with guidelines set out in the *Australia ICOMOS Burra Charter*, (2013), and in the late Sydney-based James Simple Kerr’s *The Conservation Plan : A Guide to the Preparation of Conservation Plans for Places of European Cultural Significance*, first published in 1982 by the National Trust of Australia (NSW) and now in its 7<sup>th</sup> revised edition through the aegis of Australia ICOMOS. In July 1985, Dr Jim Kerr wrote an introduction to his work, stating that:

Conservation and development are not mutually exclusive objectives; they should, and can, be part of a single planning process. Conservation projects need provision for development just as surely as competent development requires an adequate approach to determining conservation policy. Developments do not take place in a vacuum but at an existing place, in existing surroundings. This seemingly obvious fact has to be understood and accepted before decisions on the relationship of conservation and development can be made. The precise balance is important. What is kept gives the inhabitants a sense of continuity, of identity and of stability. It provides a very necessary reassurance. What is newly-created may ensure survival, give vitality or perform a function which could not otherwise be met. Today’s creation may become tomorrow’s heritage; it may also be the bomb that blows a neighbourhood apart.

The processes involved in conservation and development are as much social, political and economic as they are technical. Tension between those bent upon retaining the old and those building the new is not necessarily bad. It is a useful testing process of all four aspects and can establish a society’s priorities—provided that the basic information necessary for decision-making has been made available to all parties and that a method of making those decisions has been agreed. This guide is therefore about gathering, analysing and assessing information that bears upon policy decisions and on the processes of making those decisions. It offers a common ground for debate, a method and a common language to help resolve differences and achieve a balance between the old and the new. The result of these processes is a conservation plan.

[James Simple Kerr, *The Conservation Plan*, 7<sup>th</sup> Edition, 2012, ‘Section 2.0 Introduction’, n.p.]

This Cultural Heritage Report and allied Statement of Heritage Impact has not been based on a Conservation Management Plan, as such a document was not requested, nor is it required for properties and places listed as being of local significance in the Shire of Hornsby [‘9.2 Heritage Items’ in *Hornsby Development Control Plan* 2013, p. 9-6]. The following comprehensive report nevertheless is intended to address all of the specific cultural history, heritage, conservation and landscape amenity issues raised by the Shire of Hornsby in October 2019. It is also intended as an aid to settling any cultural heritage concerns which may arise as a result of the impending Development Application (DA) to construct a new real tennis court building contiguous to the existing Cheltenham Recreation Club Limited Clubhouse.

## 1.4 Executive Summary and Findings

The site of the Cheltenham Recreation Club at 60-74 The Crescent, Cheltenham, 2119, is made up of a number of small parcels of land which have been created by subdivision of Portions 499 and 500 in the Parish of Field of Mars, County of Cumberland. The cultural history of the settlement, subdivision and development of the large parcel of land known as Portion 499 has proved to be a fascinating and intriguing story. In December 1889, at a public auction of Crown Land, Portion 499, of 2.14 hectares, was granted to Charles William Holloway, a Gladesville landscape gardener who originally hailed from Kintbury, West Berkshire, England. C. W. Holloway, who worked as a landscape gardener in England before emigrating to New South Wales around 1882, first cleared the land. In July 1892, C. W. Holloway transferred the same parcel of land to Catherine Rattray, wife of George Allan Rattray, a leading Sydney banker. Six months later, Catherine Rattray also acquired Portion 494, a triangular parcel of land abutting Portion 499 on the Beecroft Road frontage.

Catherine and George Rattray built a substantial six-room brick house on their property before 1895 and a separate 5-room cottage, built in 1897, on the northern boundary of their large site. Catherine Rattray sold Portions 494 and 499, her two contiguous properties fronting Beecroft Road (formerly Parade) in Cheltenham, to William Henry Harris (1874-1953), a freeholder, of Sydney, with the transaction being dated 21 January, 1907.

At the time of this purchase, William Henry Harris and his wife Ada Margaret Harris (née Rilett) lived at Edensor Park, a large and highly profitable agricultural property at Cabramatta, near Liverpool. Harris, a man of independent means and a direct descendant of Sydney pioneer settler and Colonial Surgeon Dr. John Harris, named their new property at Cheltenham as Edensor after their rural seat at Cabramatta. Soon after settling in the new suburb of Cheltenham, Harris built substantial stables to the rear of the former Rattray villa and devoted a large area of the Edensor estate to grazing and equestrian pursuits. Formal access to Edensor was by means of a wide driveway, leading from The Crescent. This entry was marked by a gatehouse/cottage occupied by the married couple engaged as servants to the Harris household.

On 28 June 1913, William H. Harris donated five suburban allotments he had acquired from the wealthy Sydney tailor William Chorley of nearby Mount Pleasant, to the newly established Cheltenham Recreation Club Limited (CRC), on the condition that ‘it was turned into a suitable ground for bowls, croquet and tennis’. William Mark Nixon, local architect, alderman, president of the newly formed Shire of Hornsby in 1908 and 1909, community leader and prominent horticulturalist, was engaged to layout the CRC site to incorporate a bowling green, croquet lawn and three tennis courts. A small two-room timber and asbestos cement sheet clad clubhouse was erected at the same time and the new Club was officially opened on 28 November 1914.

In the same year, William and Ada Harris engaged W. M. Nixon and Son, architects, to undertake extensive alterations and additions to Edensor, to include an encircling verandah and a Beecroft Road boundary wall of Pyrmont sandstone, as well as laying out a new garden in the household reserve in a ‘gardenesque’ style. Arthur L. Doust, a well-known Sydney landscape gardener and builder earlier responsible for all of the landscaping works for the CRC, undertook the extensive gardening work at Edensor.

In the 1920s and 1930s, and later again in the late 1940s, William H. Harris made further donations of land to the CRC to facilitate expansion of their sports grounds and the rambling single-storey clubhouse. In 1954, the CRC Committee engaged the firm of Adam, Wright and Apperly, architects, to design a new and substantial two-storey brick Clubhouse to be erected to the east of the original accommodation. Richard Eric ‘Dick’ Apperly, as a young architecture graduate/new partner in his late father’s firm, was responsible for the design of the new building, in an austere and contemporary Functionalist/Modern style. This building was opened in April 1957, and with sensitive additions made in 1970-1971, continues to serve the CRC to the present day. The majority of the original ad-hoc plan Clubhouse was demolished after 1961, save for a small section retained and adapted for use by the CRC Croquet Section. W. H. Harris, who died in 1953, played no part in the new building program.

William Henry Harris’s great public legacy rests in the existing sporting grounds of the Cheltenham Recreation Club Limited, and in the fabric of the existing Clubhouse which was appropriately named the ‘William H. Harris Memorial Clubhouse’ in his memory in 1957. He was a generous benefactor, but did not seek the public limelight.



The current proposal to construct a new real tennis court building and associated amenities as an addition to the ‘William H. Harris Memorial Clubhouse’ at the Cheltenham Recreation Club (CRC) can be clearly justified on cultural heritage, urban conservation and landscape amenity grounds. This view is clearly established in Parts A and B of this extensive report.

Demolition of the existing ‘Croquet House’ at the CRC, a critical aspect of this current development proposal, can also be justified on heritage grounds. The existing free-standing structure, which is a small section of the original much larger CRC Clubhouse erected in stages between 1913 and 1925, is now much altered and of comparatively low integrity. This building, in its current state, is not of such a level of cultural heritage significance that it should be retained insitu as a relic of the first years of development of the Cheltenham Recreation Club Limited and otherwise, as a heritage item within the Shire of Hornsby.

The surviving structure, in two discontinuous sections which date from 1929 and 1933 respectively, contains substantial amounts of hazardous asbestos-based building materials (used for both external and internal wall and ceiling panelling). This once fashionable material was installed in the early 1930s and again in the early 1960s, when the pavilion was altered and renovated for continued occupation by the CRC Croquet Section. Architectural and engineering advice confirms that the existing pavilion cannot be feasibly and economically relocated to another vacant site within the grounds of the CRC.

Analysis of the layout and development of the extensive grounds of the CRC confirms that there is no suitable site available to allow for this move and for this old facility to continue as a practical, functional asset situated near to the three croquet lawns. In any case, the facilities in this pavilion are outmoded and more generous accommodation is to be provided for the CRC Croquet Section in the proposed new real tennis court building development.

The proposed new real tennis court building has been delineated in accordance with long-established International parameters for the design and construction of a real or ‘royal’ tennis court. These near constant performance standards can be traced back to 1555, when the first book on the game of tennis (aka *jeu de paume* or *pallacorda*) and tennis court construction was written by Antonio Scaino da Salò and published in Venice, Italy.

The proposed real tennis court building, as revised, is appropriately sited and will not adversely impact upon the existing long-established landscaped and sportsground character of the site of the Cheltenham Recreation Club, nor otherwise detrimentally affect the existing distant visual amenity and established early 20<sup>th</sup> century residential character of the Beecroft-Cheltenham Heritage Conservation Area. The sensitive juxtaposition of the two separately functioning buildings in the manner proposed in the current DA documentation will allow for the existing CRC Clubhouse to remain in its existing setting, still readily visible and identifiable from the main pedestrian and vehicular approach from The Crescent, as well as from the open lawns surrounding the original two-storey structure. The belt of trees on The Crescent street frontage, to include two trees of local landscape significance, will greatly assist in screening the proposed new tennis court building from public vantage points.

The new real tennis court building development as now proposed by the Sydney Real Tennis Club Inc., at the Cheltenham Recreation Club Limited, at 60-74 The Crescent, Cheltenham 2119, in revised format, has great merit when tested against prevailing cultural heritage controls and cultural heritage significance criteria. The proposal will not detrimentally impact upon the existing landscape or cultural heritage significance of the CRC site, or on the visual amenity and cultural significance of the Beecroft-Cheltenham Heritage Conservation Area. Consequently, the Development Application should not be refused on heritage grounds.

## 1.5 The Cheltenham Recreation Club Limited : Summary Cultural History

### 1.5.1 History of the Consolidated CRC Site (1889-1963)

A comprehensive history of the site of the Cheltenham Recreation Club at 60-74 The Crescent, Cheltenham, 2119, can be found in Section 4.0 : Part B of this report. The subject site is made up of a number of small parcels of land which have been created by subdivision of Portions 499 and 500 in the Parish of Field of Mars, County of Cumberland. These small parcels have been annexed from Crown Grants 499 and 500 over an extended period, with the first five allotments out of William Chorley’s subdivision of Portion 500 (Lots 1 to 5 in Deposited Plan DP 5440) being conveyed to William Henry Harris [II] by transfer dated 11 April 1913. W. H. Harris in turn donated the same land to the newly established Cheltenham Recreation Club on 28 June 1913 on the condition that ‘it was turned into a suitable ground for bowls, croquet and tennis’. The new Club was officially opened on 28 November 1914.

New South Wales Land Registry records confirm that William Chorley acquired large tracts of land at Beecroft (later Cheltenham) in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and early 20<sup>th</sup> century. On 11 November 1893, Portion 500 of the Parish of Field of Mars was granted to William Chorley, master tailor, of Sydney, for a consideration of £128. William Chorley built his family residence ‘Mount Pleasant’ on a large elevated site fronting Carlingford Road (later Cheltenham Crescent and The Crescent) around 1890-1891 and thereafter the family moved from their first cottage in Beecroft Road to the impressive new two-storey timber villa.

Chorley was instrumental in having a railway platform erected on the Great Northern Junction line, close to his new residence, and having made a substantial contribution to the cost of the overhead bridge, opted somewhat nostalgically, to name the new platform ‘Cheltenham’ after his hometown in Gloucestershire. In the first decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, with a new railway platform close by, Chorley undertook extensive closer subdivision of his holdings between Beecroft Road and Cheltenham Crescent, creating several new roads in the process. William Chorley died on 22 April 1935 (not 1936) and the value of his estate when assessed for probate purposes tallied at £63,522. ‘Mount Pleasant’ was demolished by his trustees and this large residential site was then further subdivided and sold. The site of ‘Mount Pleasant’ is now 46-48 The Crescent, Cheltenham.



Fig. 1.1 Portion 499 in the Parish of Field of Mars : Granted to Charles William Holloway in December 1889  
[New South Wales Land Registry : Fig. 4.9 in Part B]

On 7 December 1889, at a public auction of Crown Land, Portion 499 of the Parish of Field of Mars was granted to Charles William Holloway of Gladesville, for a consideration of £158. Charles William Holloway was born at the village of Kintbury, West Berkshire, England, in 1854, son of Charles Holloway, a carpenter. C. W. Holloway, who worked as a landscape gardener in England before emigrating to New South Wales around 1882, cleared the land.

On 27 July 1892, C. W. Holloway transferred the same parcel of land (Portion 499) to Catherine Rattray, wife of George Allan Rattray, a leading banker, of Croydon (recorded 22 December 1892). Six months later, Catherine Rattray also acquired Portion 494, a triangular parcel of land abutting Portion 499 on the Beecroft Road frontage. Catherine and George Rattray evidently went to live at their large property in Beecroft Road (in an area later named 'Cheltenham' by William Chorley), following completion of a substantial six-room brick house built on their property before 1895 and a separate 5-room cottage built in 1897 on the northern boundary of their large site. The original Rattray residence contained six principal rooms, with the kitchen and other ancillary rooms located to the rear of the main building. The original residence was evidently enhanced with a wide Victorian-era perimeter verandah which was replaced in 1914-1915. Catherine Rattray sold Portions 494 and 499, her two contiguous properties fronting Beecroft Road (formerly Parade) in Cheltenham, to William Henry Harris [II], a freeholder, of Sydney, with the transaction being dated 21 January, 1907.

At the time of this purchase, William Henry Harris and his wife Ada Margaret Harris (née Rilett) lived at Edensor Park, a large and highly profitable agricultural property at Cabramatta (near Liverpool). Harris and his wife named their new property at Cheltenham as Edensor after their rural seat at Cabramatta.

W. H. Harris opted to subdivide Portion 494, the triangular allotment fronting Beecroft Road, into two unequal lots and thereafter donated the larger allotment to the Church of England Property Trust Diocese of Sydney, all to facilitate the construction of a new Anglican Church at Cheltenham. The church building was designed by Norman Hargreave Brodrick (1897-1965), architect, and was reputedly his first commission. Harris retained the smaller triangular lot to effectively create a cranked frontage for his residence Edensor at 203 Beecroft Road. The land in this triangle was used as an open yard and run for his horses.

On 1 August 1923, William Henry Harris transferred a further narrow strip of land with a frontage of 10.972 metres and a minimum depth of 85.902 metres to the Cheltenham Recreation Club. Ten years later, on 13 May 1933, William Henry Harris transferred another small parcel of land from his Edensor site subdivision to the Cheltenham Recreation Club. In 1937, W. H. Harris made further generous donations of land to the Cheltenham Recreation Club Limited to facilitate expansion of their recreational facilities.

During World War II, the Australian Government undertook extensive aerial photography runs over Sydney, and a record taken in 1943 shows the extent of development of the buildings and grounds of the Cheltenham Recreation Club Limited at this time as well as the layout of the buildings and site of Edensor to great effect. This photograph clearly shows the CRC site at the intersection of The Boulevard and The Crescent, with three tennis courts, a croquet lawn and a bowling rink (light tones) arranged each side of the original Clubhouse, with the land to the south of this building being grazing paddocks (dark tones). Close examination of this photograph also reveals a central roadway leading from The Crescent to the site of Edensor and the existence of a small cottage/gatehouse at the northern end of this roadway.

In the late 1940s, the Cheltenham Recreation Club resolved to expand their sporting facilities to accommodate a Post-War increase in membership and public interest in lawn bowls, tennis and croquet. William H. Harris again came to the fore, offering to donate two additional parcels of land to the Club, and in the process creating a statutory right-of-way leading from The Crescent, through to his now much-reduced residential property Edensor. On 9 January 1963, the eleven separate parcels of land plus the right of way leading to Edensor at 203 Beecroft Road, making up the site of the Cheltenham Recreation Club at 60-74 The Crescent, Cheltenham, were consolidated as one new Certificate of Title Volume 8422 Folio 153.



Fig. 1.2 Aerial Photograph of Crown Portions 499, 494 and 500 (1943)  
[SixMaps : NSW Spatial Services : Fig. 4.14 in Part B]

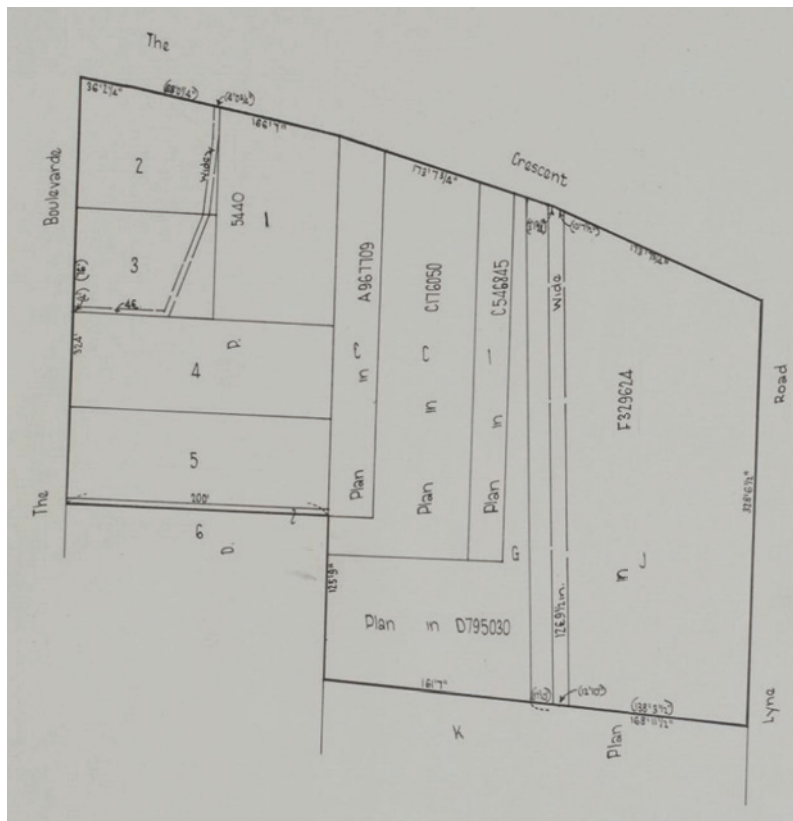


Fig. 1.3 Current Title Plan for the Site of the Cheltenham Recreation Club Limited  
‘Plan of Consolidation’ dated 9 January 1963 showing the ten allotments making up the site  
[Certificate of Title Volume 8422 Folio 153 : Fig. 4.16 in Part B]

In the period from 1923 to 1952, W. H. Harris generously donated around 1.21 hectares of these two Crown Portions to the Cheltenham Recreation Club Limited, as additions the original 5 lots derived from William Chorley’s tight subdivision of Portion 500 in 1913. He also donated more than half of Portion 494 fronting Beecroft Road to the Church of England Property Trust, Diocese of Sydney, this transfer being registered on 17 April 1923.

Following the death of William Henry ‘Bill’ Harris on 27 May 1953, and the granting of probate of his will, the property at 203 Beecroft Road, Cheltenham, was transferred to his widow, Mary Eileen (‘Molly’) Harris (née Cooney). During her long tenure of Edensor, she sponsored further development of the site. In the process she maintained the right-of-way cutting through the CRC land and leading from The Crescent to the front gates of her large residence. This roadway exists to the present day to effectively divide the CRC into two unequal portions. In 1962, the 1.05 hectares site was subdivided into five separate residential allotments in accordance with an irregular allotment plan with Edensor remaining as allotment 4, with a reduced area of 0.61 hectares. Houses were subsequently erected on allotments 1, 2, 3 fronting Lyne Road and allotment 5 to the west of Edensor. ‘Molly’ Harris died on 12 December 1990 at the age of 81 years and the property in turn passed to her daughter Julie Harris Harris, who, before her own death lodged a great tranche of legal documents and other artefacts relating to the Harris family with the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences, Sydney.

### 1.5.2 The Harris Family of Ultimo, Cabramatta and Cheltenham

The close familial link of William Henry Harris [II] of Edensor with Dr. John Harris (1754-1838), the pioneer Irish surgeon, Colonial public servant and extensive landholder at Ultimo on Sydney Harbour and at Shanes Park, Parramatta, has now been clearly established and accurately defined. The life and times of Dr. John Harris (1754-1838), a member of the New South Wales Corps (later the 102<sup>nd</sup> Regiment of Foot) who came with the Second Fleet to New South Wales, has been reliably charted by a number of eminent Australian and Irish historians. A direct descendant, John Harris, has set out the story of his forebears in New South Wales in great detail in Chapter 2 ‘Ultimo and the Harris Family’ in Michael R. Matthews, *Pymont & Ultimo : A History*, 1982. Shirley Fitzgerald and Hilary Golder have otherwise recorded the fascinating story of the development of Pymont and Ultimo, through the aegis of members of the Harris Family in Sydney, in the period from 1803 to 1911 and beyond.

