

Heritage Inventory Sheet

Item Name	'Wyatt Park, Haslams Creek, Lidcombe Pool, Lidcombe Oval, Stormwater Drain' and 'Stand of Eucalyptus Microcorys'		
Recommended Name	Wyatt Park Sporting Complex, Stand of Eucalyptus Microcorys and Associated Landscape		
Site Image			
Address	Main entrance at Church Street, Lidcombe, NSW 2141 Park bounded by Olympic Drive and Boorea Street, Percy and Church Streets		
Lot/Section/DP	1	-	581438
	7046	-	1065005
	453	-	752036
	1-2	-	707506
	75-77	-	752036
	2	-	581438
Current LEP ID	I175, I187 (Cumberland LEP)		
Former LEP ID	I40, I41 (Auburn LEP)		

	I41 (Auburn LEP)	
Heritage Conservation Area	Not included	
Date Updated	February 2020	
Significance Level	LOCAL	
Site Type	Level 1	Complex/Group
	Level 2	Recreation and Entertainment
Ownership	The Minister For Lands (C/- Cumberland City Council, PO Box 42, MERRYLANDS NSW 2160); The State Of New South Wales (C/- Cumberland City Council, PO Box 42, MERRYLANDS NSW 2160); Cumberland City Council; Girl Guides Association of NSW (17/23 Rowe Street, SYDNEY NSW 2000)	

Curtilage Map





Revised Curtilage recommended- refer below.

Statement of Significance

Wyatt Park forms a large recreational precinct in Lidcombe with considerable historic, aesthetic, social and rarity values to the local community. The Park is historically significant of the development of community sporting facilities and recreational uses in the Lidcombe and Auburn area from the 1930s onwards. The sporting venues at the park have been constructed at different stages from 1930 onwards, often with the financial support of local beneficiaries and the government. The sporting complex is of aesthetic significance for its use of modernist architectural forms that date between 1930 and 1950. Of particular aesthetic significance is the Lidcombe Oval and grandstand that opened in 1933 and retains much of its original fabric. Similarly, the swimming centre constructed during the Post War period in 1959, also retains some original fabric. The Park is socially significant as a major sporting and recreational venue for both Lidcombe and Auburn, dating from 1951. The Wyatt Park recreational precinct is rare as an example of a recreational facility constructed in the post war period, of which few examples remain in Western Sydney.

Further, the line of fifteen Eucalyptus microcorys trees surrounding Wyatt Park along Olympic Drive have historic and aesthetic significance, forming a landmark vegetation in the local region. The Eucalyptus microcorys was widely planted in the area in the early 1970s, when an interest in Australian native vegetation was expressed in greening much of Sydney's inner west areas by the Federal Labor Government.

Criteria Assessment

a) Historic	The Wyatt Park recreational precinct forms a large recreational complex in Auburn with considerable historic significance to the local community. The sporting venues at the Park have been constructed
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	at different stages from 1930 onwards, often with the financial support of local beneficiaries and the government. The Eucalyptus microcorys are demonstrative of the interest in Australian native vegetation that was expressed in greening much of Sydney's inner west areas by the Federal Labor Government in the area in the early 1970s.
b) Associative	The item does not meet this criterion.
c) Aesthetic/Technical	The built structures within the park vary in style. The sporting complex is of aesthetic significance for its use of modernist architectural forms that date between 1930 and 1950. Of particular aesthetic significance is the Lidcombe Oval and grandstand that opened in 1933 and retains much of its original fabric. Similarly, the swimming centre constructed during the Post War period in 1959, also retains some original fabric. Although substantially renovated between 2016 and 2017, the building retains the form of the original structure. Original fabric and decorative detailing along Church Street is also retained. Further, the line of fifteen Eucalyptus microcorys trees form a landmark vegetation in the local region.
d) Social	The Park is socially significant to the local community as a major sporting and recreational venue for both Lidcombe and Auburn, dating from 1951. The sporting venues at the park were constructed at different stages, often with the financial support of local beneficiaries or the government. More recently the park, in particular Lidcombe Oval is socially significant to the local community for its association with Western Sydney Magpies rugby league and various cycling clubs.
e) Scientific	The item does not meet this criterion.
f) Rarity	The Wyatt Park recreational precinct is rare as an example of a recreational facility constructed in the post war period, of which few examples remain in Western Sydney.
g) Representativeness	The item does not meet this criterion.

