

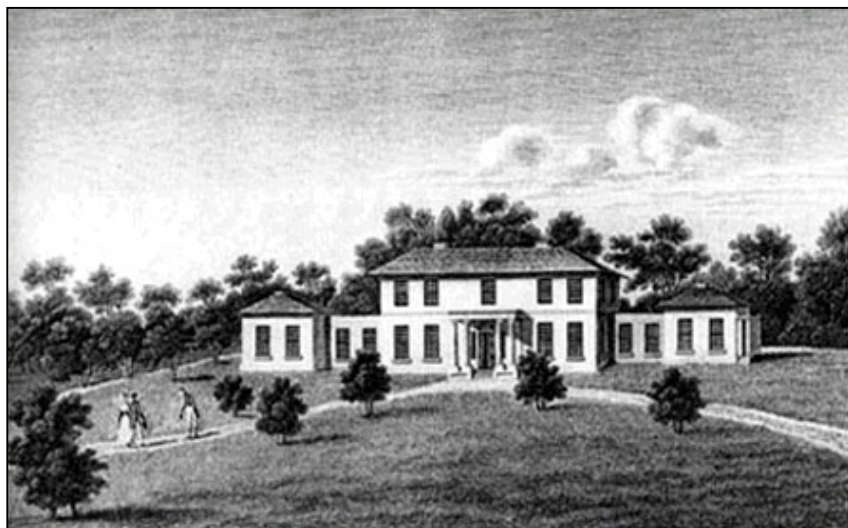
C6 - Landuse Overview

1. General Description

Historical:

The Upper Parramatta River Catchment has been intensively used for thousands of years. The confluence of fresh and tidal waters, the generally agreeable climate and the topography meant that the catchment was a suitable place in which to live. In fact evidence indicates it was of major significance to the Aboriginals, the ridge line above the Parramatta Park amphitheatre carries evidence of being an important meeting place for local tribes. Items of indigenous cultural heritage in the catchment include tree scars, middens, rock paintings and stone scatters.

After white settlement in Port Jackson, Governor Phillip explored the Upper Parramatta River



region in 1788 and granted land to settlers and convicts such as James Ruse, the MacArthurs and Edward Elliot. Very early in the history of white settlement in Australia the soils of the Cumberland Plains provided the arable land which enabled the fledgling colony to become self sufficient for food.

Old Governors House c 1819

The Upper Parramatta River catchment has evolved into a major regional centre for Western Sydney and NSW. The catchment area of 107 km² includes the cities of Parramatta and Blacktown with a resident population of 230,000 in 70,000 properties (1996).

2. Map

Refer to Map 2 Aerial photograph of the Upper Parramatta River Catchment to distinguish between landuse zones.

3. Description of Types

The majority of land use zoning in the catchment is urban (94%), of which 72% is residential, 10% commercial and industrial, and 12% infrastructure. 5% of the catchment is open space and bushland, and the remaining 1% is zoned 'rural'. Major transport corridors traverse the catchment including the M2 and M4 motorways, the Great Western Highway, James Ruse Drive, Cumberland Highway and Windsor Road. Industrial areas have developed along the

major transport corridors – M4, M2, Great Western Highway, Windsor Road and James Ruse Drive – in suburbs such as Seven Hills, Girraween and North Rocks.

Land use can be summarised as follows: (extract from the Upper Parramatta River Catchment Stormwater Management Plan 1999)

Fig C6.1 Landuse in the Upper Parramatta River Catchment

Land Use	Zoning	Total Area (hectares)	% of catchment
Rural	1	68.4	0.7
Low density Residential	2a/2b	6380.1	68.5
High Density Residential	2c/2d	315.3	3.4
Commercial	3	248.0	2.7
Industrial	4	689.7	7.4
Special Uses Institutional	5a	1148.0	12.3
Special Uses Commercial	5b	10.7	0.1
Bushland & Open Space	6	456.9	4.9

4. Distribution

The history of the Upper Parramatta River district is closely interwoven with the colonial history of New South Wales. The development of farms, vine yards, tanneries, wool mills and quarrying occurred in and around Parramatta. The town of Parramatta was laid out in 1790, the first land grants in the Blacktown district in 1791, in the same year as the founding of Toongabbie. The first farm at Baulkham Hills was granted in 1795. Settlement proceeded rapidly, especially along the transport lines, both road and rail and on the flat, arable land of the Cumberland Plain. By the 1940's centres such as Parramatta, Blacktown and Toongabbie had become large town centres. The surrounding areas of West Pennant Hills, Castle Hill and Baulkham Hills, being of more difficult terrain, were lightly urban with a patchwork of agricultural fields.

Today Parramatta is the geographic and demographic centre of greater Sydney, it is a thriving urban area and a major regional centre for Western Sydney and NSW. The catchment area of 108 km², is 70% urbanised and contains approximately 80,000 properties and a population of 220,500 (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 1999). The cities of Parramatta and Blacktown are located at the perimeter of the catchment; Parramatta Central Business District being at the outlet, and Blacktown at the western extremity.

5. Reasons for Distribution

The Parramatta area was a significant junction between Aboriginal tribal areas and an important place for local Aborigines living in and near the Upper Parramatta River catchment. The ridge line above the Parramatta Park amphitheatre indicates evidence of being a major meeting place for Aborigines. Local items of indigenous cultural heritage range from tree scars from the making of bark canoes, shell middens, stone scatters and rock paintings. The catchment is also rich in colonial heritage with remnants of colonial weirs, heritage buildings such as Old Government House and large historical structures such as Lake Parramatta Dam wall.

It was not until the first successful farming was implemented in and around the Upper Parramatta River catchment in the late 1790's and early 1800's that the fledgling Australian colony was able to become self sufficient for food. The Governors Domain (which partly remains as Parramatta Regional Park), the Third Settlement Reserves in the Toongabbie-

Winston Hills area and other small farms were the location of early successful agriculture in Australia.

The soils of the Upper Parramatta River catchment soon became depleted in nutrients so farming moved onto the more fertile Hawkesbury-Nepean River flats. However up until the 1960's small holdings were still providing vegetables and poultry products for the expanding Sydney—Parramatta markets. Generally market gardening had been pushed to the western and southern fringes of the catchment as land values, ease of building on river flats, improved transport links to regional centres and increasing population meant that urbanisation spread through the catchment.

Now Bushland and Open Space is limited and includes 14 regionally significant parks, 4 golf courses and small semi-natural areas of open forest. The natural forest is confined to the Darling Mills and Hunts Creek sub catchments where steep terrain has been less conducive to housing and industrial infrastructure and some woodland remnants in and around Prospect Reservoir in the west and south of the catchment, further from town centres.

5. Other Resources and Links

- Upper Parramatta River Catchment Trust www.uprct.nsw.gov.au
- Parramatta City Council www.parracity.nsw.gov.au
- Baulkham Hills Shire Council www.baulkhamhills.nsw.gov.au
- Holroyd City Council www.holroyd.nsw.gov.au
- Blacktown City Council www.blacktown.nsw.gov.au
- www.teachingheritage.nsw.edu.au