The life and career of Dr. John Harris has been traced in Section 5.0 : Part B of this report. It is sufficient to note in this summary that he was born at Moy McIlmurray near Moneymore, County Derry, Northern Ireland, in 1754, eldest son of John Harris (1706-1766) and his wife Ann McKee (1714-1766). They had issue a further four children who lived to adulthood, namely Robert (1756-1803), William (1763-1856), George (1764-1843) and Elizabeth (1764-?). Two brothers, William and George Harris, were to play an important role in the distribution of Dr John Harris’s estate in New South Wales following his death in 1838. Harris received a number of land grants in Sydney and its environs and later acquired additional land on the Ultimo peninsula by private treaty to build his holding there to 233 acres [94 hectares]. Dr. Harris had accumulated great wealth and a large real estate portfolio including large acreages at Ultimo and Parramatta before journeying to England in 1809 to appear at the court martial of Lt-Colonel George Johnson. Following his marriage in England in 1814 John and Eliza Harris returned to NSW to live on his pastoral property Shanes Park on the South Creek near Parramatta, the name ‘Shane’ being the Celtic word for ‘John’.

Surgeon John Harris’s last will and testament makes interesting reading and has long been transcribed and made available on the public record. His Ultimo estate was devised to his brothers William and George, to be divided equally between them. Upon their respective deaths, each half-share in the Ultimo estate passed to the eldest son named John of both brothers. Both of these sons named John Harris came to Australia from Ireland to take possession of their legacies and their trials and tribulations are recorded in some detail in Part B of this report. John Harris (1803-1891), eldest son of William Harris, also inherited Shanes Park and in an extended period amassed an estate valued for probate at £390,000.



Dr. John Harris's Parramatta Estate, otherwise known as 'Harris Farm', was devised to Thomas Harris (1816-1870), son of his brother William Harris (1763-1856), another 30-acre farm at Parramatta was left to Eliza Stinson or Magee, daughter of his sister Elizabeth Harris (1764-?). Land adjoining Shanes Park in the County of Cumberland was left to his three nephews, Samuel, Robert and David Harris, the sons of his brother Robert Harris (1756-1803). Jane Lindsay or Magee, another daughter of his sister Elizabeth, was bequeathed Dr. John Harris's Pitt Town farm known as 'Bardenarang'. All of these legacies were further complicated by the direction that after the decease of the original beneficiaries, the same property was to pass to their next of kin named John 'being lawfully begotten and to his heirs male being so named and lawfully begotten to have and to hold forever'. Administration and interpretation of this condition in Dr. John Harris's will gainfully occupied the Sydney legal fraternity for many years. Disputes in the Harris family extended to c.1925.

William Henry Harris [II] (1874-1953) of Edensor at Cheltenham, major benefactor of the Cheltenham Recreation Club, is descended through his father William Henry Harris [I], his Irish grandfather John Harris (1802-1846), and his great grandfather George Harris (1764-1843). Great grandfather George Harris of Ballymilligan, near Magherafelt, County Londonderry, Ireland, was the youngest brother of Dr. John Harris Colonial Surgeon, early Sydney settler, and the first owner of the Ultimo Estate on Sydney Harbour. In a long drawn out legal process, William Henry Harris [II] through his father, inherited property and other assets out of the estate of his pioneer forebear, Dr. John Harris of Ultimo, and generously used part of this substantial inheritance to the ultimate benefit of the Cheltenham Recreation Club Ltd.

William Henry Harris [I] (1845-1893) was born on 6 September 1845 at Ultimo, Sydney, New South Wales, son of John Harris (1802-1846), and his wife Nancy Ann (née McKee). He was baptised at the Anglican Christ Church St Lawrence in George Street, Sydney, on 25 November 1845. His father, John Harris, emigrated to Sydney with his wife and five young children in 1844, specifically to take charge of his substantial entailed half-share in the Ultimo Estate, died on 10 September 1846, at the age of 44 years. He was interred at St John's Anglican Church burial ground at Parramatta, evidently with little fanfare. William [I], the only child born in Australia, was raised by his mother Nancy Ann Harris to adulthood, living at 'Ultimo House' and 'Livingstone House' after his marriage in 1870.

William Henry Harris [I] married Susan Mary Newton Clarke at the residence of her brother in Riley Street, Surry Hills, on 24 March 1870. Susan Mary Clarke was born at Sydney on 6 July 1841, daughter of John Stephenson Clarke (1787-1850), solicitor, and his wife Mary Anne (née Parfit). Her parents were married at the Old Church, St Pancras, London, on 21 May 1828, at which time John Stephenson Clarke was practising as an attorney in Fenchurch Street, London.

Following the distribution (the so-called 'family lottery') of parts of the Ultimo Estate amongst several members of the Harris family in 1859, William Henry Harris [I] took possession of around ten allotments, including Block 35, a large suburban block on the east side of Harris Street, and bounded by Quarry Street, Pyrmont Street and Fig Street. In 1873-1874, Harris, newly married, built a new residence 'Livingstone House' on this site. Their second son, William Henry Harris [II], was born in 1874, and not as elsewhere recorded as '1882'. His elder brother John Stephenson Harris died as a 37 day-old infant on 20 September 1872. William Henry Harris [II], as the eldest surviving son, came to inherit the largest portion of his father's considerable estate, which encompassed large parcels of industrial, commercial and residential land at Ultimo and Pyrmont, agricultural property at Cabramatta, a large share portfolio and other commercial investments in the affairs of Sydney's business community.

### 1.5.3 William Henry Harris (1874-1953) of Cabramatta and Cheltenham



William Henry Harris (1874-1953)

William Henry Harris [II] (aka Junior), a key player in the foundation of the Cheltenham Recreation Club, was born at ‘Livingstone House’, in Harris Street, Ultimo, on 10 January 1874, second son and third child born to William Henry and Susan Mary Harris [BDM NSW Births : 337/1874]. His arrival was otherwise announced in the Sydney press at the end of the month, and again in late February 1874 [*Sydney Morning Herald*, 31 January 1874, p. 1, and 21 February 1874, p. 6]. He grew up in some comfort in the large Harris family household at Ultimo, as his parents were well-off and employed several household staff.

William Henry Harris [I], who was known in the Sydney press as ‘William Harris’, had acquired the Cabramatta estate of J. B. Bossley in the early 1880s. As a young man, W. H. Harris [II] evidently went to work on his father’s two large farms, Edensor Park and Abbotsborough at Cabramatta, where he developed cattle breeding, crop farming, dairying and property management skills. In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, William Henry Harris [II] gave his occupation as ‘farmer’ but he was more than that, for with his elder sister Ada Mary, he managed a large real estate portfolio at Ultimo on behalf of his father’s estate. As well, Harris, like his father before him, cultivated an interest in equestrian bloodstock and the affairs of the Sydney Hunt Club. Following the death of his father in October 1893, and the eventual settlement of his business affairs and probate of his will, ownership of one of these properties, Edensor Park, was finally transferred to William Henry Harris [II] in 1903.

W. H. Harris [II] attained his majority in January 1895 and later that year he married Ada Margaret Rilett (1875-1930), daughter of William Rilett (1843-1922), a permanent way railway employee, and his wife Eliza (née McCauley) [BDM NSW Marriages 5434/1895]. The Rilett family came from Lithgow and Ada Margaret Rilett was born at Bathurst late in 1875 [BDM NSW Births 7591/1875]. Eliza Rilett died on 6 January 1913 and was awarded a neat and informative obituary in the *Lithgow Mercury* four days later. Her husband William, who had worked at Lithgow, Nevertire and Lawson as a railwayman, before moving to Sydney, died more than nine years later, on 5 September 1922.

Following their marriage, William and Ada Harris went to live in the large brick homestead at Edensor Park, the Harris family’s rural seat, and from 1895 until 1906, W. H. Harris, with enormous wealth and capital assets at his disposal, led the charmed life of a young country gentleman. In 1899, W. H. Harris’s dairy at Edensor Park was considered to be ‘without doubt the best equipped dairy in the Liverpool district’. From as early as 1897, W. H. Harris facilitated private shooting parties at Edensor Park, hunting ‘gill-birds’ on one occasion, and ‘hares’ on another. Harris and his wife Ada also regularly hosted meets of the Sydney Hunt Club at Edensor Park and regularly attended pastoral and agricultural shows in New South Wales. Both were active in the affairs of the Liverpool Agricultural, Horticultural and Industrial Society and W. H. Harris served as vice-president of this organisation for some years in the early 1900s. Having finally settled most of his father’s complex estate, and gained legal title to his considerable legacy at Cabramatta, William Henry Harris decided to leave Edensor Park in 1906 and move back to suburban Sydney, forsaking the increasingly industrialised environs of Livingstone House in Harris Street, Ultimo, for the Rattray property at rural Beecroft (Cheltenham).



Fig. 1.4 'THE SYDNEY HUNT CLUB'  
Saturday's Meet at Edensor Park, the residence of W. H. Harris.  
[*Sydney Mail and New South Wales Advertiser*, 30 August 1905, p. 539]

In late January 1907 William Henry Harris sold a number of his show horses ('high-class hunters, buggy horses and hackneys') at a special auction sale held at Inglis & Son's Bazaar at Camperdown. Bill and Ada Harris, as they were referred to by their friends and family, moved to Beecroft in early 1907 to occupy the already well-established Rattray villa on Beecroft Road (Parade). They named the place Edensor after their family property at Cabramatta. Harris was attracted to this site as the 5 acre-odd rural lot provided plenty of paddock space to accommodate his horses and house cattle. After taking possession in early 1907, the large site of Edensor was effectively divided into two near equal sections, with the southern part facing Beecroft Road and Lyne Road containing the large household lot. This division is easily discerned in the aerial photograph of the site taken in 1943. Harris maintained the northern part as open farm paddocks fenced off from the household lot, with a wide enclosed driveway crossing through this grassland and leading from the principal entrance on The Crescent to Edensor.

At an unknown but early date, William Harris built large timber stables close to the Beecroft Road frontage, complete with hay-loft, clerestory roof lighting, large sliding doors, modern brick flooring and groom's quarters. In the first years of occupation, he also created his own private bowling green close to the Lyne Road frontage. For many years Harris employed a resident groomsmen to care for his horses, ponies and carriages. Harris and his first wife also employed a married couple to effectively run their household, evidently occupying the small cottage-cum-gatehouse located on The Crescent frontage and close to the northern driveway entrance to Edensor.

It is now clear that in 1914-1915 Bill and Ada Harris engaged their friend, distinguished local architect William Mark Nixon, to undertake major renovations and additions to the late Victorian style Rattray villa, as well as completely refresh the layout and plantings in the surrounding garden. This work was undertaken by Arthur L. Doust, an accomplished landscape contractor and builder, under the direction of W. M. Nixon, architect. Doust had earlier been engaged by the Cheltenham Recreation Club Limited to layout the grounds and build a small clubhouse on land given to the CRC by W. H. Harris. Bill Harris and his wife Ada led the life of country gentry at Cheltenham. They both pursued their joint interest in equestrian activities in the district as well as participating in many community and horticultural organisations. They also staged many of their own social events at Edensor. W. H. Harris, it seems, was a generous supporter of most of these community groups and often sponsored their many activities. Their genteel life together at Edensor ended when Ada Margaret Harris died at a private hospital in Sydney, on 24 February 1930 at the age of fifty-four years, and was interred in the monumental Harris family vault in the Rookwood Cemetery. She died without issue.



Fig. 1.5 Edensor in 1932 : [ *Truth*, Sydney, Sunday 16 October 1932, p. 1 ]  
The wide Pyrmont stone verandah and rear additions were built in 1914-1915 : W. M. Nixon, architect  
Two young Himalayan Cedar trees (*Cedrus deodara*) are shown planted in front of Edensor.

Less than three years later, William Henry Harris [II] married Alice May Carter (née Gardiner), a fifty-one year-old divorcee [BDM NSW, Marriages 1932/17271]. Alice May Gardiner (1881-1936) was born in Sydney on 31 May 1881, daughter of William Gardiner and his wife Catherine (née Monroe). Alice M. Gardiner first married William Thomas Carter at Albury, in accordance with Presbyterian rites, on 3 December 1901. They had issue one son, William George Carter, born at Albury in 1902. In February 1931, her petition for divorce on the ground of constructive desertion, was granted in the Sydney Courts. W. H. Harris's introduction of Alice May Carter to the Edensor household in early September 1932 had terrible and unexpected repercussions, for Harris's adopted niece, Florence May Matthews, the 'girl with a limp', found it difficult to accept Alice May Carter in the place of her late aunt Ada Margaret Harris. Ethel Matthews (née Rilett), younger sister of Ada Harris, died at the Nepean Cottage Hospital, Penrith, at the age of 37 years and in 1923, her two children, Florence May and Eric, were legally adopted by Ada and Bill Harris and went to live at Edensor. They were educated locally, well provided for, and lived in some comfort with their caring aunt and uncle.

On 21 September 1932, and prior to the marriage of W. H. Harris and Alice May Carter, Florence May Matthews disappeared without trace, on her way to her dressmaking class in Sydney. At first her failure to return home that evening created consternation in the Edensor household, but attracted little public interest. It was assumed that she had run away from home. Many months later, her body was found in swamp land near North Narrabeen. An inquest returned an open finding on the cause of her demise. For Bill and Alice Harris, their married life together at Edensor proved to be short-lived, for Alice May Harris died at a private hospital in Sydney, on 9 August 1936 and was privately interred in the Presbyterian Section of the Rookwood Cemetery the following day. Seemingly undaunted by personal tragedies, William Henry (Bill) Harris married for a third time in 1938, his bride being Mary Eileen 'Molly' Cooney (1909-1990), a spinster shop-assistant, who lived with her parents, Daniel Joseph Cooney, a labourer, and his wife Julia (née Ryan) at 19A George Street, Burwood. Daniel and Julia Cooney were married in 1901.

Mary Eileen Cooney is descended from Irish immigrant stock. Her father, Daniel Joseph Cooney was born at Gulgong, New South Wales, in 1872, son of Denis Cooney (1844-1906), road contractor, and his wife Mary J. McMahon. Denis Cooney, an orphan from the Killaloe village in County Clare, came to Australia as a 13 year-old assisted immigrant aboard the 765 ton *Escort*, sailing from Southampton on 27 November 1857 and arriving at the Sydney Docks on 11 March 1858. He travelled with his sister Catherine, there being a total of 289 emigrants on board. Denis Cooney and Mary McMahon were married at Murrurundi in the Upper Hunter region in 1869 and thereafter raised a large family of three sons and four daughters between 1870 and 1888. Denis Cooney, 'one of the oldest and most respected residents in the district', died at Salvation Hill near Gulgong on 2 September 1906.

Bill and 'Molly' Harris had issue two daughters, Julie Harris Harris, born at Charlemount Private Hospital, Potts Point, on 10 November 1942 [*Sydney Morning Herald*, 14 November 1942, p. 16] and Susan Mary Harris, born at the Poplars Private Hospital, Epping, on 6 November 1944 [*Sydney Morning Herald*, 11 November 1944, p. 24]. Notably, W. H. Harris was 68 years-old when his first daughter was born. Susan died in infancy in July 1945 and was interred in the Old Catholic Cemetery, Section 18, in the Rookwood General Cemetery, perhaps belying the Irish Catholic background of her mother. The curiously named elder daughter, Julie Harris Harris, lived most of her life as a spinster at Edensor, with her parents and for some time with cousin Eric Matthews, then with her mother after the death of her father.

William Henry Harris [II] died in hospital on 27 May 1953, at the age of 79 years [*Sydney Morning Herald*, 29 May 1953, p. 16]. He was interred, privately, in the Rookwood Cemetery next day [Presbyterian Section 5G, Row 9]. Apart from two death notices published in the mainstream Sydney press, his passing seemingly went un-noticed, and no obituary recording his many contributions to the Cheltenham and Beecroft communities, and to the Cheltenham Recreation Club, can be found to date. The value of his considerable estate has not been established as yet, nevertheless, his biography, as published on the BCHG website, can with a little fine tuning, continue to accurately portray the life and career on one William Henry Harris (1874-1953) to great effect.

Mary Eileen 'Molly' Harris lived at Edensor from 1938 until her death in 1990. She became patron of both the womens' croquet and bowls sections of the Cheltenham Recreation Club and was herself a keen bowler. She took a great interest in the gardens at Edensor, to carry on a tradition first established by William and Ada Margaret Harris in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Historians at the BCHG record that Molly Harris frequently opened the house and gardens at Edensor for charity days, including events in support of the Cheltenham Kindergarten ['Gardens in Flower for Fetes' in *Sunday Herald*, 23 September 1951, p. 19].

She died on 12 December 1990 at the age of 81 years, and was interred in the Presbyterian Section of the Rookwood General Cemetery [Zone A, Section 05G, Grave 613]. Julie Harris Harris (1942-2003) stayed at Edensor for another five years, to finally sell the property in 1995. She died on 20 December 2003 and was interred in the Presbyterian Section of the Rookwood General Cemetery, next to her mother, in one of the Harris Family plots [Zone A, Section 05G, Grave 614].

William Henry Harris's great public legacy rests in the existing sporting grounds of the Cheltenham Recreation Club Limited, and in the fabric of the existing Clubhouse which was appropriately named in his memory in 1957. He was an exceedingly generous benefactor, but did not seek the public limelight, as did two of his Ultimo uncles, John and Matthew Harris. Both John Harris (1838-1911) and Matthew Harris (1841-1917), like their youngest brother William Henry Harris [I], inherited a large portfolio of land in the Ultimo Estate around 1859 and used their wealth, generated by a large rent roll, to great advantage.

John Harris lived at 'Bulwarra House', Ultimo, entered politics and rose through the ranks of the Sydney City Council and was elected to the Legislative Assembly in 1877. He was elected mayor of Sydney on several occasions and took a leading role in community affairs. His younger brother Matthew lived at 'Warrane' in Ultimo and also pursued a notable career in Sydney politics. He was knighted for services to the Sydney community in 1899. Both men are the subject of detailed biographies in Volumes 4 and 9 respectively of the *Australian Dictionary of Biography*.



#### 1.5.4 Brief History of the Cheltenham Recreation Club Limited (1913-1975)

The early history of the Cheltenham Croquet Club was written by CRC member H. (Hazel) Barr and published in 1991 under the banner *The First Twenty Years : A Brief History of the Cheltenham Croquet Club*, Cheltenham, 1991. Whilst this brief account of the origins of the Croquet Club records pertinent details of the work of various parties to form the Cheltenham Recreation Club and to develop the site for croquet, lawn bowls and lawn tennis, it is largely silent on matters to do with the design and construction of the first Clubhouse, a small section of which survives to the present time in the grounds of the CRC.

The Cheltenham Recreation Club celebrated their 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary on 17 February 1988, at which time the president prepared an address to members, which typescript survives in the archives of the CRC. Therein, he mentioned that at the public meeting to form the recreation club, held at the Beecroft School of Arts on 7 February 1913, fifteen local residents were nominated to organise the affairs of the new organisation. The formation of the Cheltenham Recreation Club Limited was formally announced in the *Sunday Times* on 17 August 1913, with advice that the CRC had been formed with an intended working capital of £2,000.

A search of the local newspaper, the *Cumberland Argus*, has established that William Mark Nixon (1859-1931), a prolific local architect, Shire councillor, horticulturalist and prominent community leader, was involved in the design and layout of the original site of the Cheltenham Recreation Club, given to the CRC by William Henry (Bill) Harris [II] on 28 June 1913. W. M. 'Will' Nixon was born at The Glebe, Sydney, on 31 May 1859, son of wealthy Scottish emigrant William Nixon (1828-1891) and his wife Jane Elliot (née Graham). A comprehensive history of the Nixon family of Hawick, Roxburghshire, Scotland, and Nottingham, England, and an extensive biography and account of the architectural practice of W. M. Nixon & Son, has been set out in Section 6.4 : Part B of this report.