Physical Description

Wyatt Park is a large recreational precinct that contains a variety of sporting fields including a swimming centre, two sporting ovals and basketball and netball courts. The precinct is a green space that also contains the Auburn Youth Centre and features a portion of Haslams Creek which is channelised and operates as a stormwater drain. The surrounding landscape is framed with a line of Eucalyptus microcorys trees along the road and boundary of the site. A carpark is located at the south of the site between the Church Street and Olympic Drive intersection and Haslam Creek Stormwater Drain.

Auburn Swimming Centre

The Auburn Swimming Centre is now known as the Auburn Ruth Everuss Aquatic Centre. The building that opened in 1959 was substantially redeveloped between 2016 and 2017. The complex now features a gym, café, a 25-metre indoor pool, a 50-metre outdoor lap pool, outdoor water polo pool, family leisure and program pool and splash pad.

The Auburn Ruth Everuss Aquatic Centre is simply massed, with some skillion, butterfly and gable roofs. The original concrete block wall along Church Street is painted white and features patterned coursing and tiling. The main changes to the building associated with the redevelopment included the construction of a new entrance and rear addition over the indoor pools. The entrance to the complex is distinguished by a large skillion roof concrete entrance foyer with an area for administrative use, as well as wet areas for visitors. The rear addition features a glass curtain wall with a steel framed roof.

The building is in a good condition due to its recent renovation.

Youth Centre

The Youth Centre is a large, two storey, brick building with simple massing and low-pitched gable roof. The square parapet along the lower façade is newly painted to yellow. The recent coating has removed the former 'Youth Centre' signage. The building features timber windows which have also been recently repainted white. The second storey features a deep set back and is clad in pressed metal and a row of windows on the eastern elevation.

The building is in a good condition due to its recent building maintenance repair works.

Lidcombe Oval and Buildings

Lidcombe Oval is a large circular oval in the centre of the site. The oval is distinguished by the oval entrance gates which feature a brick stepped square parapet with typical Art Deco font that reads 'Lidcombe Oval'. The now painted brick structure features a ticket box and provides entrance to the oval. The reverse side of the structure, fronting the oval features a roller door, presumably protecting a screen or score board. Lidcombe oval also features a grandstand. The grandstand is a brick structure with a steel framed gable roof. The structure features a concrete slab floor to the upper storey as well as concrete lintels over the regularly spaced windows on the ground floor. The oval is encircled by a chain-link fence.

Overall Lidcombe Oval appears to be in a good condition, although there are some signs of efflorescence on the brickwork.

Stormwater Drain

The Haslam Creek Stormwater drain is constructed of brick and lined with concrete on the channel floor. The brick is also capped in concrete and features concrete semi-circular abutments along the channels wall. The bricks are in a good condition, as is the mortar.

Stand of Eucalyptus microcorys

A group of fifteen Eucalyptus microcorys trees, which form a distinctive line to the edge of Olympic Drive. The trees are well maintained.

Condition	Good	Fair	Poor
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Alterations and Additions

- The Auburn Ruth Everuss Aquatic Centre: The building was substantially redeveloped to include a new entrance building, large indoor pool complex, gym, outdoor water polo pool, family leisure and program pool, and splash pad. The redevelopment made use of the existing lap pools, adding the splash pad and larger awnings are new additions to the site. The original decorative concrete block wall along Church Street is retained and painted white.
- Auburn Youth Centre: The building appears to have undergone a refresh program, with repainting of window frames and parapet.
- Lidcombe Oval: The entrance gate is painted blue.

While many structures in the park appear to have had little external modification, it is likely the facilities they contain have been progressively upgraded over time. The integrity of the item, as a whole is considered to be moderate.

Integrity	High	Moderate	Low
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* element detracts from the overall cultural significance of the place

Historical Notes

Construction years	1932 onwards
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The suburb of Lidcombe is located 14 kilometres west of Sydney and was first seen as an exploring party rowed up the Parramatta River came close to the area on 4 February 1788. Early land grants in the area were given to settlers around 1804 such as H.G. Douglas, Joseph Hyde Potts, and Samuel Haslam who established the first farms in the area. These early land grants ranged between 60 to 200 acres and were focused around Parramatta Road and the small tracks deviating from it. The opening of the railway station at Lidcombe (known as Haslam Creek station) in 1859 led to the subdivision and subsequent development of Lidcombe.