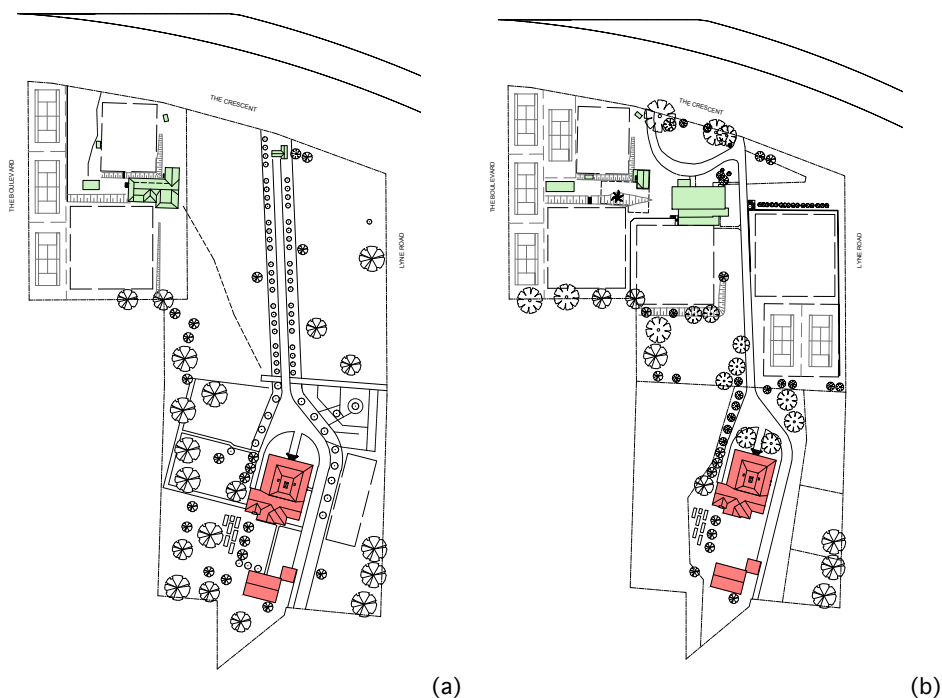


Fig. 1.6 The Original and Second Clubhouse (Green) and the Edensor Site (Red)  
Schematic Site Plans in 1927 (a) and c.1970 (b)  
[S. N. Cremona (del) : August 2020]

W. M. Nixon and Son, architects, prepared plans and specifications and called tenders for work at the CRC in August 1913. The contract for these works totalling some £700 was awarded to A. L. Doust, a contractor of Chatswood, who variously undertook work as a landscape contractor and residential builder in Sydney’s northern suburbs. Arthur Leslie Doust (1873-1955) was born at Parramatta on 19 February 1873, married Florence Maude Blinkhorn on 8 August 1894, had issue four children and was divorced in April 1926. In a long career as a gardener and builder, Arthur L. Doust rose through the ranks to finally practice as a landscape architect from his abode in the City View Flats on Lavender Bay.

Arthur Doust and William M. Nixon, contractor and architect respectively, successfully converted the five suburban allotments into a neatly arranged complex of croquet lawn, four-rink bowling green and two grass tennis courts. The original heavily terraced layout of these facilities can be gleaned by examination of the 1943 and 1953 aerial photographs of the site [Fig. 6.1] and recently prepared site survey plans [Fig. 6.7]. Although there is no specific reference to the construction of a clubhouse in the tender notice published in August 1913, it is clear from a press report of the official opening of the grounds of the Cheltenham Recreation Club in late November 1914, that a small clubhouse had been erected by that time [Fig. 6.3].

It is also clear now that William Henry (Bill) Harris instructed W. M. Nixon to prepare a new layout of the gardens at Edensor in the same year that A. L. Doust completed the landscaping and building works at the Cheltenham Recreation Club. In July 1914, Arthur Doust advertised in the ‘Situations Vacant’ column in the Sydney press for gardeners being ‘3 good Men, accust. landscape work, const [consult] Doust, Cheltenham Bowling Club, Chelt’ham’ [*Sydney Morning Herald*, 13 July 1914, p. 17]. Nixon was also engaged by W. H. Harris at this time to design extensive renovations to the residence and site of Edensor to include construction of a wide Pyrmont stone verandah and rear additions facing Beecroft Road [Fig. 1.5].

In February 1916, the Shire of Hornsby approved the plans for a ‘fibro-cement shelter’ on the bowling green at the Cheltenham Recreation Club [‘The Building Industry’ in *Cumberland Argus and Fruitgrowers Advocate*, 26 February 1916, p. 8]. In late 1918, W. M. Nixon & Son called tenders for further work at the CRC, to include completion of a two-rink bowling green and tennis court, the inference being that work on these facilities had already started in 1914. The drainage easement which ran through Lots 1 and 3 of Chorley’s original subdivision, continued to flood, leading the CRC Committee to make further representations to the Shire of Hornsby to have the matter rectified. The Club was also concerned with the state of the roads leading to their new establishment and sought further improvements to their immediate environment in February 1924.

### 1.5.5 Summary History of Original CRC Clubhouse

The first section of the CRC Clubhouse was built in 1913-1914 as a two-room rectangular plan pavilion located on a sloping site above the original terraced croquet lawn. This shelter at first contained just a small clubroom and kitchen. The pavilion was designed by architect W. M. Nixon & Son, as part of their brief to layout the grounds of the Cheltenham Recreation Club Limited. It was completed before the official opening of the CRC in November 1914. It was built by Arthur L. Doust, the builder and landscape contractor otherwise engaged to shape the sloping paddocks and form up the tennis courts, bowling green and croquet lawn on land otherwise described as Lots 1-5 in DP 5440.

William Mark Nixon's concept and strategic plan for the grounds of the newly formed sporting club at Cheltenham has much merit. He has used the sloping site to advantage, excavating benches across the site to provide level ground for the croquet lawn and bowling green to be formed up. As well, the extensive excavated overburden has been used to fill the low flood-prone ground near the corner of The Crescent and The Boulevard and make it suitable for three tennis courts. In the process, Nixon and the CRC Committee have decided to build the new clubhouse on natural sloping ground above the croquet lawn embankment and between this lawn and the upper level bowling green. This decision meant that the lightweight timber pavilion was to be located on high brick piers on the north side of the building, whilst the south side was to be constructed on dwarf brick walls with the floor level set below the playing surface of the bowling green. This matter is clearly illustrated in Fig. 1.7).

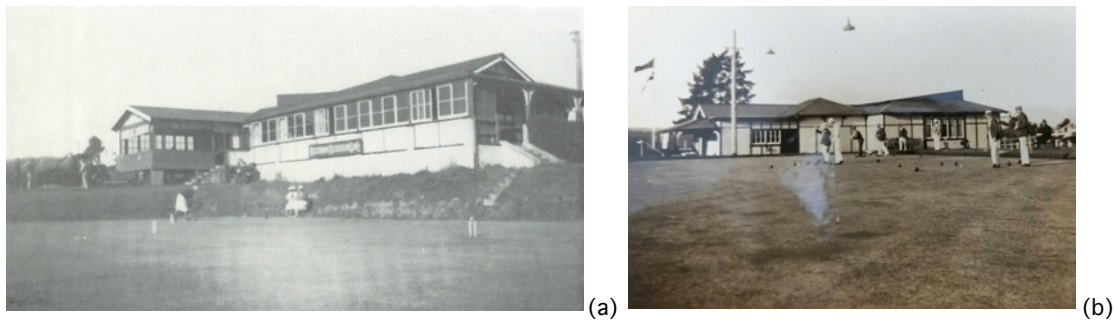


Fig. 1.7 'The Old Clubhouse' (a) : The Cheltenham Recreation Club Pavilion in c. 1933 (b)

The sign on the building reads 'Cheltenham Recreation Club'

The Croquet Pavilion (left end) is recorded as open on two sides, with the east side fenestrated

[(a) H. Barr, *The First Twenty Years : A Brief History of the Cheltenham Croquet Club*, Cheltenham, 1991, p. 13]

[(b) Cheltenham Recreation Club Limited Archives]

The original Clubhouse was extended and altered on a number of occasions between 1915 and 1925, likely to designs by the same architectural firm, to provide additional accommodation for an ever-expanding club membership, to include a gentlemen's clubroom, billiard room and a large skillion-roofed function room. An enclosed and regularly glazed verandah/passage was built along the long north façade of the rectangular building to facilitate access to the various sections of the pavilion. As well, a wide new verandah was constructed across the west gabled façade before 1925.

In 1929 a small room was created at the east end of the pavilion for use by the Croquet Section and in 1933, an open sided pavilion was built out from the Croquet Section clubroom to provide shelter *en plein air* as well as views to the croquet lawn from an elevated covered vantage point. It appears that sanitary facilities were provided for the membership in external conveniences. The architectural character of the first CRC Clubhouse is recorded somewhat vaguely in three photographs of the building taken in the period 1925 -1935, one of which shows the roof profiles and the asbestos cement sheet panels to effect [Fig. 1.7].



Fig. 1.8

Existing Cheltenham Recreation Club Croquet House : S. N. Cremona Photographs (2019)

### 1.5.6 Post War Development of the Site and the Second Clubhouse

The Sydney Real Tennis Club Limited now propose to erect a new real tennis court building as an addition to the existing two-storey Clubhouse owned and occupied by the Cheltenham Recreation Club Limited since 1957. The architectural and cultural history of this building is only tenuously recorded in the archives of the CRC, and in local history sources, including those files of the Beecroft-Cheltenham History Group (BCHG) which are published on their informative and wide-ranging website. Historians with the BCHG succinctly record that:

In 1948, Mr Harris donated a second parcel of land upon which were built a second bowling green and two more tennis courts. They were opened on Australia Day 1950. The club continued to expand with, in 1954, work commencing on a new club house being built in memory of William Harris who had died the year before. It was opened on 13 April 1957.

Examination of the records of the Cheltenham Recreation Club Limited and a review of both the popular and the dedicated architectural press in Australia (Trove) has now clearly established that the existing 'William H. Harris Memorial Clubhouse' at Cheltenham was designed by Richard Eric 'Dick' Apperly (1925-1992), partner in the architectural firm of Adam, Wright and Apperly, and built in the period from January 1954 to April 1957. Positive moves to construct a new and more accommodating clubhouse at the CRC stem from discussions at committee meetings held in the old clubhouse in late 1953 and early 1954. In January 1954, the CRC Committee had settled a site for the new building and resolved that architects 'Messrs. Wright & Applebee [sic]' be 'consulted as to a suitable plan'.

In December 1954, Richard Apperly and his new partner David Barnett announced that they had assumed control of the old firm of Adam, Wright and Apperly, of 28 Bond Street, Sydney [*Sydney Morning Herald*, 10 December 1954, p. 19] and had nominated Richard (Dick) Apperly to take charge of the commission to design a new clubhouse for the Cheltenham Recreation Club Limited.

By June 1955, the architects, under the banner of Adam, Wright and Apperly, had completed the design and documentation for the proposed new Clubhouse and had the plans approved by both the Hornsby Shire Council and the Metropolitan Licensing Court. A report on the 'Club Premises' appears in the Annual Report of the CRC for the year ending 30 June 1955.

#### CLUB PREMISES

The erection of a new clubhouse has been beset with difficulties in obtaining the necessary finance. Various finance organisations have been approached unsuccessfully, but negotiations are now being entered into which the Directors anticipate will result in the required amount of finance, on favourable terms, being available in the near future. Members will have noted that the plans of the new building, which have been approved by Hornsby Shire Council and the Metropolitan Licensing Court, make provision for all modern amenities, for both present and future members, in an attractive and functional building.

[The Cheltenham Recreation Club Limited, 'Annual Report' year ended 30<sup>th</sup> June, 1955]

Construction of the new Clubhouse was delayed for some considerable time as the Committee struggled to find a source of finance for the project. A search of land titles reveals that a mortgage over the land held by the Cheltenham Recreation Club Limited was finally arranged with the City Mutual Life Assurance Society Limited and some months later Mortgage No. G464944 was formally registered on the relevant Certificate of Title on 15 March 1956 [Certificate of Title Volume 8422 Folio 153]. By this time work was underway.



Club Premises:

The new clubhouse is nearing completion and should be ready for use in October. The functional design of the building is now apparent and all facilities are provided for the utmost in comfort for members, and for improved service by the house staff providing refreshments and catering services. It is anticipated that the Section Social Committees will now feel proud to arrange Social activities in very pleasant surroundings.

[The Cheltenham Recreation Club Limited, 'Annual Report' year ended 30<sup>th</sup> June, 1956]

By 30 June 1956, the CRC had spent £5,858/14/4 on the new clubhouse. The final cost of the new building was tallied at £16,684 odd, with an additional cost of £1,520 odd for fittings and fixtures and £271 for landscaping works. By 30 June 1957, the Cheltenham Recreation Club had spent £18,476 on the redevelopment of their new clubrooms. A search of CRC records has as yet failed to identify the builder selected to construct architect Richard Apperly's exceedingly chaste design for the new Clubhouse. The building as designed and largely constructed in 1956 is based on a long rectangular hall plan with a large kitchen located at the east end and a wide bar across the west end. The design is an austere example of Functional Modernism, the walls are built of load-bearing brickwork with a flat steel deck roof supported on then fashionable exposed open-web steel joists spanning across the dining hall and meeting room [See Fig. 1.10]. The interior was economically lined with plywood.

A sloping site (6° fall) was selected well clear of the existing clubhouse so that the original somewhat ramshackle building could continue in use whilst the new building was erected. Following the official opening of the new Clubhouse on 13 April 1957, the old building was retained on site until after 1961 and perhaps to 1970, when additions were made to the 1957 Clubhouse. The layout of the site following the opening of the new Clubhouse in April 1957, is shown to advantage on an aerial photograph taken in 1961 [Fig. 1.9 (a)].

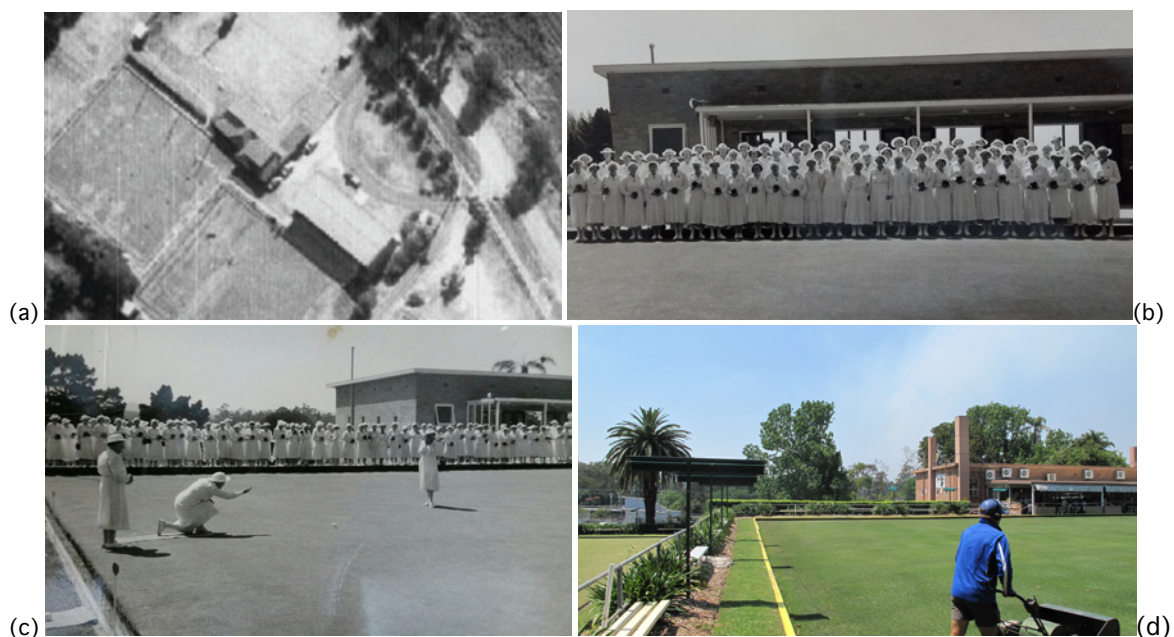


Fig. 1.9 Aerial Photograph of Site of both CRC Clubhouses in 1961 (a)  
Opening of the CRC Bowling Section Season September 1957 (b) and (c) Present View of Lawn (d)  
[NSW Sixmaps Spatial Services, CRC Archives, S. N. Cremona photo (2019)]





Fig. 1.10

The Second CRC Clubhouse : Exterior and Interior Views in 2019  
[Photography : S. Cremona, SRTC, 2019]

A search of the archives of the Cheltenham Recreation Club for original architectural drawings, building contracts and photographic records of the 'William H. Harris Memorial Clubhouse' has not unearthed any trove of documents. However, architectural working drawings for additions and alterations to the 1956 Clubhouse, which drawings are dated 7 August 1970, together with drawings for construction of a new tennis shelter dated 29 April 1970. Two Shire of Hornsby building approvals are dated 25 September and 29 June 1970 [BA 2027-70, 1307-70]. Earlier, a fibro-cement Shelter Shed had been erected in early 1964 [BA 121-64] and a brick Soil Shed built in May 1967 [BA 813-67]. Copies of these documents are reproduced in Section 6 : Part B (Figs. 6.22 to 6.24) of this report.

In 1970, the CRC Committee engaged the prominent architectural firm of Ruskin Rowe, Elmes and Slatter, of North Sydney, to design and document alterations and additions to the Clubhouse as well as design a new tennis pavilion. These entirely sympathetic extensions to the original CRC Clubhouse, as built in 1970-1971, were designed by the architects to match the form and materials used by R. E. Apperly in 1955-1956. The work included a new entry staircase, coolstore, toilets and enclosing the verandah canopy (Figs. 1.11 and 1.12 below).

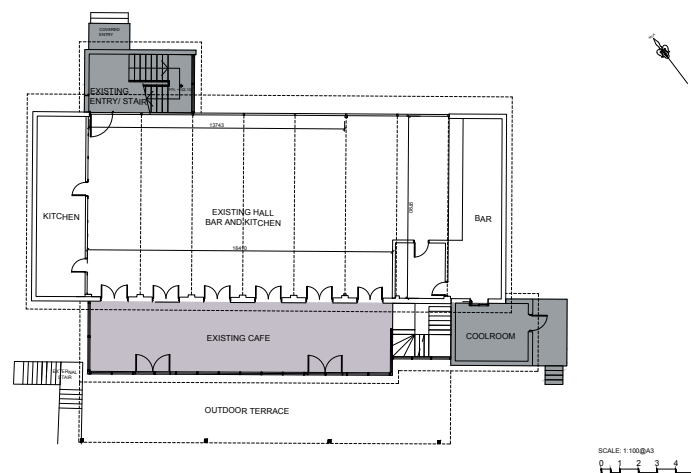


Fig. 1.11 Existing Conditions : Cheltenham Recreation Club : Upper Level Floor Plan (2020)  
The Alterations and Additions undertaken in 1970-1971 are shown shaded grey

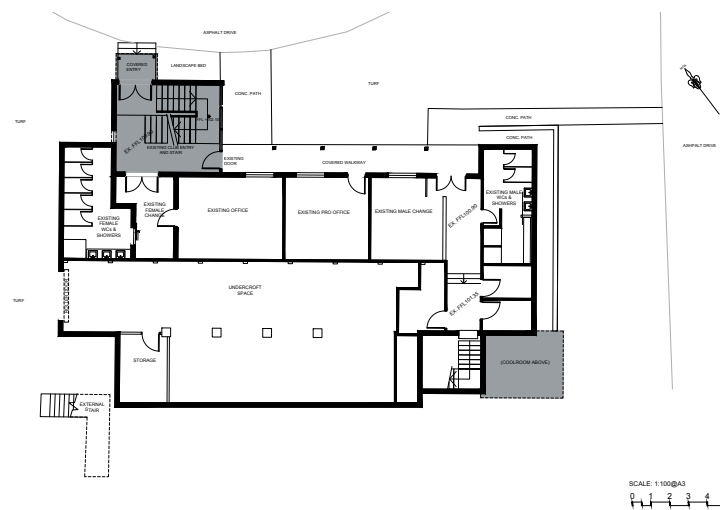


Fig. 1.12 Existing Conditions : Cheltenham Recreation Club : Lower Level Floor Plan (2020)  
[Delineation : S. N. Cremona, SRTC]

Richard Eric (Dick) Apperly, many years later, in his seminal book concerning the identification of architectural style in Australia, described the architectural style of his chaste modern building for the CRC as being ‘Post War International’. Examination of the original plan form [Figs. 1.11 and 1.12 above], confirms that the building is based on a formal rectangular plan layout arranged on two controlling axes, with the principal elevation to the street frontage originally presenting as a symmetrical composition. This simple plan form was later repeated in two of Apperly’s buildings at the Shell Refinery, Clyde. It is also pertinent to note that Apperly’s design cleverly utilised the natural steep slope of the site to advantage. The deep excavation cut into the hill allowed for access to the Clubhouse from The Crescent frontage at natural ground level as well as allowing the upper floor level to be aligned close to the same level as originally established for the second bowling green. The close alignment can be seen to effect on a 1957 photograph [See Fig. 6.19 in Section 6 : Part B].

Dick Apperly’s career and notable contributions to the architectural profession and to academic life in New South Wales is well understood by members of the profession in Australia, by his fellow academics, and by a host of graduates who studied under his tutelage in the University of New South Wales from 1966 until 1990. Richard Eric ‘Dick’ Apperly’s publications have likewise made notable contributions to the study of architectural history in Australia, and a recent biography included in *the Encyclopedia of Australian Architecture*, mentions the import of two of his major books concerning Australian and Sydney architecture. This entry reads:

APPERLY, RICHARD

Richard Eric (Dick) Apperly (1925-1992) was the son of architect Eric Langton Apperly. He studied architecture at the University of Sydney in the period 1946-1950, gaining a Bachelor of Architecture (Honours). Apperly joined his father’s firm, Wright and Apperly, then known as Adam, Wright & Apperly, in 1951 upon his father’s death. From about 1958 [sic], when David Barnett joined the firm, the practice was known as Adam, Barnett & Apperly, and later Richard Apperly Architect. In 1966, Apperly was appointed a full-time lecturer in architecture at the University of NSW, from where he would retire in 1990, as associate professor, having served as head of architecture (1984-87).

He had a profound impact on the architecture course at the University of NSW, and lasting legacy for the study of Australian architecture through his enduring interest in the Australian house of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, through his research, including his master’s thesis (completed at the University of NSW in 1972) on interwar Sydney houses and the book *444 Sydney buildings*, written with Peter Lind (1971). His most enduring work, written with Bob Irving and Peter Reynolds, was *A pictorial guide to identifying Australian architecture : Styles and terms from 1788 to the present* (1989), undertook the enormously difficult task of attempting to categorise Australian architecture into identifiable stylistic categories, from the beginning of European settlement onwards. [Julie Willis and Anne Higham, ‘Apperly, Richard’ in Philip Goad and Julie Willis, *The Encyclopedia of Australian Architecture*, Cambridge University Press, 2012, p. 25]

Whilst Willis and Higham have summarised the great contribution that Richard Apperly made to architectural education in New South Wales in an academic career covering nearly three decades, they have chosen not to discuss Apperly’s work as an architect in the 1950s and 1960s. The life and career of ‘Dick’ Apperly has been traced in much more detail in Section 6.5 : Part B of this report. The CRC Clubhouse is representative of Apperly’s early excursions into the Post-War International Style but it is not in Apperly’s own short list of five buildings which he considered answered his client’s needs ‘especially well’. Nevertheless, it is in my assessment, a critical part of the large sports and recreational site at the Cheltenham Recreation Club, a place of local historical, social and spiritual significance.



## 1.6 Cultural Heritage Significance of the Cheltenham Recreation Club

### 1.6.1 Current Assessments

Both Edensor at 203 Beecroft Road, and the Cheltenham Recreation Club at 60-74 The Crescent, Cheltenham 2119, are included in the Beecroft-Cheltenham Heritage Conservation Area (HCA) as described in Section 9.3.6 of Part 9 'Heritage' in the *Hornsby Development Control Plan*, 2013. Both places are consequently subject to general controls within Part 9.3 as well as additional prescriptive measures in Table 9.3.6 (a) for matters relating to demolition, streetscape character, materials and finishes.

The grounds of the Cheltenham Recreation Club were identified as a place of local landscape significance in the 'Hornsby Shire Heritage Study' as prepared by Perumal Murphy Wu Pty Ltd in 1993 (NSW Environment theme). Subsequently, the Cheltenham Recreation Club Grounds have been listed in the 'Hornsby Local Environmental Plan', 2013, as Listing Number 296 (*New South Wales Government Gazette*, 27 September 2013). This listing largely relates to the significance of three specified mature trees and entry plantings off The Crescent.

Edensor has likewise been identified as a place of local cultural significance in the 'Hornsby Shire Heritage Study' as prepared by Perumal Murphy Wu Pty Ltd in 1993 (NSW : Towns, suburbs and villages theme). The place is listed in the 'Hornsby Local Environmental Plan', 2013, as Listing Number 268 (*New South Wales Government Gazette*, 27 September 2013). In 1999, Tropman & Tropman, Architects, of George Street, Sydney, prepared a draft Conservation Management Plan (CMP) for the owners of Edensor. Whilst this CMP has not been sighted, a summary statement of significance for the property, as prepared by Tropman & Tropman, is held in the CRC archives to confirm that Edensor was considered by these consultants at that time to be a heritage place of local significance in the Shire of Hornsby [Confirmed by Mr. John Tropman in personal communication, 12 October 2020]

The existing buildings at the site of the Cheltenham Recreation Club have not been identified in any heritage or conservation study known to the writer. The Croquet Clubhouse (1929-1933) and the main CRC Clubhouse (1956) are not individually listed in the 'Hornsby Local Environmental Plan', 2013, or otherwise classified by the National Trust of Australia (NSW).

### 1.6.2 Review of Cultural Heritage Significance and a New Assessment

A new assessment of the level of cultural heritage significance which should be assigned to the two places individually known as the Cheltenham Recreation Club at 60-74 The Crescent, Cheltenham 2119 and Edensor at 203 Beecroft Road, Cheltenham 2119, has been undertaken in consideration of the extensive cultural history data now advanced in summary in Part A and in greater detail in Part B of this Heritage Impact Statement to the Shire of Hornsby. I have adopted this strategy as all previous assessments were made many years ago and evidently without comprehensive cultural histories being available to the consultants.

In preparing the following assessment, I have first of all referred to the New South Wales Heritage Office's long-standing publications *Assessing Heritage Significance*, 2001, and *Local Government Heritage Guidelines*, 2002. As well, I have been guided by the *Australia ICOMOS Burra Charter*, 2013 (*Burra Charter*) and by the Australia ICOMOS Practice Note *Understanding and Assessing Cultural Significance*, Version 1, November 2013. I have also had regard to extensive data on the respective websites of the NSW Heritage Council and the Shire of Hornsby and to their statutory documents and publications concerning heritage and conservation in the State and in the broad Hornsby municipality.

In the Shire of Hornsby, the cultural heritage significance of a place, at a local level, is measured using the seven standard criteria adopted by the NSW Heritage Council, which criteria relate to matters of aesthetic, historic, scientific, and social values. It is of interest that spiritual values are not specifically mentioned in NSW legislation or heritage practice guidelines, although these values are otherwise defined in the *Burra Charter* as referring to:

the intangible values and meanings embodied in or evoked by a place which give it importance in the spiritual identity, or the traditional knowledge, art and practices of a cultural group. Spiritual value may also be reflected in the intensity of aesthetic and emotional responses or community associations, and be expressed through cultural practices and related places.

[ICOMOS Practice Note, *Understanding and Assessing Cultural Significance*, (1), 2013]

### 1.6.3 The Meaning of Cultural Significance

In Article 1.2 of *The Burra Charter*, Cultural significance is defined as meaning

aesthetic, historic, scientific, social or spiritual value for past, present or future generations.

Cultural significance is embodied in the *place* itself, its *fabric, setting, use, associations, meanings, records, related places* and related *objects*.

### 1.6.4 Criteria for the Assessment of Cultural Heritage Significance

Near uniform criteria for the identification of places of cultural significance throughout Australia have long been adopted by the former Australian Heritage Commission (now the Australian Heritage Council) and State heritage agencies including Heritage NSW and Heritage Victoria. The purpose of these criteria is firstly to provide a framework by which the 'aesthetic, historic, scientific, social or spiritual value for past, present or future generations' can be assessed, and secondly to ensure that a consistent approach to the assessment of cultural significance of historic places is maintained.

The five values cited above have been further defined by Australia ICOMOS in their helpful Practice Note *Understanding and Assessing Cultural Significance*, Version 1, November 2013 [pp. 3-4]. In NSW, applicable criteria for the assessment of cultural significance have been broadly defined as follows:

- (a) an item is important in the course, or pattern, of NSW's cultural or natural history.
- (b) an item has strong or special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in NSW's cultural or natural history.
- (c) an item is important in demonstrating aesthetic characteristics and/or a high degree of creative or technical achievement in NSW.
- (d) an item has strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group in NSW for social, cultural or spiritual reasons.
- (e) an item has potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of NSW's cultural or natural history.
- (f) an item possesses uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of NSW's cultural or natural history.
- (g) an item is important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of NSW's cultural or natural places, or cultural or natural environments.

### 1.6.5 Significance of the Existing Landscapes and Building Fabric at the CRC

The level of integrity of historic fabric is usually taken into account in the process of establishing an appropriate level of cultural significance for a particular place which has been identified in a heritage study of a municipality, stands in a statutory heritage overlay area, or has otherwise been proposed for heritage planning protection.

The higher the integrity, the greater the significance and value of the place as a specimen of a particular building type or cultural epoch. Any proposed works, be it demolition, removal or alterations, to near intact buildings (high integrity) needs to be more carefully assessed than those works proposed for buildings which have already been extensively altered (low).

Integrity has been defined as follows:

<i>Integrity</i>	the state of being whole, entire or undiminished, sound, unimpaired, of perfect condition.
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Aerial photographs of all of the land contained within the boundaries of Portions 499, 494, 500 and 501 in the Parish of Field of Mars, taken over an extended period from 1943 until present day (NSW Spatial Services, Google Earth and Nearmap) can be used to confirm that the natural and man-made landscapes within the site of the Cheltenham Recreation Club have been altered on a number of occasions, and as the rural site has been progressively developed from 1913 to relatively recent times [Fig. 2.14]. The pattern of subdivision of Portion 499 is recorded in great detail in Section 4.6 in Part B of this report.

These same aerial photographs serve to confirm that street plantings (trees and shrubs) outside of the CRC boundaries have also been changed over time, with several original large trees standing in The Crescent street reserve being removed in the decades after 1994. These mature trees were evidently cut-down when car-parking facilities were constructed on the east side of The Crescent and laid out to follow the curved line of the railway reserve. The current pattern of street plantings and landscaping in The Crescent, as well as the car-parking lots are recorded in high-resolution aerial photographs now available on Google Earth and Nearmap digital services and reproduced elsewhere in this report.

The integrity of the existing CRC 'Croquet House' is discussed elsewhere in this report and it is sufficient to note that the surviving structure is now of low integrity and limited historical interest. Likewise, the integrity of the existing 'William H. Harris Memorial Clubhouse' has been somewhat compromised by the plethora of air conditioning units and ducts ranging over the south façade and the flat roof of the 1957 building. The visual perception of the Clubhouse is also affected by the fact that the floor level of the outdoor terrace is now well below the ground level of the bowling-cum-croquet green standing to the south of the Clubhouse, giving the impression that the existing two-storey structure is part buried. Otherwise, the existing CRC Clubhouse is recognisably intact and of comparatively high integrity, both internally and externally.

When tested against the prevailing cultural heritage criteria, it is clear that site of the Cheltenham Recreation Club, to include the existing sporting grounds, the 'William H. Harris Memorial Clubhouse' and identified mature trees within the site, is a heritage place of historic, aesthetic, social and spiritual value to the Shire of Hornsby at a local level. It is clearly of significance for its associations with William Harris of Edensor and William Chorley of Mount Pleasant, both benefactors and foundation members of the CRC, for its associations with the Cheltenham Recreation Club, an important local institution, and for its aesthetic landscape qualities, and close visual and historic relationship with Edensor, nearby.

## 2.0 DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

### 2.1 The Real or Royal Tennis Court : A Brief Architectural History



Fig. 2.1 Early Illustrations of Tennis in Various Forms and Courts  
[Collection : AFW]

At the outset, and by way of explanation, it should be understood that the term 'tennis' relates to the original ball and racket game, which has its origins in Medieval Europe, and not the current game, which has its origins in England in the later XIXth century and is properly referred to as 'lawn tennis'. Complex ball games have been played in purpose built structures since Greek and Roman times. Some of these structures survive as relics to the present day. In the XVth and XVIth centuries, the ancient game was revived during the Early Italian Renaissance in Italy as well as in Medieval France, when members of both the Italian and French aristocracies engaged leading architects to design enclosed tennis courts in which the near identical games of *pallacorda* and *jeu de paume* were played. Since the mid-XVIth century, when Antonio Scaino wrote the first book on tennis entitled *Trattato del giuoco della palla*, Venice, 1555, these buildings have been universally described, in whatever language, as 'tennis courts'. Scaino records the existence of two tennis court plans at this time, the larger *steccato maggiore* (*jeu dedans*) and the less complicated and smaller *steccato minore* (*jeu quarré*) [Fig. 2.2 (a)].

The tennis court building is easily defined from within because of the layout of the complex floor plan, the design and construction of the distinctive sloping penthouses and galleries, the role of the curiously named *grille*, *tambour*, *bandeau* and *dedans*, the lofty internal spatial arrangements and clerestory lighting within the building, the requisite solid construction materials of brick, stone and slate, the special wall plasters and floor finishes developed in the late XIXth century, and the often vividly coloured court livery therein. All of these specific elements combine to create what, to the uninformed spectator, is a decidedly mysterious place. Nevertheless, the architecture of the tennis court, as expressed in the external facades, often belies the function within.

My own extensive research to date has clearly established the existence of an historical silver thread which links the oldest tennis courts erected throughout various Ages with those recently erected. In effect, it is a fundamental contention in my PhD thesis that one tennis court, when built, begets another. And so it is with the proposed real tennis court to be built at the Cheltenham Recreation Club in suburban Sydney. It is also clear from my research that many of the most prominent tennis courts, when and wherever erected, were designed by leading architects of the day, and from the mid-XVIth century onwards, were delineated in the latest and fashionable architectural styles. This largely explains why every tennis court is different. Remarkably though, the floor plan and allied idiosyncratic internal elements (such as the *tambour*, penthouses, galleries, *dedans* and *grille*) which characterise tennis court designs worldwide, have been little altered since the construction of one of the earliest tennis courts (with a *tambour*) in Paris in 1547 for Francois 1 (1494-1547). The plan of this *jeu de dedans* was first illustrated in Scaino's *Trattato* of 1555 [Fig. 2.2 (b)].



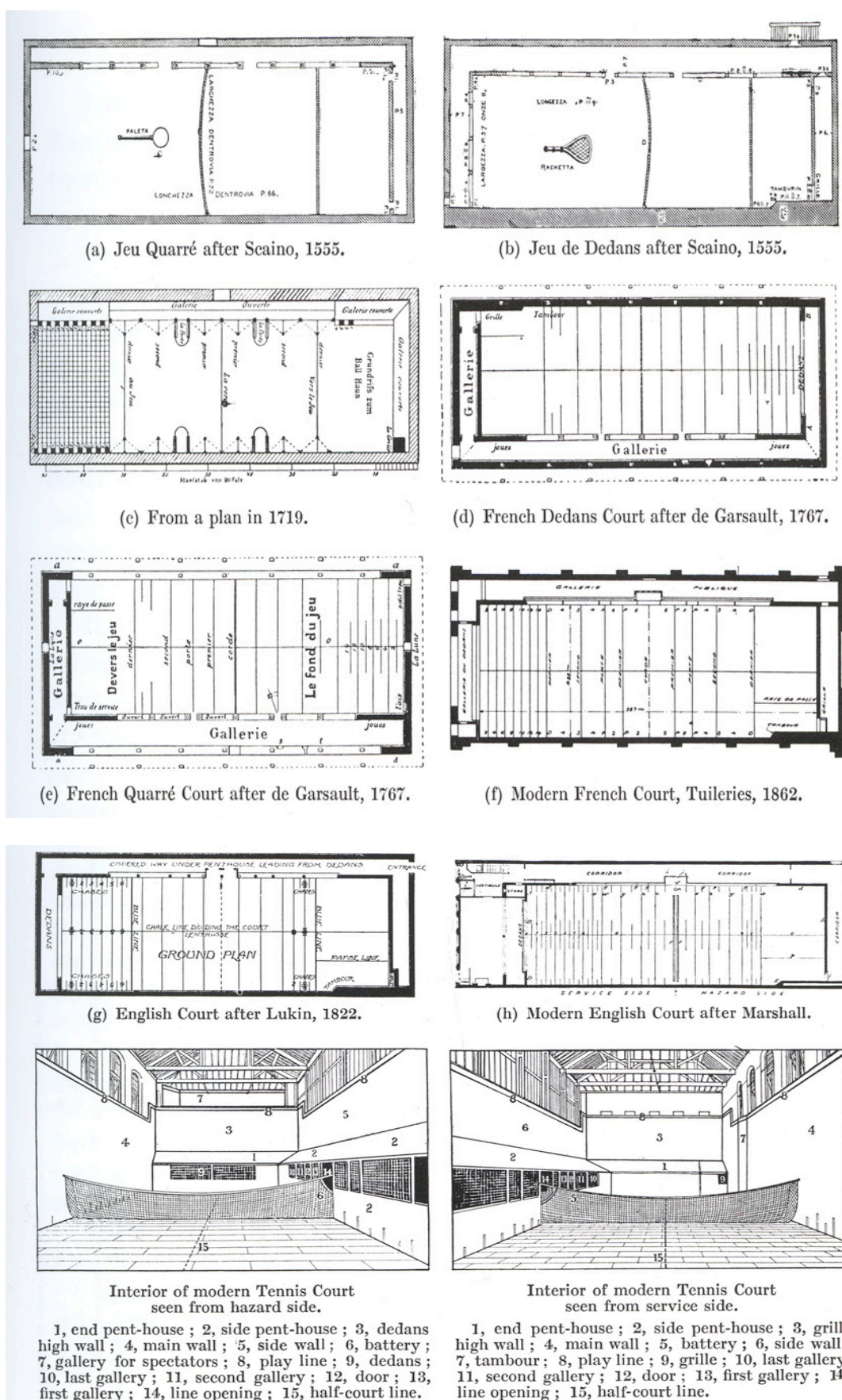


Fig. 2.2 'Diagrams of Courts'

[E.B. Noel and J.O.M. Clark, *A History of Tennis*, Oxford, 1924 (1991), facing p. 368]

Veteran tennis historian, Michael P. Garnett of Romsey, Victoria, has written and self-published several books on the game of tennis since 1983, when *A History of Royal Tennis in Australia* was published. In 2010, Garnett compiled a definitive chronological list of tennis courts of whatever description erected between 1475 and 1997, to record the existence of more than 330 places where tennis or handball was played in Great Britain, Australia, and the United States [Michael P. Garnett, 'Tennis Courts Past and Present' in *Tennis Anecdotes and Sketches*, Romsey, 2010, Chapter 64, pp. 134-153].

Since the formation of the Real Tennis Society (Société Historique de la Paume) in 2014, a much more comprehensive 'Court Register' has been prepared as a working list of tennis courts, at various locations, worldwide [See <https://realtennissociety.org/court-register/>]. A representative selection, to illustrate the changing exterior architectural character and construction of tennis courts built in Europe, Great Britain, USA and Australia over the centuries, is scheduled below [Figs. 2.3, 2.4 and 2.5].

### Key to Illustrations : Evolution of the Tennis Court (Left to Right)

#### Fig. 2.3 Real Tennis Courts in Europe

1. Anonymous, 'Painting with Chivalrous Pastimes' c. 1570 (Italian) [Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna] as reproduced in Cees de Bondt, *Royal Tennis in Renaissance Italy*, Belgium, 2006.  
'Students of Padua University Playing Tennis', c. 1610, as reproduced in Cees de Bondt, *Royal Tennis in Renaissance Italy*, Belgium, 2006, colour plate 2.  
Joseph de Saint-Germier (1860-1925), 'Partie de pasaka dans le vieux trinquet Sarazola de Saint-Jean-de-Luz', c. 1885 [Musée Basque].
2. Trinquet Court at Saint-Andre, Bayonne, France, erected c.1540.  
The Medici Villa in Poggio a Caiano, near Florence, Italy. The original pallacorda, erected after 1485, is now much altered by works in XVIII century [AFW, 2010].
3. Jeu de Paume at Chateau de Chantilly, Picardy, Northern France (1756).
4. Jeu de Paume, Terrasse des Feuillants, Paris, First Court erected 1862, Second Court Erected 1879.  
Jeu de Paume at Pau, France (1887)
5. Le Jeu de Paume de Bordeaux, Merignac, France (1978) Demolished (June 2013).
6. Le Jeu de Paume de Bordeaux, Merignac, France (2020).

#### Fig. 2.4 Real Tennis Courts in Great Britain

7. Jeu Quarré, Falkland Palace, Falkland, Scotland (1539).  
The 'Great Close Tenys Playe' (Tennis Court) at Whitehall, London, Erected by Henry VIII and completed by April 1533
8. The Royal Tennis Court, Hampton Court Palace (c.1626)  
The James Street Tennis Court, Haymarket, London (c. 1720)  
Bath Tennis Court, Moreford Street, Bath, Somerset (1777)
9. Fairlawne, Shipbourne, Kent (1879)
10. Jesmond Dene, Newcastle Upon Tyne, Northumberland (1894)
11. Middlesex University Real Tennis Club, Hendon, Middlesex (1999)
12. Wellington College, Berkshire (2016) : Radley College, Oxfordshire (2008)

#### Fig. 2.5 Court Tennis Courts in the USA

13. Newport Casino, Newport, RI (1879) : Tuxedo Club, Tuxedo Park NY (1900)
14. Myopia Hunt Club, Hamilton, MA (1902) : Aiken Tennis Club, Aiken, SC (1902)
15. New York Racquet & Tennis Club NY (1915) : Chicago Athletic Association IL (1893)
16. Boston Tennis & Racquet Club, Boston MA (1904)
17. 'Harbor Hill', Roslyn, Long Island NY (1909) : Chicago Racquet Club, Chicago IL (1924)



'A Suitable Ground for Bowls, Croquet and Tennis'



Fig. 2.3

Evolution of the Real or Royal Tennis Court in Europe (France and Italy)  
[Collection : AFW]



'A Suitable Ground for Bowls, Croquet and Tennis'

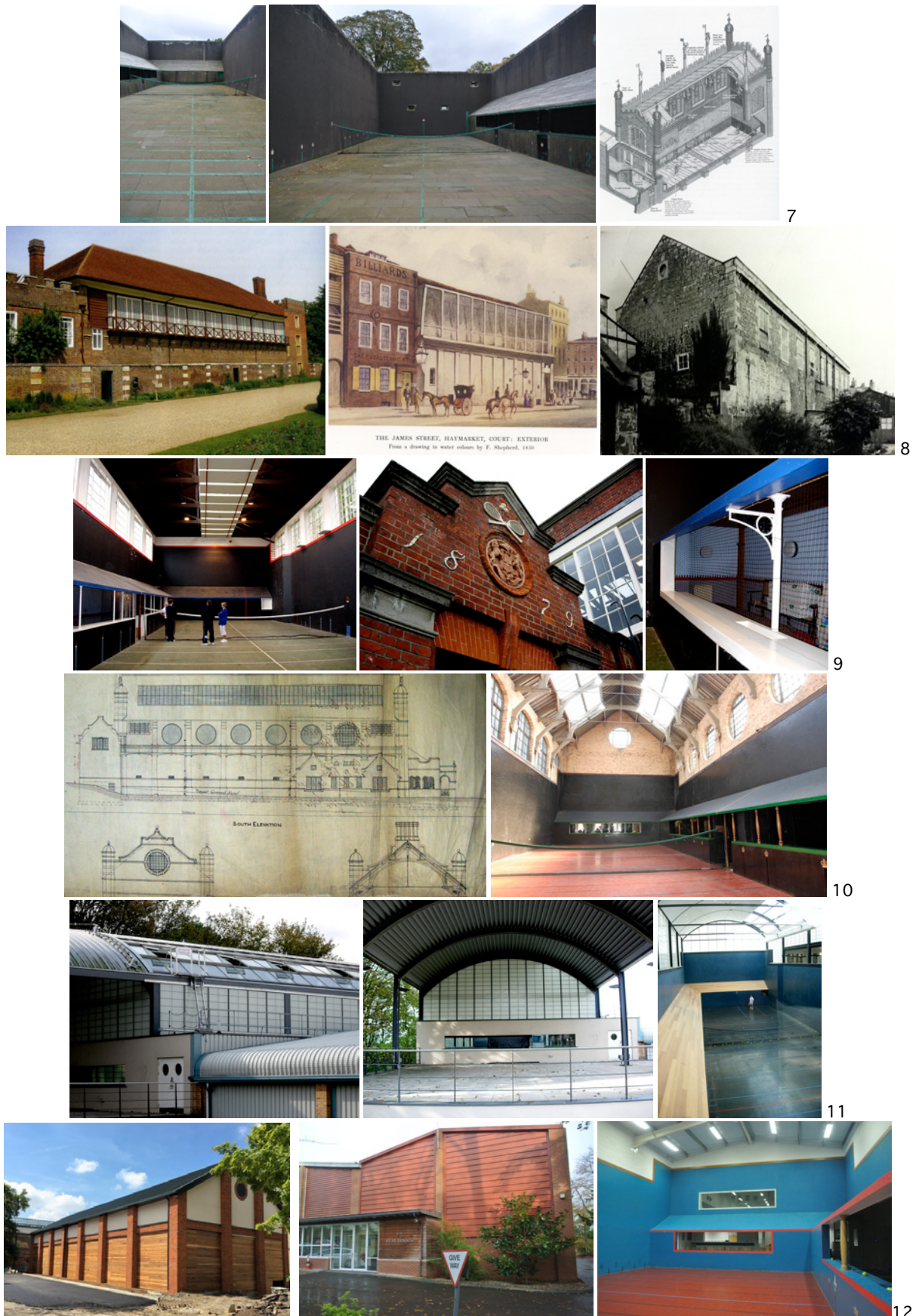


Fig. 2.4

Evolution of the Real or Royal Tennis Court in Great Britain  
[Collection : AFW]



'A Suitable Ground for Bowls, Croquet and Tennis'

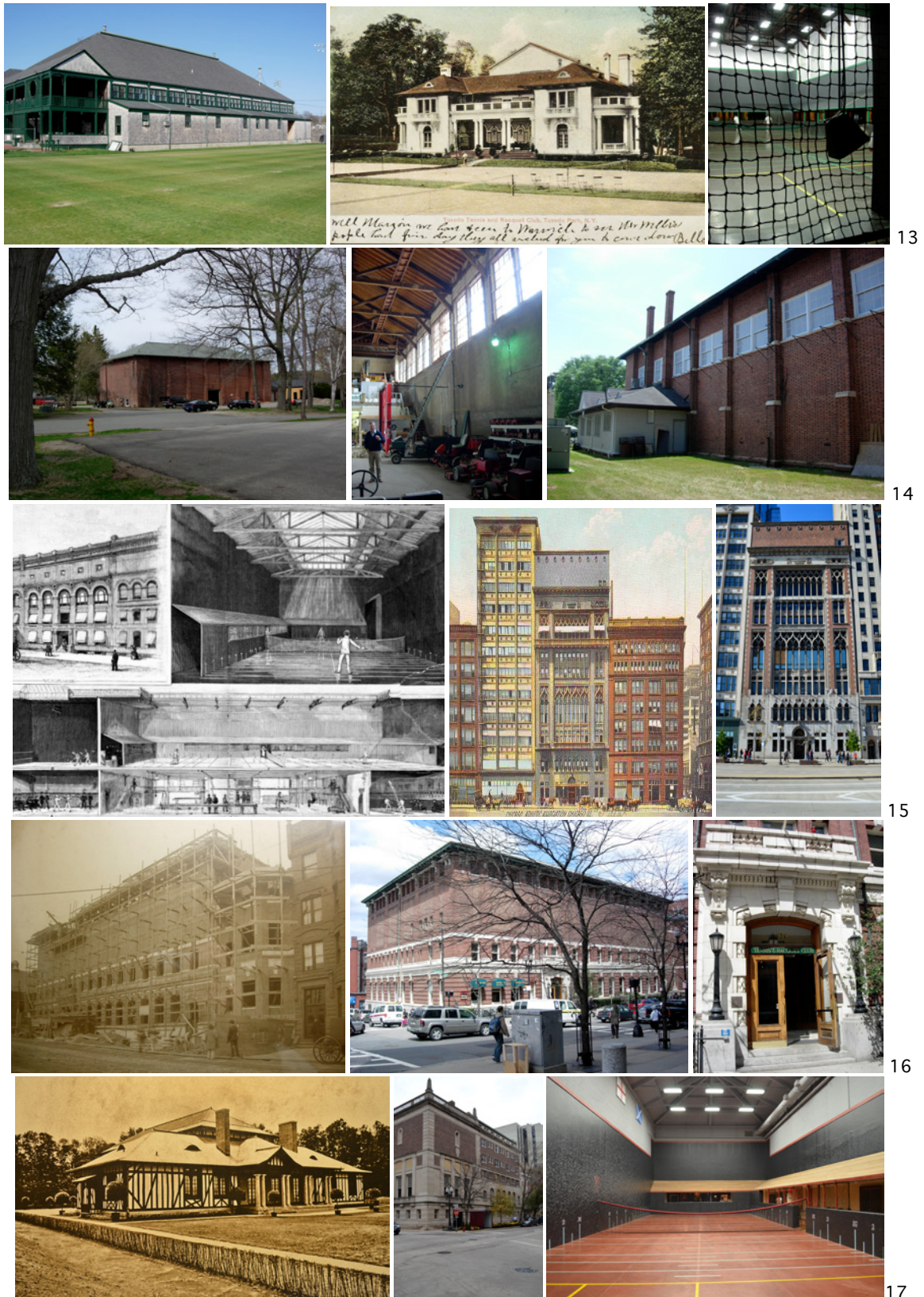


Fig. 2.5 Evolution of the Real, Royal or Court Tennis Court in USA  
American Tennis Courts were often incorporated into Athletic and Sports Clubs and Exclusive Men's Clubs and located on the two top floor levels of major building structures, others were built in the private domain such as found at Harbor Hill at Roslyn on Long Island NY (17)  
[Collection : AFW]

The game of tennis is clearly represented and otherwise defined by the architecture of the tennis court, and particularly in the floor plan and internal spatial arrangements therein. The evolution of the tennis court from Antiquity to the present day as a specific building type can be distilled by use of primary sources with a clear architectural bias, to include both printed and unpublished references, biographical archives, contemporary architectural sketch plans, construction drawings and details, paintings and drawings, photographs, works specifications and construction notes, as well as public and private papers and other records relating to individual tennis court building projects.

Whilst the history of tennis has been recorded by many commentators since the publication of Scaino's *Trattato* in 1555, to include Garsault (1767), Manevieux (1783), Julian Marshall (1878), Robert Lukin (1922) and Albert de Luze (1933), only E. B. Noel and J. O. M. Clark, in their opus magnum, *A History of Tennis*, Oxford, 1924, have illustrated the evolution and architectural character of a tennis court in critical detail [Fig. 2.2]. They have also set out full particulars concerning the design and construction of a tennis court in their Chapter IV 'Courts' as well as describing what is referred to as '*Mr Noel's Suggestions for an Ideal Court*'.

By way of illustration, these two authors have included several architectural drawings of the tennis court at South Bar, Troon, Scotland, as erected in 1905, to further describe the design and construction of a typical 'modern' tennis court [Fig. 2.6]. Coincidentally, the Troon tennis court was designed by architect William Cecil Marshall (1849-1921), a high-ranking real tennis player and runner-up at the first Wimbledon Singles final in 1877, his client being J. O. M. Clark, thread manufacturer, and one of the tennis-playing authors of the aforementioned text. I understand that Chapter IV in Noel and Clark's heavy tome has been widely consulted in the development of a design for the proposed real tennis court building at the Cheltenham Recreation Club Limited [Figs. 2.12 and 2.13]. Cees de Bondt, an eminent tennis historian from Amsterdam, Holland, has succinctly described real tennis and the format of the tennis court as follows:

### **Real Tennis**

Real Tennis is still almost the same sport as the Royal Game that was played with such great enthusiasm at all the princely courts of Europe and by a large contingent of the urban elite between roughly 1500-1800. After 1800 the interest in the game dwindled in Italy and the rest of the continent, but it survived in Great Britain. After 1874, when the new game of lawn tennis swept the country, royal tennis became more fashionable again among the English aristocracy. By the year 1900 the popularity of lawn tennis was so great that it was universally called "tennis" and the old game had to distinguish itself by becoming "real" tennis. Nowadays, attracted by the combination of clever ball control and tactical skills that are required for this subtle game, many players are taking up real tennis. In addition, every new player is fully aware of the game's unique historical pedigree. To its devotees, some 7,000 players worldwide, real tennis is the most wonderful pastime yet devised by the wit of man.

### **The Court**

The court is enclosed by four walls, usually with high windows at the top. The ball is in play up to a height of about 5.5 metres at the sides and 7.3 metres at the ends. Around three sides there are sloping roofs of the penthouses, which form part of the playing area, as does the flat floor, which measures about 30 x 10 metres. No two real tennis courts are exactly the same. Each court is slightly different in its overall size and in the angles of the penthouses and the *tambour*. The court is divided by a net into a service and a receiving or hazard end. The service is always delivered from the same end and does not alternate. When serving, the ball must bounce on the roof of the service penthouse on the hazard end, and then on the floor within the area behind the winning gallery. A second service is allowed if the first is a fault.  
[Cees de Bondt, *Royal Tennis in Renaissance Italy*, Brepols, Belgium, 2006, p. 205]



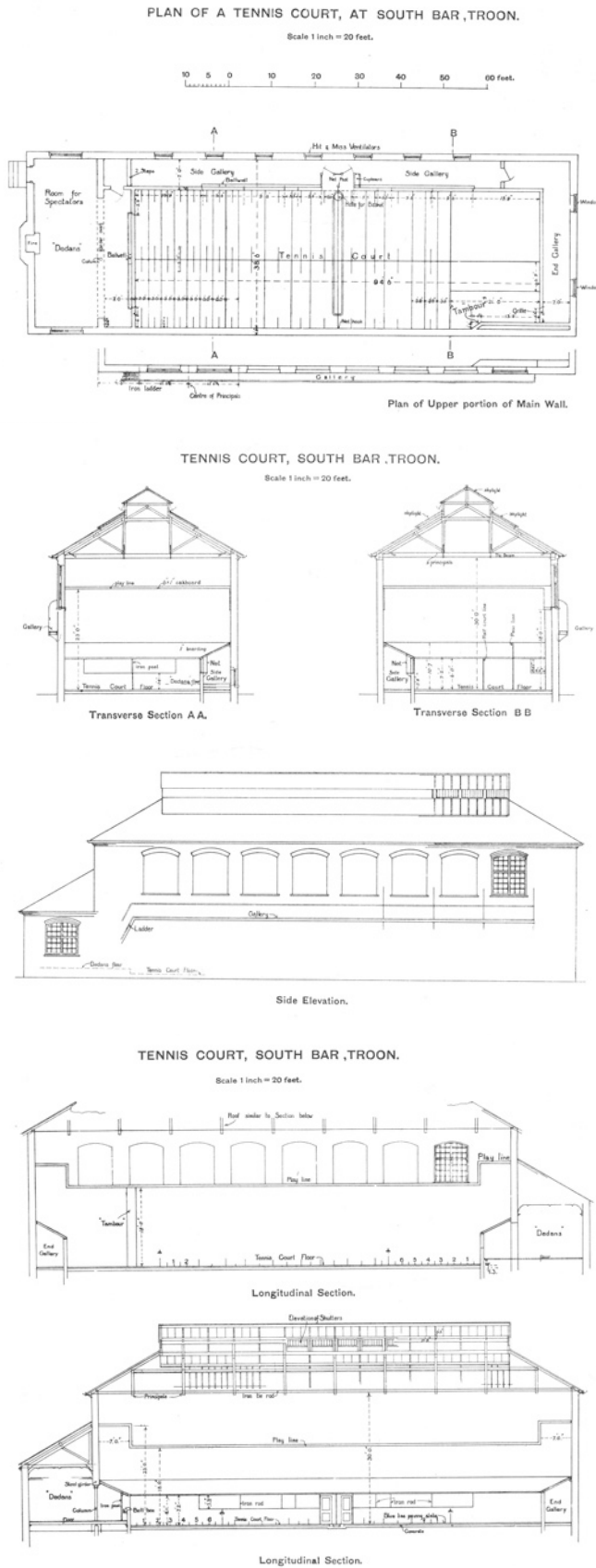


Fig. 2.6 'Tennis Court, South Bar, Troon' (Design by W. C. Marshall, architect, 1905)  
[E. B. Noel and J. O. M. Clark, *A History of Tennis*, Oxford, 1924 (1991), facing pp. 369, 372, 373]  
Insets : The Tennis Court as Built (window and roof variations) [Scottish Heritage Ref : 45255 (2009)]

## 2.2 Real or Royal Tennis Courts : Historical Precedents in Australia

This current proposal to build a new real or royal tennis court at the Cheltenham Recreation Club is intended to once again provide a base for the Sydney Real Tennis Club Inc., which was established in Sydney in 1997, and until December 2005, functioned in a purpose-built real tennis court at Macquarie University [Fig. 2.7]. This real tennis court was designed as a utilitarian addition to the existing Sports Association buildings at the University and was constructed of precast concrete panels aligned against an existing masonry wall of this structure. The tennis court was de-commissioned in 2006 and the space converted to another purpose. At this time, there were more than 100 active tennis players in the SRTC. Since then, members of the Sydney Real Tennis Club Inc., have had to play real tennis on courts located in Victoria (RMTC at Richmond, BTC at Ballarat, Cope-Williams Tennis Club at Romsey) and at the oldest real tennis court in Hobart, Tasmania (built in 1874-1875).



Fig. 2.7 Sydney Real Tennis Court at Macquarie University (1997)  
Opening Day : M. Sylvain Elalouf, of the Cercle du Jeu de Paume, France, with Sophie Davies  
[Sydney Real Tennis Club Inc. Archives]



Fig. 2.8 Hobart Real Tennis Court, Davey Street : Erected 1874-1875 : Henry Hunter, Architect  
[Collection AFW]



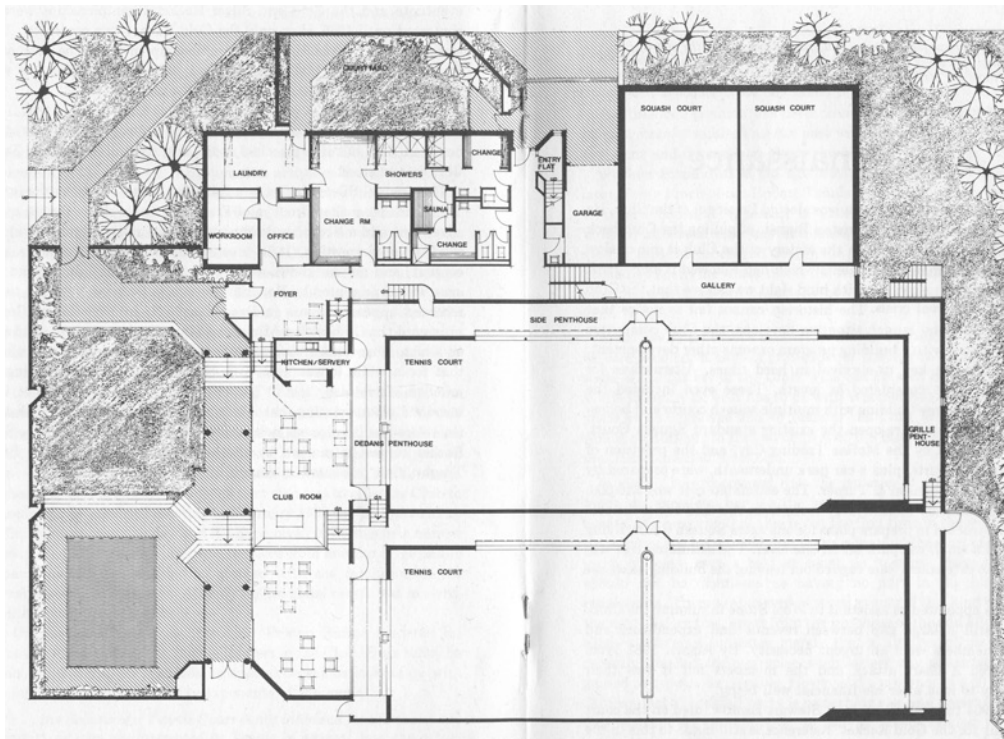


Fig. 2.9 Royal Melbourne Tennis Club : Erected 1973-1974 : Jackson & Walker, Architects  
[Vernon Mursell, *A History of the Royal Melbourne Tennis Club 1881-1974*, RMTCL, 1974, pp. 26-27]



Fig. 2.10 Cope-Williams Real Tennis Court at Romsey, Victoria : Erected 1998  
The Main Wall is built of pre-cast concrete panels (LHS)  
[Collection AFW]

## 2.3 Description of the Proposal : A New Real Tennis Court at the CRC

The current proposal to build another real tennis court in the Sydney metropolitan area has been long-in-gestation but has now advanced to the stage where the current development proposal has been settled by the Sydney Real Tennis Club Inc., and the Cheltenham Recreation Club Limited. Detailed architectural plans and associated documents drawn by Mr. Sav Cremona, building designer and accomplished real tennis player, can now be lodged with the Shire of Hornsby in a comprehensive Development Application (DA).

Essentially, both parties, acting jointly, and by legal agreement, propose to construct a multi-purpose sports building to include provision of a single real tennis court laid out and built in accordance with firm and long-established International standards for real tennis court construction. This facility will include spectator and player accommodation in both the traditional dedans and in a larger space once referred to as the 'false dedans' but now designated as the 'Dedans Lounge' on the architectural drawings describing the proposal. As well, requisite facilities for the real tennis professional are provided, to include a store and office/workshop. A small kitchenette is also provided on the lower level of the real tennis court building. The proposal also allows for the provision of an integrated upper-level Club Lounge with the capacity for generous internal viewing of the game of real tennis through an upper glass wall, as well as providing elevated vantage points in these two spaces for viewing one of the croquet lawns and games of croquet played in the open air.

The proposal is clearly described in the 'Statement of Environmental Effects' prepared by Planning Direction Pty Ltd (June 2020) and in the eight sheets of architectural drawings, three photo montages and the schedule of external finishes prepared by S. N. Cremona for the Sydney Real Tennis Club Inc. [Fig. 2.11].

The proposed new building is located on the only available and suitable vacant ground next to the existing Cheltenham Recreation Club Limited Clubhouse aka the 'William H. Harris Memorial Clubhouse', which structure was first erected in 1955-1956 in accordance with an austere and minimalist/functionalist design prepared by Richard Eric 'Dick' Apperly of the architectural firm of Adam, Wright and Apperly, of North Sydney. The two-storey Clubhouse was extended in 1970-1971 by construction of a new entrance and enclosed stairway to the street frontage, a new coolroom/store, and works to extend the area of the Clubhouse at first floor level. This latter work involved the provision of a new glass wall to enclose the original open patio for use as a café/dining room (See Section 6.5).

- CRC-A.01 - Site Analysis Plan
- CRC-A.02 - Proposed Site Plan
- CRC-A.10 - Proposed Lower Ground Floor Plan
- CRC-A.11 - Proposed Ground Floor Plan
- CRC-A.30 - Elevations
- CRC-A.40 - Sections
- CRC-A.50 - Landscape Plan
- CRC-A.60 - Shadow Diagrams
- CRC-A.71 - Photo Montage-View 1
- CRC-A.72 - Photo Montage-View 2
- CRC-A.73 - Photo Montage-View 3
- CRC-A.90 - Schedule Of External Finishes

Fig. 2.11      Schedule of Documents : Shire of Hornsby Development Application

**ALLAN WILLINGHAM** MRSV, FRHSV, M.ICOMOS  
HERITAGE CONSULTANT ARCHITECTURAL HISTORIAN TENNIS HISTORIAN



## ‘A Suitable Ground for Bowls, Croquet and Tennis’

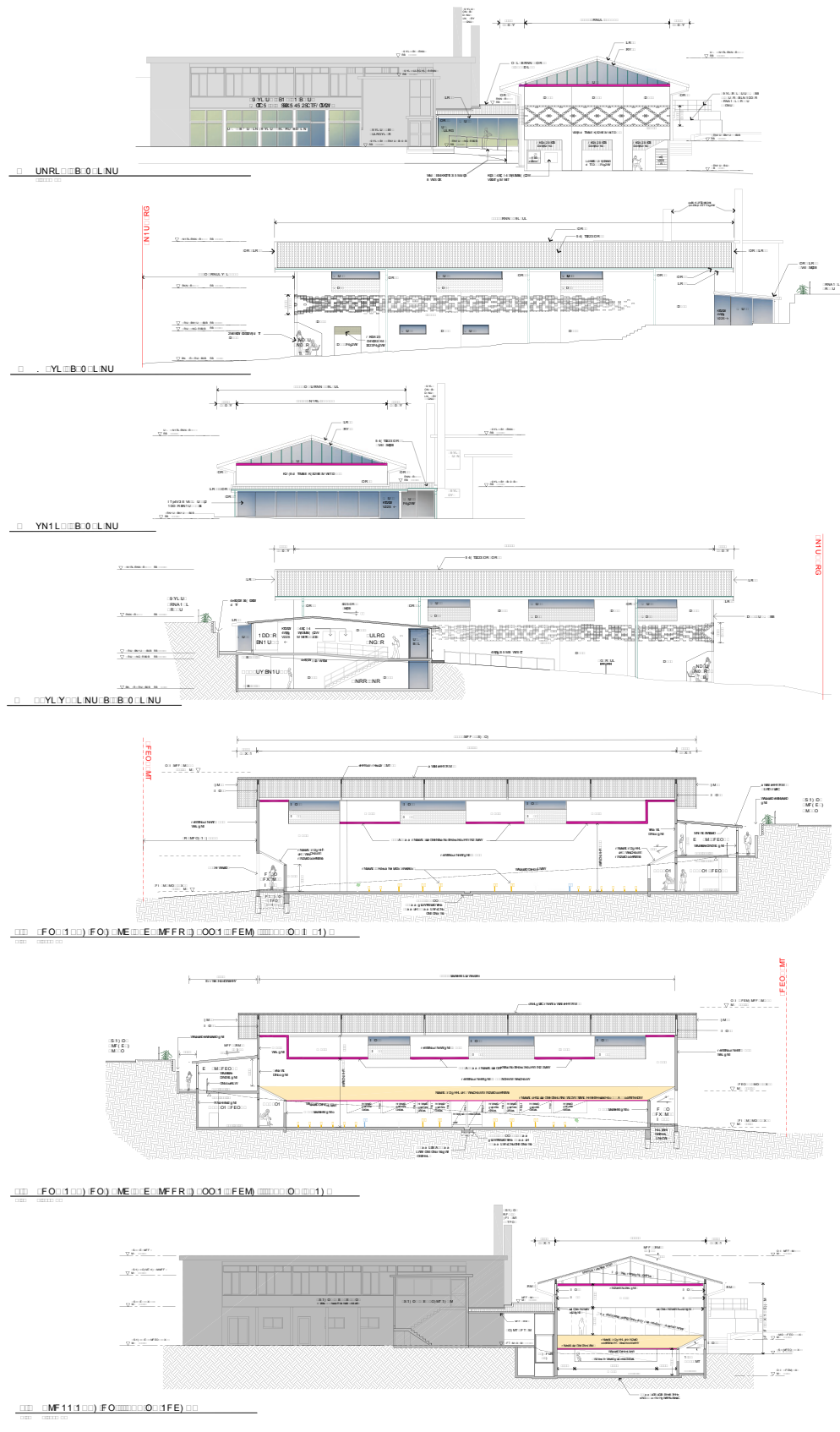


Fig. 2.13 Elevations (c) and Sections (d) : Proposed Sydney Real Tennis Court  
The magenta coloured lines define the minimum height of all tennis play lines (Int. standard height)  
[Sydney Real Tennis Club Inc. : S. N. Cremona, delineator, June 2020]

## 2.4 Analysis of the Existing and Proposed Site Landscaping

The adjoining sites of Edensor at 203 Beecroft Road, Cheltenham, and the Cheltenham Recreation Club at 60-74 The Crescent, Cheltenham, both form part of the Beecroft-Cheltenham Heritage Conservation Area. The Statement of Significance for this Conservation Area reads as follows:

- (a). The Beecroft-Cheltenham Heritage Conservation Area is significant as an example of a government subdivision that was used to fund the development of a railway line. The area developed from 1893 as a township due to its proximity to Beecroft Station.
- (b). The Heritage Conservation Area demonstrates a multi-layered history of suburban subdivision, re-subdivision and development from the initial boom period of the Victorian crown land subdivision of 1887 to the 1960s, and less noticeably into the present day.
- (c). The area contains a fine collection of buildings from the Victorian, Federation, Arts and Crafts, Inter-War and Post-War eras. There have been comparatively few demolitions to interrupt the “development diary”, resulting in generally intact early residential fabric and streetscapes.
- (d). The Beecroft Village Precinct contains an important public reserve and community buildings including the Beecroft School of Arts and the Beecroft War Memorial that represent the aspiration of a growing suburb. The continuing focus in the Beecroft village for day to day activities and community interaction, together with the community buildings, clubs and activities show an enduring sense of community cohesiveness.

[*Hornsby Development Control Plan*, 2013 (January 2019) : Part 9.3.6 ‘Beecroft-Cheltenham Heritage Conservation Area—Character Statement’, 9-19]

The grounds of the CRC have also been individually identified as a heritage place of local significance and listed in the ‘Hornsby Local Environmental Plan’, 2013, as Listing No. 296 [*New South Wales Government Gazette*, 27 September 2013]. A succinct supporting description and statement of significance for this listing reads:

### **Physical Description**

Large site with bowling greens and mature boundary trees extending into adjacent properties. Grounds possibly part of Edensor Estate. Trees at entry including Liquid Amber (to 20m) and Kaffir Plum (16m) from c. 1950s. Recent planting of Cocos Palms. Canary Island Palm on western side to 9m.

### **Statement of Significance**

Mature Palm Tree and entry planting from c.1950-60 with views to period trees in adjoining properties. Of local significance.

[NSW State Heritage Inventory : Database No. 1780835]

Research data, aerial photographs taken in 1943, 1953 and 1961, as well as other site information recently assembled and set out in Section 4.0 : Part B of this report, confirms that the large site now occupied by the Cheltenham Recreation Club Limited had been cleared of all native forest trees and lower ground cover by the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. Clearing of the land in Portions 500 and 501 was part of William Chorley’s plans to subdivide his large holdings and sponsor closer residential development in the Beecroft-Cheltenham area. Much of this land was bounded by The Promenade, The Boulevard, Beecroft Road and The Crescent (formerly Carlingford Road).

Whilst a great deal of the established native vegetation was retained in parts of the new suburbs of Beecroft and Cheltenham, the land in Portion 499, was at least part-cleared by the Crown grantee Charles William Holloway, gardener and nurseryman, between 1889 and 1892. The land so cleared of predominant forest tree species (Turpentine and Ironbark) included the sites of the future Rattray residence Edensor (erected 1892-1895) and the Cheltenham Recreation Club (established in 1913). In 2004, Godden Mackay Logan, Sydney based heritage consultants, noted in a report prepared for the Hornsby Shire Council, that:

Except along The Boulevard, The Promenade and Cheltenham Road (between Beecroft Road and the railway), forest trees provide a backdrop behind the buildings.  
[Godden, Mackay Logan P/L., ‘Beecroft/Cheltenham Heritage Conservation Area Review’, January 2004, Section 5.2.3 Landscape, p 44].

Cultural history data set out in this report confirms that the extensive grounds of the Cheltenham Recreation Club have been carefully laid out and landscaped from the outset. It is also well documented that the CRC regularly employed qualified gardeners to not only look after the croquet lawns, bowling rinks and grass tennis courts, but to maintain the ancillary grounds, hedge-rows and trees on the site.

#### 2.4.1 Changing Landscape Patterns and Plantings

The changing site patterns and sequence of plantings in the man-made landscape and grounds of the Cheltenham Recreation Club can be traced and clearly illustrated in a series of aerial photographs of the Cheltenham area taken from 1943 to 1994 [Fig. 2.14].

The significance of the subject site is now held to relate to a belt of mature trees standing close to the entry on The Crescent street frontage [Fig. 3.3], and to a Canary Island Date Palm (*Phoenix canariensis*) located within the site and standing west of the existing ‘Croquet House’ on a graded embankment [Fig. 1.8]. This palm likely dates from the early 1970s, and planted after the original single-storey CRC Clubhouse was demolished in the 1960s [See Fig. 2.14]. The proposed construction of a new real tennis court building on the nominated site to the west of the existing ‘William H. Harris Memorial Clubhouse’ will not impact on the environment or visual amenity of this landmark palm at all.

The brief statement of significance for Listing No. 296 in the HELP (2013) as listed above, also refers to ‘views to period trees in adjoining properties’, meaning, as I understand, views looking south through the CRC site to large trees standing in the garden reserve of Edensor at 203 Beecroft Road, as well as barrier trees on the boundaries of houses located in The Boulevard (Lots 6 and 7 in DP 5440). Whilst the floor plan/north wall of the original design for the new real tennis court building, as submitted to the Shire of Hornsby Pre-Planning Meeting in October 2019, was located close to The Crescent street frontage and clearly impacted upon the TRZ of Tree 1, the proposed new building is now located much further back from The Crescent and no longer unacceptably impacts upon the integrity of the tree root zone and significance of the Liquidambar (*Liquidambar styraciflua*). Existing views to ‘period trees’ remains unimpaired.

Examination of all of the DA documents confirms that no trees at all are to be removed in the current development proposal and the proposed new real tennis court building will not otherwise restrict or unacceptably impact upon any identified distant views across the large site. The only perceptible alteration to the existing site landscape is to do with the removal of a small section of a clipped Murraya hedge-row bordering the curved asphalt driveway, and perhaps replanting this hedge in another place [Fig. 2.16].



The original *Murraya paniculata* (Chinese Box or Mock Orange) is now classed as an invasive weed by many local authorities in New South Wales and Queensland and has been replaced by new hybrid cultivars. Three cuttings from the historic vine planted at Hobart RTC by the former Tennis World Champion Pierre Etchebaster (1893-1980) are proposed to be located at the North/West corner walls as ‘New Plantings’ [Fig. 2.15].

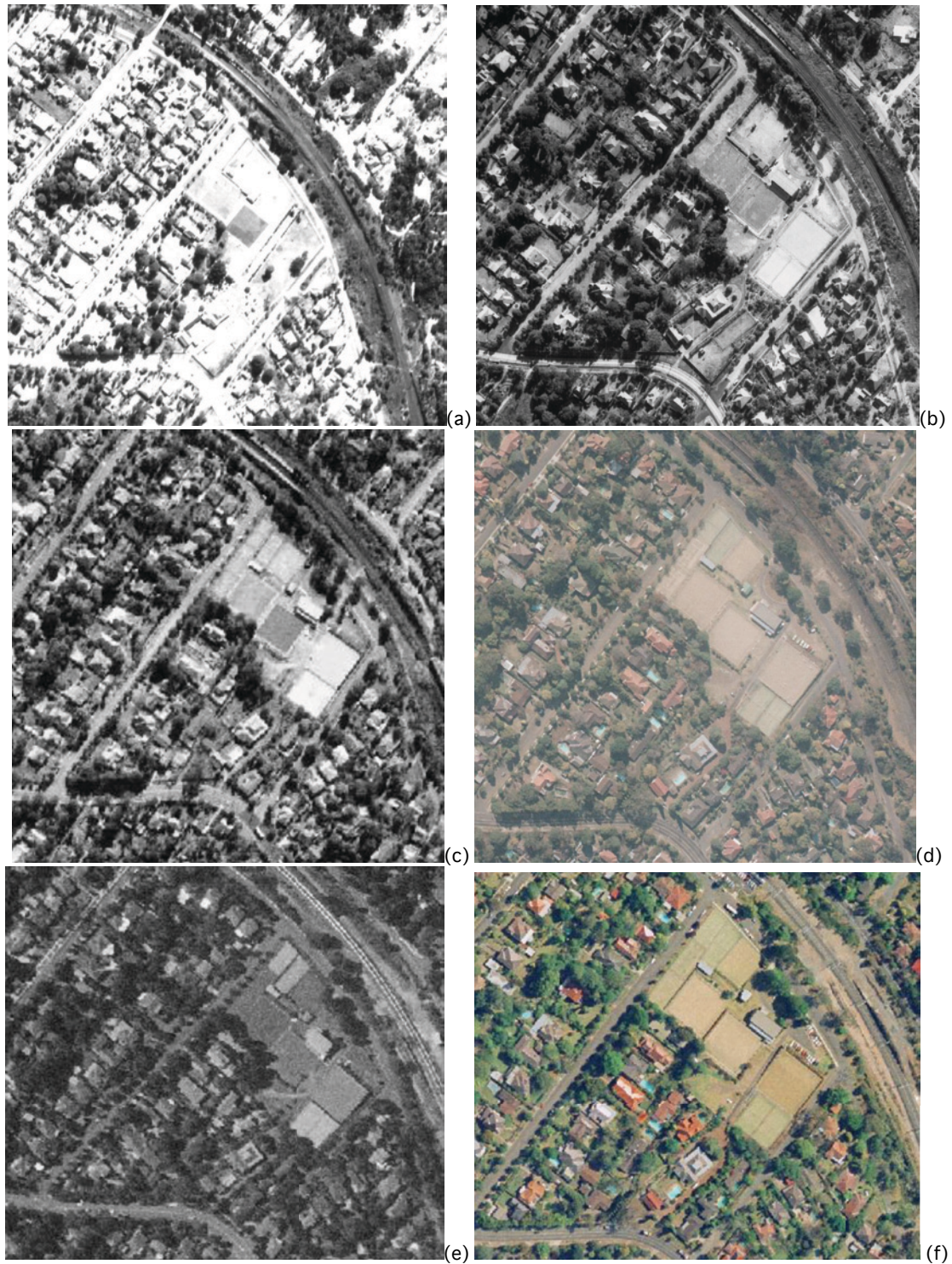


Fig. 2.14 Historical Aerial Survey Photographs of the CRC Site (1951 to 1994)  
Recording the Changing Nature of the Landscaping and Trees on the Site  
KEY : (a) 1951, (b) 1961, (c) 1975, (d) 1986, (e) 1989, (f) 1994  
[Sixmaps, NSW Spatial Services : [www.spatial.nsw.gov.au/](http://www.spatial.nsw.gov.au/)]



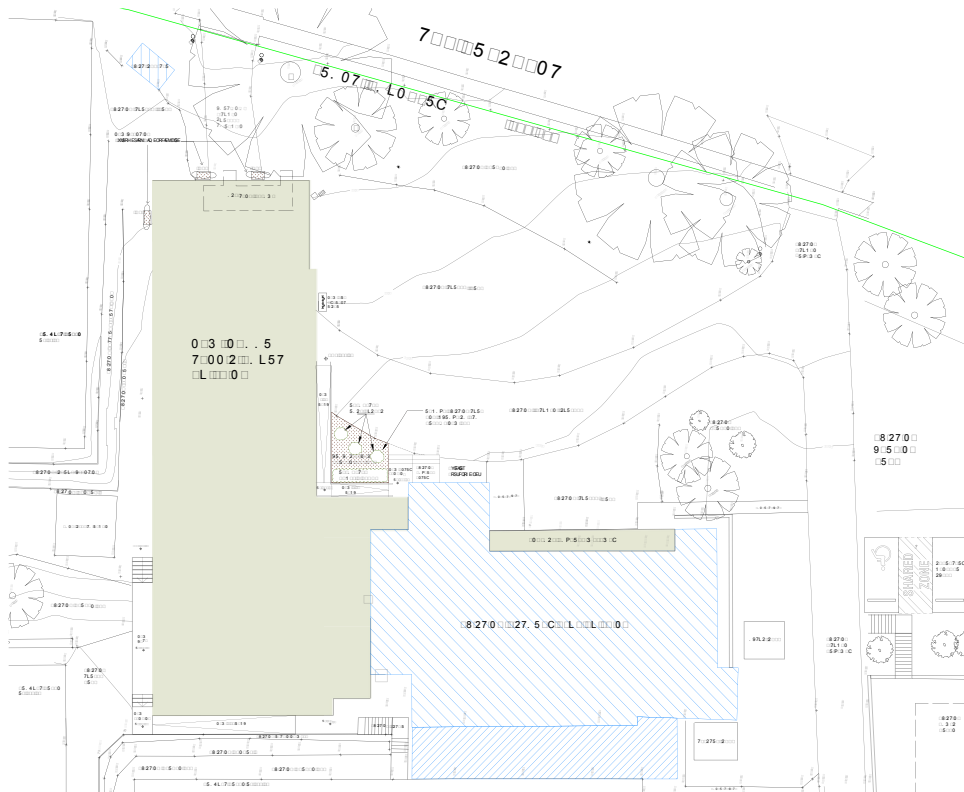


Fig. 2.15 Site of the Proposed New Real Tennis Court : Proposed Landscape Plan  
Showing Alterations to Existing Landscape Elements and the Location of all new Plantings  
Trees 1 (Liquid Amber) and 2 (Chinese Tallow Wood) are subject to Arborist's Report  
Three cuttings from the historic vine planted at Hobart RTC by the former Tennis World Champion  
Pierre Etchebaster (1893-1980) are to be located at the North/West corner walls as 'New Plantings'  
[Delineation S. N. Cremona : Sydney Real Tennis Club Inc., June 2020]



Fig. 2.16 Site of the Proposed New Real Tennis Court : Addition to the Existing CRC Clubhouse  
Showing the Existing Landscape Elements and the Location of the Croquet Lawns and Tennis Courts  
The Location of the Existing Croquet Clubhouse to be demolished is shown by Red Lines  
[Delineation S. N. Cremona : Sydney Real Tennis Club Inc., June 2020]



## 2.5 Real Tennis and Croquet at Cheltenham

Since 2006, when Dutch author Cees de Bondt held there were 7,000 players worldwide, the number of players has increased dramatically, and there is now well over 10,000 active players, largely based in England, Scotland, Ireland, France, Holland, the United States of America, and Australia. In this country alone, there are now more than 1,000 active players regularly playing this ancient game, both socially and in competition. Tennis, otherwise Royal or Real Tennis, as a pastime, has gone through all of the vicissitudes of sporting life and endured changing political, cultural and social attitudes now for more than 450 years.

Real tennis is now undergoing a great revival or renaissance in the aforementioned countries which host the sport. A number of new courts were erected, with great enthusiasm, in the late 1990s in England and the USA, to include an innovative glass-walled court at Washington DC (soon to be replaced on another site), two courts at Prested Hall in Essex and one at Middlesex University, Hendon, Middlesex, and in Australia, vigneron Gordon Cope-Williams built a tent-like court at his winery at Romsey, Victoria. More recently new courts have been constructed in England at Radley College in Oxfordshire (2008) and Wellington College in Berkshire (2016). New courts are also proposed to be built at Charleston, South Carolina, and Washington DC, in the United States of America; a new jeu de paume opened in Bordeaux, France, in May 2020, and the Melbourne Cricket Club are exploring the option of building a new court in Melbourne's inner suburbs.

Since 1974, when the Royal Melbourne Tennis Club (RMTTC) moved from their historic stone tennis court in Exhibition Street, Melbourne (erected in 1881), into modern off-form concrete premises in Sherwood Street, Richmond (See Fig. 2.9), the game of real tennis in Australia has been much revived. The Hobart Real Tennis Club, operating at the oldest tennis court in Australia (erected 1874-1875) has an active membership, as has the Ballarat Real Tennis Club (erected 1981-1984). Following the death of Gordon Cope-Williams, progenitor of the tennis court at Romsey (erected 1998), the court remains closed to play and is currently listed for sale by private treaty.

The first Australian real tennis world champion was Wayne Davies, who hailed from Geelong, played squash with the writer at Deakin University, Waurin Ponds 3216, learnt to play real tennis at RMTTC, turned professional in 1978 and won the World Championship for the first time in 1987. He held the title until 1994. Of particular interest is the fact that Wayne Davies was instrumental in having a real tennis court built at Macquarie University in 1997, he served as the SRTC professional until 2005, when he left Australia to take up the post of sports director at the Westmoor Club, Nantucket, Massachusetts, USA. There he embraced the game of croquet with typical fervour and by 2011 was a member of the USA Croquet Team. In later years, Davies has reached the semi-finals of the USA Croquet Championship and at the present time is a croquet coach at the Westmoor Club on Nantucket Island.

The ancient and historic games of real tennis (*jeu de paume*) and croquet (*paille-maille*) are both pastimes which require great hand-eye coordination, have their origins in Antiquity and fully developed as racket or mallet sports in the early 17<sup>th</sup> century. Both games use a handicap or *bisque* to even up the match between unevenly graded competitors. Croquet and real tennis both survived the onslaught of lawn tennis in the early 1900s and both sports were included in the Olympic Games scenario at this time. Croquet historians such as Dr. Ian Plummer assert that there is a long-established affinity between croquet and real tennis, as both games rely in part on an understanding of geometry and heavily angled strokes.

The introduction of the latter sport (real tennis) to the Cheltenham Recreation Club fold may prove beneficial to both games in Sydney.

### 3.0 STATEMENT OF HERITAGE IMPACT

#### 3.1 Identification of Project

This statement of heritage impact has been prepared for the Sydney Real Tennis Club Inc. (SRTC), and the Cheltenham Recreation Club Limited (CRC), and relates to an assessment, based on cultural heritage grounds, of the merits of a proposal to demolish an existing detached Croquet Club pavilion and thereafter construct a new real tennis court and allied facilities over this site. The proposed new building presents as additions to the fabric of the ‘William H. Harris Memorial Clubhouse’, an existing two-storey brick building standing at 60-74 The Crescent, Cheltenham 2119.

This statement forms part of the statement of environmental effects prepared by Mr. Nigel White, town planner, of Planning Direction Pty. Ltd., entitled ‘Statement of Environmental Effects : Proposed Erection of a Real Tennis Court Building Attached to the Existing Club House’, and dated June 2020.

#### 3.2 Authorship of this Statement

This statement of heritage impact has been prepared by Allan Willingham, AGIT, FRHSV, MRSV, M. ICOMOS, heritage consultant, architectural historian and tennis historian, of ‘Denton Hall’, 151A McKean Street, North Fitzroy, Victoria 3068. The writer’s qualifications to undertake this work are set out in Section 1.1 : Part A, and in a brief curriculum vitae attached as an appendix to this report.

#### 3.3 Statutory Cultural Heritage Assessments

The proposed development is situated on part of large site owned and occupied by the Cheltenham Recreation Club Limited (CRC) at 60-74 The Crescent, Cheltenham 2119, which site is included in the Beecroft-Cheltenham Heritage Conservation Area and more particularly is listed as being in the Beecroft-Cheltenham Plateau Precinct [HDCP, 2013, Part 9.3.6].

The grounds of the CRC have also been individually identified as a heritage place of local significance and listed in the ‘Hornsby Local Environmental Plan’, 2013, as Listing No. 296 [New South Wales Government Gazette, 27 September 2013].

The proposed real tennis court building development is situated on part of a large site owned and occupied by the Cheltenham Recreation Club Limited, which site is adjacent to the residential site known as Edensor at 203 Beecroft Road, Cheltenham 2119. Edensor is a property identified as a heritage place of local significance in the Shire of Hornsby. The place is listed in the ‘Hornsby Local Environmental Plan’, 2013, as Listing Number 268 (New South Wales Government Gazette, 27 September 2013).

The existing timber-framed asbestos-clad pavilion now occupied by the Croquet Section of the CRC, and which is proposed to be demolished, was built in the period from 1929-1933 as an open-sided annexe to the original rectilinear plan CRC Clubhouse (erected 1913-1925). This now much-altered relic has not been identified as a heritage place of cultural significance in the Shire of Hornsby. The cultural history of this building has been recorded in great detail in Section 6.2 : Part B of this report to the Shire of Hornsby. This data has been analysed, and when the surviving building is assessed against established cultural heritage criteria, it is a place of some historical interest but not so significant that it should be retained on site.

The existing ‘William H. Harris Memorial Clubhouse’ has to date not been identified as a heritage place of local cultural heritage significance in the Shire of Hornsby. Research undertaken in the course of preparation of this report has advanced much new cultural heritage data concerning the existing CRC Clubhouse (opened in April 1957) [See Section 6.5 : Part B]. It is clear from examination of this data and a comparative analysis with other places in Sydney of similar age and style, that the CRC Clubhouse is a place of local cultural heritage significance in the Shire of Hornsby. This assessment has to do with the seminal association with CRC benefactor William Henry Harris, the social and recreational role that the Cheltenham Recreation Club has played in the community and in the lives of its members, and for its minimalist architectural qualities and close association with emerging architect R. E. ‘Dick’ Apperly. In the process of assessing the heritage impact (if any) of the proposed real tennis court building development on both the identified landscape significance of the CRC site and the existing ‘William H. Harris Memorial Clubhouse’ I have considered the CRC Clubhouse to be of local significance.

The subject parcel of land at 60-74 The Crescent, Cheltenham 2119 once formed part of the undeveloped grounds of Edensor, rural land otherwise described as being Portions 494 and 499 of the Parish of Field of Mars, County of Cumberland. The cultural history, chain of ownership and the patterns of subdivision of these two Portions have been exhaustively charted in Section 4.0 : Part B of this report, effectively to satisfy 3.4 (a) below.

### 3.4 Basis of this Statement of Heritage Impact

The following statement of heritage impact is based on the model set out by the Department of Planning, NSW, and should be read in conjunction with all of the relevant historical, social, cultural, architectural and landscape data and analysis set out in both Part A and Part B of this report. As required, the following matters (a) to (f) raised by the Shire of Hornsby, as listed below, have been addressed in this report and Statement of Heritage Impact.

- (a) A history of the site and its change over time from first land grant to the present including sequences of subdivision, building, change and demolition;
- (b) An assessment of the landscape heritage significance of the site, the 1920s pavilion building and any other elements that may [be] affected by the proposal directly or indirectly;
- (c) A heritage impact assessment of the proposed demolition of built and landscape elements;
- (d) A heritage impact assessment of the proposed new building and landscaping works on the identified landscape heritage values of the place, especially in terms of height, bulk, envelope, setbacks, form and materials;
- (e) A heritage impact assessment of the proposed demolition and proposed new building and landscaping works on heritage items in the vicinity and the Heritage Conservation Area; and
- (f) Identification of measures that could assist to mitigate any adverse heritage impacts such as compiling research about and archival recording of the site prior to demolition and works, and perhaps undertaking an Interpretation Plan about the history and heritage of the site and incorporating its recommendations into final design/landscaping.

The Shire of Hornsby also advised that the proposal must address the relevant sections of the HDCA (Parts 9.2, 9.3 and 9.4) which relate to Heritage Items, and to matters of ‘height, form, materials and set-back’ in a Heritage Conservation Area (HCA). I have examined the documents first submitted for review in October 2019 and have compared these architectural drawings with those now prepared for the Development Application (DA).

The Shire of Hornsby in their ‘File Note of Meeting’ dated 3 October 2019, provided a summary recommendation that ‘Council generally does not support the current design of the proposal and the impact this would have on [a] significant heritage item (landscaped grounds) and existing landscaping along The Crescent. Council would generally not support the demolition of the contributory cottage [sic] house’.

This advice proved to be the catalyst for a major revision of the design concept and planning for the proposed real tennis court building development at the CRC, as well as setting myself on an extended research program to identify critical cultural history data concerning the origins and site development of both Edensor and the Cheltenham Recreation Club.

### 3.5 Revisions to the Original Design

Since the aforementioned Pre-Planning Meeting (PL/63/2019) in early October 2019, the SRTC, through their building designer, have made a number of significant alterations to the original design concept for the proposed real tennis court building at Cheltenham. Reference to a set of documents marked ‘Preliminary Set’ and dated 8 September 2019 confirms that the following significant alterations, as discussed below, were made to the development proposal to accord with a number of the issues raised at the Pre-Planning Meeting and to otherwise rationalise some of the floor layouts and ancillary accommodation initially included in the draft Development Application documents. Fundamentally, the tennis court building was moved back from the frontage, further excavated into the slope, the floor levels lowered, the overall ceiling height reduced and the roof profile altered to a gable form.

These changes have not always been in the best interests of the game of real tennis as the overall dimensions of the traditional real tennis court floor length and the internal wall and ceiling heights in the proposed SRTC real tennis court have now been reduced to an absolute minimum to meet perceived concerns of the Shire of Hornsby.

Ceiling heights are of critical importance in the game of real tennis for many serves require great vertical space to be executed correctly and with calculated effect. Former World champion, Chris Ronaldson, in his book of tennis instruction, *A Cut Above the Rest*, Oxford, 1985, notes that there is ‘almost an infinite number of services’ which can be delivered by a player, with many of the well established serves having names such as the bobble, boomerang and chandelle.

All of these serves follow an appointed path to the receiver, with serves such as the sidewall, high sidewall, drop, giraffe, piqué and the chandelle ‘flying high as control and available space permit’ [ See Ronaldson, Chapter 11 ‘Services’, pp. 46-66]. Ronaldson provides diagrams for the effective path of these serves, many of which are delivered from different positions on the Service Side floor and flighted high through the roof and ceiling space. Some idea of the significance of ceiling heights to the game can otherwise be deduced from examination of interior views of tennis courts, worldwide, illustrated elsewhere in this report [Figs. 2.3 to 2.5].

Despite these apparent reductions in court dimensions (length and height), the current proposal, when measured against International standards for real tennis court construction, is still acceptable. The Sydney Real Tennis Club proposal is now very similar in design concept, planning, roof forms, spatial envelope and construction, to two real tennis courts erected at Radley College and Wellington College in England in 2008 and 2016 respectively [See illustrations of these buildings at Fig. 2.5].

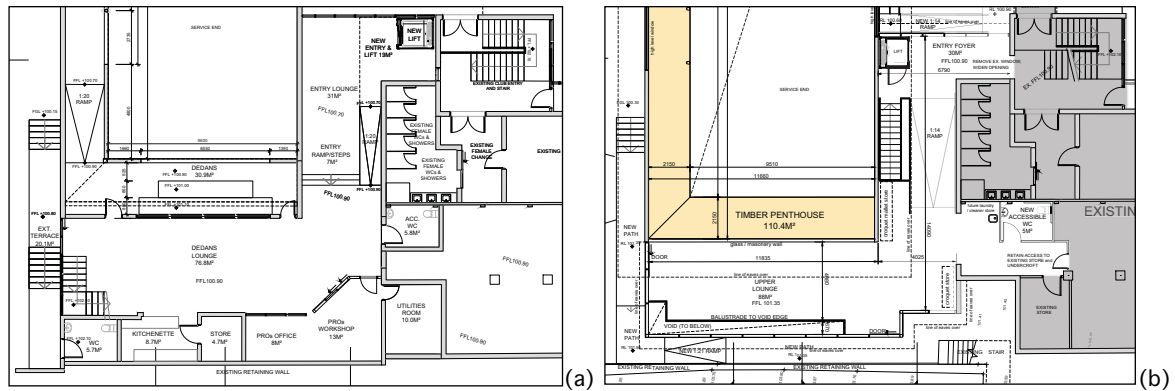


Fig. 3.1 Dedans Lounge : September 2019 (a), Upper Lounge : June 2020 (b)  
New Facilities for the Croquet Section are shown in the Upper Lounge (b)

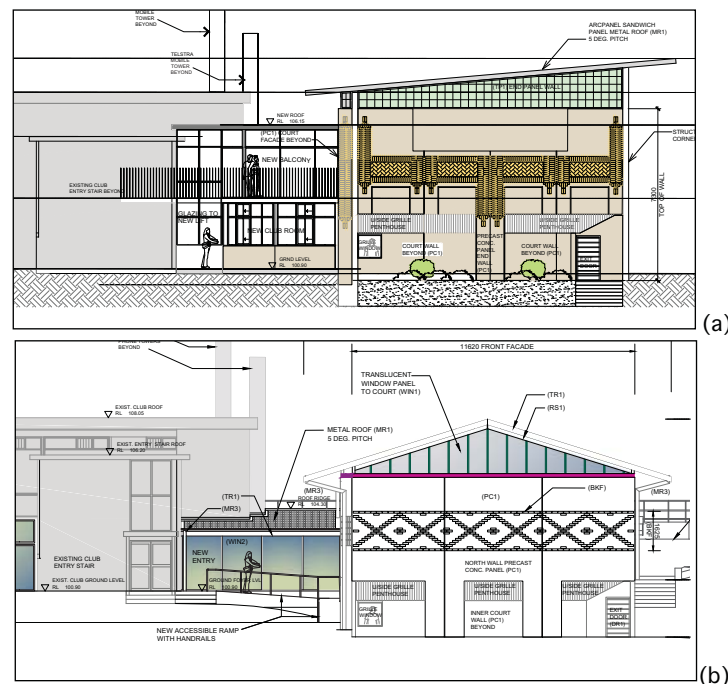


Fig. 3.2 Redesign of Tennis Court Building : North Elevation : September 2019 (a) and June 2020 (b)  
Showing new Gable Roof Form, Elevation Treatment, Reduction in Height, Lowering of Court Floor Level

### 3.6 Matters of Height, Form, Bulk, Envelope, Materials and Setback

#### 3.6.1 Height of the Proposed Building

Whilst there are no evident height controls for the CRC site, being zoned RE 2, the SRTC have responded to advice from the Shire of Hornsby to contain the overall height of the proposed new building to otherwise accord with maximum heights permitted in a Residential Zone, this being 8.50 metres above natural ground level.

Reference to Fig. 3.2 above also confirms that the overall roof height of the current proposal above natural ground level has been much reduced by undertaking to excavate the site and consequently lower the reduced level (RL) of the tennis court floor (FFL) from RL 100.70 to RL 98.50, all to meet existing CRC Clubhouse floor levels. In effect, the new building is set well into the sloping ground in the same manner as adopted by architect R. E. 'Dick' Apperly for siting the existing two-storey brick Clubhouse as built for the CRC in 1956-1957.



### 3.6.2 Form, Bulk and Envelope of the Proposed Building

Since the 16<sup>th</sup> century in Great Britain and Europe, 'tennis' courts have been enclosed in regular rectangular-plan form buildings with high brick, stone or timber walls, initially open to the sky, and later covered and protected by gable-form roofs of heavy timber construction. In the current iteration for the proposed real tennis court building at Cheltenham, the rectangular plan form has been retained but the contemporary sloping skillion roof (5° pitch) has been replaced with a traditional pitched gable roof. The form of the building is that of a rectangular hall, with the apparent bulk of the structure being concealed by the manner of excavating/siting the building into natural ground, and keeping wall heights to a minimum.

The proposed tennis court building envelope is consistent with that long adopted for real tennis court buildings, worldwide. The traditional and necessary bulk of the proposed building has been reduced by constructing an innovative open 'cloister' or arcade in the north façade and by the incorporation of high glass windows in the upper gable of this elevation and in the east and west elevations, all to light the court interior and reduce the evident visual mass of the building. The open 'cloister' is an historical reference to the accepted origins of tennis (*jeu de paume* and *pallacorda*) as first played with the hand in French Medieval monasteries and in the large fortified palaces of the Italian aristocracy and clergy in the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> centuries. This sheltered arcade or gallery is located under the Hazard side penthouse and it is proposed that the grille, a near 1.00 metre square winning opening in the end wall of the court, is to be securely glazed so that the game can be viewed, casually, by members and visitors to the CRC without having to enter the building. It should also be appreciated that this open 'cloister' is now located at natural ground level in a much reduced building envelope [See Fig. 3.2].

### 3.6.3 Interpretation Panels in the Open 'Cloister' and Tennis Court Interior

The configuration of this 'cloister' can be appreciated by reference to a view of the proposed building from a vantage point in The Crescent [Fig. 3.3]. It is also proposed to use this 'cloister' as an interpretation area where the history of the game of tennis, the origins of the Cheltenham Recreation Club and the cultural and architectural history of Edensor and the 'William H. Harris Memorial Clubhouse' can be securely displayed. Further and larger interpretation panels are also to be permanently located in the interiors of the two linked buildings to display the same historical information, in positions to be determined by the SRTC and the CRC. It should also be pointed out that most real tennis clubs, worldwide, take great pride in displaying historical illustrations, competition trophies, championship boards, books on tennis and other tennis ephemera (rackets and balls), in display cabinets and on the walls of their courts.

### 3.6.4 Construction Materials and Finishes of the Proposed Building

In 1996-1997, the SRTC sponsored the construction of a new and utilitarian real tennis court at Macquarie University using pre-cast concrete panels for the walls of the main structure [Fig. 2.7]. This appears to be the first occasion when tilt-up panel construction was used in an innovative yet ad-hoc manner to build a real tennis court in Australia. Around the same time, the late Gordon Cope-Williams opted to design and build his own real tennis court at Romsey in Victoria using tall precast concrete panels for the main wall of the building [Fig. 2.10]. In very recent times, French architects used a system of large concrete panels laid horizontally as the structural system for the walls of the real tennis court built at Merignac, Bordeaux. This ultra-modern building was opened early in 2020 [Fig. 2.3 (Interior)].

Tilt-up panels have been defined in AS 3850 as being ‘a flat concrete panel, cast in a horizontal position, usually on-site’. The system has found widespread application in Australia for industrial, commercial and residential buildings because of economies in standardised fabrication and erection techniques, and it is proposed to construct the new real tennis court at Cheltenham using tilt-up panels cast on site, using the future tennis court floor as the casting bed. Care must be taken in the design of these panels to ensure that the concrete wall is rigid and of sufficient mass/thickness to match the ball-rebound performance characteristics of hard plaster-rendered solid brick or masonry walls long found in traditional real tennis court construction in Australia, Europe, Great Britain, USA and France. The use of masonry in the walls of tennis court buildings is otherwise still a popular technique, and is to be used in the proposed new court tennis court on Daniel Island, Charlston SC, USA (2020).

The concrete panel finish is described as being ‘off white concrete’ in the Schedule of External Finishes (CRC-A-9001) accompanying the current DA documents. The sample panel has a pinkish tinge and this colouring is recommended to provide an appropriate aesthetic blend with the salmon-coloured bricks utilised in the construction of the existing CRC Clubhouse in 1956. The decorative brick inlay on these concrete panels is proposed to be a mixed brown brick colour, and whilst this finish is acceptable, a better solution would be to provide a salmon-coloured brick veneer biscuit which is a closer match to the bricks found in the walls of the original CRC Clubhouse, if such a colour can be found.

One design innovation which should be mentioned in the SRTC proposal is the configuration of a stand-alone ‘tilt-up tambour’ in the main wall of the real tennis court. This technique has overcome the need to construct a double wall to form this tambour in the traditional manner [See Fig. 2.12]. The extension of this angled concrete tambour above the playline is problematic, but can be addressed in the design development and engineering design stages of the project. In any case, a play line across the tambour will mark the area of the tambour face which is in play.



Fig. 3.3 Montage Views of the Proposed Real Tennis Court from The Crescent [SRTC 2020]  
The Proposed ‘Cloister’ or Hazard Penthouse Undercroft is shown at Ground Level (a)  
The Proposed Real Tennis Court Building is essentially screened at The Crescent frontage (b)  
[SRTC : CRC-A.71 Photo Montage-View 1 (a) : CRC-A.72 Photo Montage-View 2 (b)]

The contemporary exterior construction materials are clearly expressed in the current design of the real tennis court building, and the dark green external metal finishes are considered appropriate in a landscape setting which is characterised by large areas of vivid green lawns and a thick belt of mature trees and under plantings on The Crescent frontage [Fig. 3.3].

Montage Views illustrated in Fig. 3.3 above serve to establish that the new building proposal will be part screened from public views in The Crescent, as the tennis court structure is located behind a thick belt of significant trees and shrubs growing on the street frontage.

### 3.6.5 Setback from the Street Frontage (The Crescent)

At the Pre-Planning Meeting in October 2019, officers of the Shire of Hornsby expressed concerns regarding the proposed short setback of the north wall of the new building from The Crescent street frontage. The north-east corner of this building was originally setback 4.80 metres from The Crescent. The north-west corner of the tennis court building was setback 8.00 metres. As well, it was pointed out by Malcolm Bruce, the consultant arborist, in late October 2019, that the north section of the proposed building encroached into the tree protection zone of Tree 1 (TPZ) to an unacceptable extent (23%). The recommended maximum impact on the TPZ has been set by Australian Standard AS 4970 (2009) at 10%.

In response, the SRTC and their building designer undertook a survey of the residential environs surrounding the boundaries of the Cheltenham Recreation Club to establish the range of front boundary setbacks found for housing located in The Crescent, Lyne Road and The Boulevard in Cheltenham. During this survey, houses in the area were photographed to assist in interpretation of the character of residential styles found in the HCA (See below).

This survey, which was undertaken using scaled aerial imagery available on the NSW Government portal Six Maps Spatial Services, found that there was a wide range of frontage setbacks in the immediate neighbourhood of the CRC. Some houses in Lyne Road have comparatively small setbacks of 5.00 metres from the street frontage, others in The Crescent vary from 9.00 metres on sites to the west of The Boulevard and from 12.00 to 17.00 metres on residential lots to the east of Lyne Road (Fig. 3.4].

The subject site is zoned as 'RE 2 Private Recreation' in the Hornsby Local Environmental Plan (HLEP) 2013. Whilst there are no minimum setbacks from street frontages and side boundaries scheduled in the Hornsby Development Control Plan (HDCP) for development on the CRC land, Council has requested that the setbacks otherwise prescribed for residential buildings in the Beecroft-Cheltenham Conservation Area also apply to the site at 60-74 The Crescent, Cheltenham ['File Note of Meeting' dated 3 October 2019].

Table 3.1.2 (a) in the HDCP prescribes a minimum setback of 9.00 metres on a designated road, and 6.00 metres on a local road. Consequently, the scheme submitted to the Shire of Hornsby at the October 2019 meeting has been extensively revised to provide for an average setback of the north wall of the proposed real tennis court of 10.175 metres from The Crescent frontage (north-east corner setback 8.60 metres, north-west corner is at 11.75 metres from the front boundary). I understand that The Crescent at Cheltenham is classified as a 'local road' so a minimum setback of 6.00 metres is required to satisfy the HDCP requirements in Table 3.1.2 (a) [Advice from the Shire of Hornsby, 8 October 2020]. The current proposal clearly meets this minimum setback requirement and is in accord with front boundary setbacks found in surrounding residential streets in the CRC neighbourhood.

This increased setback of the proposed real tennis court building has also addressed the matter of encroachment into the Tree Protection Zone (TPZ) of Tree 1, the Liquidambar (*Liquidambar styraciflua*) standing close to The Crescent street frontage. I understand that the proposed building now impacts on the TPZ for Tree 1 to a maximum of 10% and this encroachment is acceptable when tested against the relevant Australian Standard. The degree of encroachment is illustrated by reference to Fig. 2.15 and Fig. 2.16.

### 3.6.6 Proximity of Development Site to Residential Buildings in the Neighbourhood

The large site of the Cheltenham Recreation Club is bounded on two sides by The Boulevard and Lyne Road, residential streets containing largely noteworthy single storey houses built in the period 1900-1939. The historic property Edensor at 203 Beecroft Road is situated well clear of the west boundary of the CRC site, although access to this property is available via a right-of-way running through the CRC site. The proposed real tennis court building fronting The Crescent and the Railway Reserve stands isolated and does not abut or adjoin any significant residences in the immediate neighbourhood of the Beecroft-Cheltenham Heritage Conservation Area.

All of these residential sites are distant from the proposed tennis court development site and consequently the new building has no perceptible capacity to detrimentally impact on the visual amenity, architectural qualities and established cultural heritage significance of this neighbourhood, being otherwise a small component of the Beecroft-Cheltenham HCA. The nearest residential sites to the CRC land are recorded on an aerial photograph with radial distances thereto plotted and shown as red lines [Fig. 3.4]. Reference to this recent aerial photograph confirms that the proposed real tennis court building is aligned to face The Crescent street frontage, is effectively on the longitudinal central axis of the CRC site, and is equi-distant from The Boulevard and Lyne Road, the two residential streets which form the east and west boundaries of the CRC site.

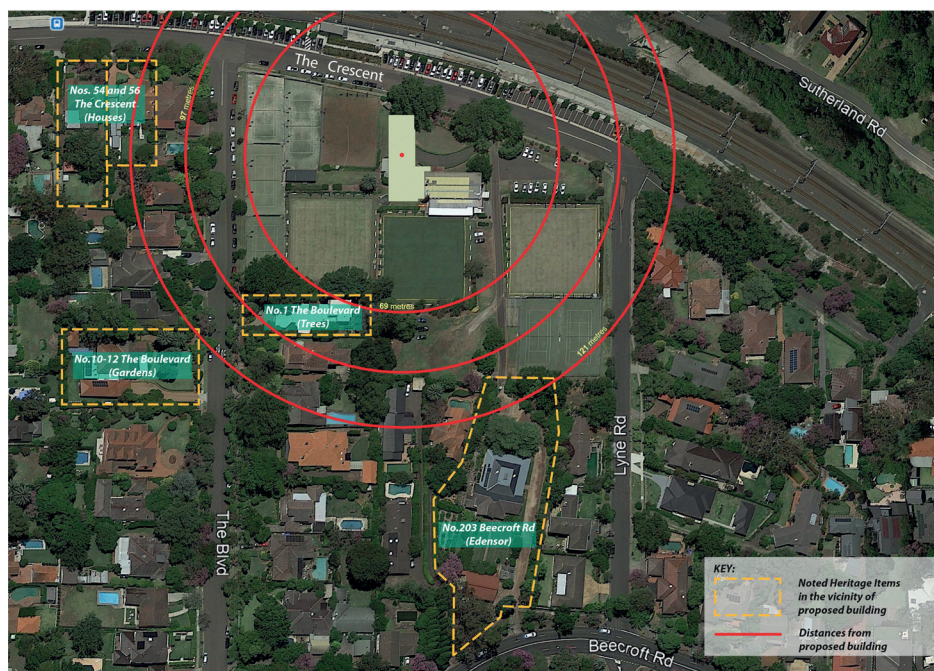


Fig. 3.4 Proposed Real Tennis Court Site and Environs : Proximity of Residential Buildings  
Red Lines plotted at 69, 97 and 121 metres radius from Centre of Proposed New Building (Light Green)  
[Nearmap image (2018)]

### 3.6.7 Architectural Character of the CRC Neighbourhood

The history of residential development and the architectural character of the Beecroft-Cheltenham Heritage Conservation Area was discussed and defined by Godden Mackay Logan (GML) in their *Beecroft-Cheltenham Heritage Conservation Area Review*, 2004. Therein, the consultants found that the subject HCA contained a ‘fine collection of Inter-War and Post-War housing’, with many of these places being designed by well-known Sydney architects.

William Mark Nixon, the architect-cum-horticulturalist who designed the original Clubhouse and laid out the grounds of the Cheltenham Recreation Club in several stages between 1913-1925, is one such architect who actively contributed to the portfolio of significant Federation/Arts and Crafts style houses built in the suburbs of Beecroft and Cheltenham in the period 1890-1915. GML have otherwise noted that:

the area clearly demonstrates all its layers of suburban subdivision, re-subdivision and development from initial boom-period Victorian crown land subdivision of the Common to the 1960s and less obviously through to the present day [p. 37].

Houses standing in the immediate neighbourhood of the Cheltenham Recreation Club date from the Federation period and are largely built of face brick with terracotta tiled hipped and gabled roofs, sometimes incorporating sandstone in the base walls (as at Edensor) and otherwise demonstrating a variety of then popular domestic architectural styles. Whilst I have not been able to visually survey the CRC neighbourhood firsthand, I have examined a large portfolio of digital images of houses standing in The Crescent, Lyne Road, The Boulevard, and Beecroft Road as assembled by S. N. Cremona of SRTC.

This collection is sufficient to confirm that the existing buildings standing on the site at 60-74 The Crescent, Cheltenham have no close functional, stylistic or material relationship with the housing typology found in the surrounding area. Clearly, both the much-altered surviving remnant of the original CRC Clubhouse, and the existing two-storey Functionalist/Modern style 1950s Clubhouse, are places which are out of context with the prevailing architectural character of the HCA and read as isolated and independent structures in a manicured landscape setting.

### **3.7 Proposed Demolition of the Existing Croquet Club Pavilion**

The existing timber-framed asbestos-clad pavilion now occupied by the Croquet Section of the CRC was built in the period from 1929-1933 as an open-sided annexe to the original rectilinear plan CRC Clubhouse. The original single-storey timber framed Clubhouse was erected in stages between 1913 and 1925 from designs prepared by local architect William Mark Nixon. The structure was externally clad with regularly aligned asbestos cement sheet panels and lined internally with the same material. The architectural and cultural history of the original CRC Clubhouse has been recorded in extensive detail in Section 6.0 of this report which is otherwise included in 'Part B : Charting the Cultural History and Significance of the Place'. Photographs of the original CRC Clubhouse, with the open pavilion, are included as Fig. 6.3 in Section 6.2, which deals with the early development of the site and the history of the first Clubhouse (1913-1957).

Following construction of the new CRC Clubhouse in the period 1954-1957, the original CRC Clubhouse was evidently retained on site for many years. Whilst the date of demolition of this old building has not been firmly established, aerial photographs confirm it was still in place in 1961 and gone by 1971 [Fig. 2.14 (b) and (c)]. The Croquet Section eventually arranged for part of their clubroom and all of the open pavilion annexe to be retained and heavily modified to function as independent accommodation for croquet players. In the process, the original weatherboard cladding was removed and replaced with asbestos-cement sheets with standard flat cover straps of the same material. The two open sides of the pavilion, with a floor area of approximately 25 square metres, were enclosed with windows salvaged from demolition of the main section of the original clubhouse. As well, a small part of the east end of this original building, measuring around 5 x 3 metres, and including the mallet room and basic kitchen facilities, was retained as the Croquet Section's Clubhouse.



This room, built before 1925, is lined with what appears to be asbestos cement sheet panels with broad cover straps on the walls and original v-jointed timber lining boards to the ceiling. The large room in the former pavilion has also had a flat panelled ceiling installed and whilst this material has not been tested, it dates from the 1960s and may be asbestos cement panels, or alternatively fibrous plaster sheets with wide flat cover straps. More information concerning the existence of hazardous asbestos-based material and lead paints is set out in a recent report prepared by EP Risk, 'Cheltenham Recreation Club : Limited Destructive Hazardous Materials ('HAZMAT') Assessment', Sydney, 12 February 2020.

In recent times, the original roof cladding over the pavilion and skillion section has been replaced with patent green 'Colorbond' corrugated sheet steel cladding and a new skillion shelter has been built over the old brick steps. The question of the cultural significance of this structure is discussed in Section 1.6 of Part A of this report. Whilst the existing Croquet Club pavilion has some historical interest as a much-altered and adapted relic of the first CRC Clubhouse, it is not a place worthy of retention on cultural heritage or practical grounds.

An alternative proposal, to remove and relocate this utilitarian structure, which is composed of two separate structural sections, is evidently not feasible when it is recognised that the existing structure contains large amounts of asbestos cement sheet panelling. It is also clear from analysis of the latest aerial photographs included in this report [Fig. 3.4] that there is no clear site available in the CRC grounds which could be used to re-site the pavilion and put the redundant structure to a new and practical use. In any case, the cost of undertaking this move and rehabilitation of the structure is prohibitive.

As part of the current development proposal, it is intended to house the Croquet Section in part of the Upper Lounge of the proposed new real tennis court building, and to provide modern accommodation and additional internal sanitary facilities to replace the existing outdoor toilet located close to the original croquet lawn [Fig. 3.1]. This seems to be the most appropriate strategy in all of the circumstances.

The proposed real tennis court, which is to be built to conform with long-established International standards for real tennis court design and construction, cannot be developed unless the existing Croquet Club pavilion is demolished [Fig. 2.16]. Demolition of this pavilion will otherwise allow for the siting of the new real tennis court on the only available and suitable parcel of land within the total CRC complex. This site is just of sufficient ground area to take the proposed new building as well as being located in close proximity to the two-storey CRC Clubhouse such as to allow for existing facilities to be shared by the SRTC and the CRC.

### **3.8 Addressing Relevant Questions Raised in the SOHI Guidelines**

#### **3.8.1 Demolition of a Building or Structure**

I understand that the SRTC and the CRC have explored all of the options available to them when assessing whether the existing CRC 'Croquet House' could be feasibly, practically and economically moved to another location within the subject site and adapted for further use by the Cheltenham Recreation Club. Relocation of this relic has been ruled out on several grounds, including the fact that the existing structure contains large amounts of building materials containing hazardous asbestos and moving the somewhat fragile structure would be problematic [Demlakian Engineering Report, November 2019]. In any case, the CRC will have no further use for this building when the tennis court building is constructed and up-to-date facilities will be available therein for the Croquet Section of the CRC [Fig. 3.1].

Most of the original CRC Clubhouse, built in stages in the period 1913-1925, was demolished in the 1960s and there is nothing of tangible historical interest or significance contained in the existing surviving fabric that should otherwise be salvaged and retained as a relic of an earlier period of development of the CRC. The cultural history of this building has been charted in great detail in this report, and prior to removal of this place, a schematic measured drawing of the building should be undertaken and lodged in appropriate archives as a permanent record of the ‘Croquet House’.

Whilst the surviving CRC ‘Croquet House’ is not identified as a place of local cultural significance to the Shire of Hornsby, it is nevertheless situated within a site formally identified as being of local landscape significance. Article 9 of the *Australia ICOMOS Burra Charter* (2013) relates to matters of ‘location’. Essentially, this article states that a heritage place ‘should remain in its historical location’ with the further proviso that ‘relocation is generally unacceptable unless this is the sole practical means of ensuring its survival’ [*Burra Charter*, 2013, p. 5]. This article only relates to places of established cultural significance, but it is of some import to this study as it does support my view that any historical interest which may be assigned to the Clubhouse relic would be further reduced if it was moved from its original location in the CRC grounds.

Demolition of this small pavilion, which dates from 1929-1933, is essential, as the proposed real tennis court building development cannot proceed without this site being made available. I concur in the views of the SRTC and the CRC, that demolition is the appropriate strategy in advancing the development proposal.

### 3.8.2 Major Additions to the ‘William H. Harris Memorial Clubhouse’

The current proposal involves the construction of a new real tennis court building on a naturally sloping site adjacent to the existing CRC Clubhouse. This land does not form part of the long-established cultivated croquet lawns and bowling greens at the Cheltenham Recreation Club. The longitudinal axis of this new sports and recreation building is aligned at right-angles to the major longitudinal axis of the 1957 Clubhouse. The two-storey structure known as the ‘William H. Harris Memorial Clubhouse’ will stand apart from the new building proposal, with the two sections connected by a discreet single-storey glass link aligned on both the north and south elevations [Fig. 2.13]. In this regard, the proposal broadly reflects *Australia ICOMOS Burra Charter* (2013) principles and guidelines for the conservation of places of cultural significance in Australia, and more particularly in regard to issues concerning Articles 8 and 22, which relate to ‘setting’ and ‘new work’ respectively.

#### Article 8. Setting

Conservation requires the retention of an appropriate setting. This includes retention of the visual and sensory setting, as well as the retention of spiritual and other cultural relationships that contribute to the cultural significance of the place.

New construction, demolition, intrusions or other changes which would adversely affect the setting or relationships are not appropriate.

#### Article 22. New work

New work such as additions or other changes to the place may be acceptable where it respects and does not distort or obscure the cultural significance of the place, or detract from its interpretation and appreciation.

New work should be readily identifiable as such, but must respect and have minimal impact on the cultural significance of the place.

The juxtaposition of the two separately functioning buildings in the manner proposed in the current DA documentation will allow for the existing CRC Clubhouse to remain in its existing setting, still readily visible and identifiable from the main pedestrian and vehicular approach from The Crescent, as well as from the open lawns surrounding the original two-storey structure. The ‘William H. Harris Memorial Clubhouse’ clearly retains its own identity, with the proposed real tennis court building being located sufficiently clear of the east wall of the Clubhouse to guarantee it too will have its own identity.

The proposed new building does not distort or obscure the architectural character of the existing Clubhouse and the single-storey glazed link between the two buildings is discreet and designed in such a manner that both high structures are read as separate buildings when viewed from a northerly aspect. Article 22 of *The Burra Charter*, as set out above, relates to ‘New Work’. In the related Practice Note ‘Burra Charter Article 22—New Work’ (November 2013), it is explained to conservation and heritage practitioners alike that, whilst new work should be readily identifiable, it should also not affect the setting and have minimal impact on the cultural significance of the place. As well, it should not distort or obscure the cultural significance of the place or detract from its interpretation and appreciation. In further advice, practitioners are advised that:

An important factor in the success of new work is the quality and sensitivity of the design response. New work should respect the context, strength, scale and character of the original, and should not overpower it. The key to success is carefully considered design that respects and supports the significance of the place. Imitative solutions should generally be avoided: they can mislead the onlooker and may diminish the strength and visual integrity of the original. Well-designed new work can have a positive role in the interpretation of a place.

[‘Burra Charter Article 22—New Work’ (November 2013), p. 2]

### 3.8.3 New Landscape Works and Features

The history of the CRC site has been researched and recorded in near exhaustive detail in Sections 4.0 and 5.0 of Part B of this report to the Shire of Hornsby. Additionally, the changing site patterns, layout of the lawns, greens and tennis courts, and the sequence of plantings in the man-made landscape and grounds of the Cheltenham Recreation Club has been traced and clearly illustrated in a series of aerial photographs of the Cheltenham area taken from 1943 to 1994 [Fig. 2.14].

It is clear from close examination of these photographs, when viewed in chronological order, that the landscape character of the site of the Cheltenham Recreation Club has been altered, modified, and enhanced on many occasions between 1913 and 1994. The nature of these changes is discussed in Section 2.4.1 of this report. A number of early trees are now gone.

Whilst it is appropriate to assess the impact (if any) that the proposed new real tennis court building will have on the existing architectural character and setting of the ‘William H. Harris Memorial Clubhouse’, as stated above, the critical issue as far as the forthcoming Shire of Hornsby DA is concerned is to assess the impact (if any) of the proposed new building on the existing landscape character and identified cultural significance of the grounds of the Cheltenham Recreation Club.

As set out in Section 3.3 above, the grounds of the CRC have been individually identified as a heritage place of local significance and listed in the ‘Hornsby Local Environmental Plan’, 2013, as Listing No. 296 [*New South Wales Government Gazette*, 27 September 2013].

The significance of the subject site is held to relate to a belt of mature trees standing close to the entry on The Crescent street frontage [Fig. 3.3], and to a Canary Island Date Palm (*Phoenix canariensis*) located within the site and standing west of the existing 'Croquet House' on a graded embankment [Fig. 1.8]. This palm likely dates from the early 1970s, and planted after the original single-storey CRC Clubhouse was demolished in the 1960s [See Fig. 2.14]. The proposed construction of a new real tennis court building on the nominated site to the west of the existing 'William H. Harris Memorial Clubhouse' will not impact on the environment or visual amenity of this landmark palm at all.

The brief statement of significance for Listing No. 296 in the HELP (2013) also refers to 'views to period trees in adjoining properties', meaning, as I understand, views looking south through the CRC site to large trees standing in the garden reserve of Edensor at 203 Beecroft Road, as well as barrier trees on the boundaries of houses located in The Boulevard. Whilst the floor plan/north wall of the original design for the new real tennis court building, as submitted to the Shire of Hornsby Pre-Planning Meeting in October 2019, was located close to The Crescent street frontage and clearly impacted upon the TRZ of Tree 1, the proposed new building is now located much further back from The Crescent and no longer unacceptably impacts upon the integrity of the tree root zone and significance of the Liquidambar (*Liquidambar styraciflua*). Existing views to 'period trees' remains unimpaired.

Examination of all of the DA documents confirms that no trees at all are to be removed in the current development proposal and the proposed new real tennis court building will not otherwise restrict or unacceptably impact upon any identified distant views across the large site. The only perceptible alteration to the existing site landscape is to do with the removal of a small section of a clipped *Murraya* hedge-row bordering the curved asphalt driveway, and perhaps replanting this hedge in another place [Fig. 2.16]. The original *Murraya paniculata* (Chinese Box or Mock Orange) is now classed as an invasive weed by many local authorities in NSW and Queensland, and currently a range of *Murraya* hybrid cultivars are chosen for hedges instead of the original variety.

In preparing this Statement of Heritage Impact, I have benefitted from expert advice and observations included in consultant arborist Malcolm Bruce's report entitled 'Arboricultural Impact Assessment for Two Trees Located on the Cheltenham Recreation Club, Cheltenham' dated 31 October 2019. I rely on this report as far as any impact on Tree 1 is concerned.

In summary, I believe that this report has comprehensively addressed all the statutory requirements of the Shire of Hornsby ('Hornsby Development Control Plan', 2013 and 'Hornsby Local Environmental Plan' 2013), as well as those six issues (a) to (f) set out in the Shire of Hornsby memo of 3 October 2019. The new real tennis court building development as now proposed by the Sydney Real Tennis Club Inc., at the Cheltenham Recreation Club site at 60-74 The Crescent, Cheltenham 2119, in revised format, has great merit when tested against prevailing cultural heritage controls and cultural heritage significance criteria.

The proposal, which closely conforms to International standards for real tennis court design and construction, will not detrimentally impact upon the existing landscape or cultural heritage significance of the CRC site, or on the visual amenity and cultural significance of the Beecroft-Cheltenham Heritage Conservation Area. Consequently, the Development Application should not be refused on heritage grounds.

Allan Willingham  
[alberti@ozemail.com.au](mailto:alberti@ozemail.com.au)  
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