The name "Lidcombe" is derived from the combination of the names of two former Mayors. When the name Rookwood no longer appealed to residents (due to its association with the expanding necropolis), a new name was created for the suburb. This combined Frederick Lidbury, an active local government figure and Mayor of Rookwood on several occasions with Alexander Larcombe, his main Mayoral opponent. The suburb was renamed to "Lidcombe" on 15 October 1913.

The land in which Wyatt Park is now located, formerly sat within the 100 acres land grant to Anne Curtis. This came to be owned by the Sydney Meat Preserving Company. The land was reserved for public recreation in 18 November 1927, however, had been previously unofficially used as a playing area and trotting track to the north. Council was able to influence the owners, Sydney Meat Preserving Company, not to subdivide that area and after negotiation, were able to influence the current Premier, J. T. Lang (the local member) to ensure the land was reserved for public recreation. The government purchased the 45 acres for £4,500 and Lang announced the purchase officially on 10 August 1926.

Lidcombe Council prepared a comprehensive scheme of development for Wyatt Park which would be gradually implemented with the assistance of D. L. Davidson of the Town Planning Association. A grant of £3,000 from the Commonwealth Government enabled Lidcombe Council to construct an Oval. The grandstand was completed with a loan of £1,000 from the State Government in 1932-3 from Christmas relief funds for the unemployed. Lidcombe Oval had a cycle track built in 1947. The oval was also the home ground for the Western Sydney Magpies rugby league from 1967 to 1986 before the club moved to Campbelltown Stadium in 1987.

The site had previously contained the Lidcombe Baths which were established in 1898 from funds donated by the Independent Order of Oddfellows. The baths were called the 'Hampden Baths' and opened in 1899. A dressing shed was constructed in the 1920's and the site remained a popular swimming venue until the 1930's. In 1941, the baths were closed and soon after removed when Church Street was realigned, and Olympic Drive constructed. The Auburn Swimming Centre at Wyatt Park was opened in 1959.

Other improvements made to the park during the Economic Depression of the 1930s included the Council's acceptance of the state government's "work for the dole" scheme. The scheme came into operation for Lidcombe in June 1933 and continued until July 1937. Works completed included 14 miles of roads, 4 miles of kerbing and guttering, 3 miles of concrete paving and 3 miles of tarred footpaths. The construction of stormwater channels also formed part of unemployment relief works in the 1930s under schemes managed by the Water Board included the Cooks River drainage area, partly situated in Lidcombe, the Haslam's Creek area in Lidcombe. Over £500,000 was spent on storm water channel construction, particularly the channel through Wyatt Park.

In the 1970s, it is likely that the stand of *Eucalyptus microcorys* was planted when a revived interest in Australian native vegetation was expressed in the greening much of Sydney's inner west areas by the Federal Labor Government.

The Auburn Swimming Centre, now known as the Auburn Ruth Everuss Aquatic Centre, reopened in 2017 after its redevelopment. Today, the site remains in use as a recreational precinct for various sporting activities and the Lidcombe Oval is again the home ground for the Western Sydney Magpies rugby league team.

Recommendations					
Heritage Management		Existing Built and Landscape Elements		Future Development and Planning	
1. Maintain this item's heritage listing on the LEP.	X	6. Original fabric is highly significant and should be maintained.	X	12. Alterations and additions should respond to the existing pattern of development, with careful consideration of the setting (form, scale, bulk, setback and height).	X
2. Maintain this item's listing as part of the Heritage Conservation Area.		7. Unsympathetic alterations that detract from the cultural significance of the item should be removed.		13. New alterations and additions should respect the historic aesthetic/character of the item and area (e.g. paint scheme, materiality, style, landscape elements).	X
3. Consider delisting as an individual item from the LEP.		8. Maintain heritage landscape elements and schemes.	X	14. Future uses for this item should be compatible with its historical functions/associations.	X
4. Consider additional research to nominate this item for the State Heritage Register.		9. Maintain the existing setting of the heritage item, informed by the historic pattern of neighbouring development (form, scale, bulk, setback and height).			
5. The heritage curtilage for this item should be revised/reduced.	X	10. Maintain the historic aesthetic/character of the item and area (e.g. paint scheme, materiality, style, landscape elements).			
		11. The condition of this item is poor. Condition and maintenance should be monitored.			

Other recommendations and/or comments:

- Consideration should be given to the integration of I40 (Auburn LEP) with I41 (Auburn LEP) as they are located in the same location, with the same curtilage. Both relate to the park landscape and have thus been combined within this listing sheet. The revised curtilage below reflects the existing curtilage of I40. The Lot/DP stated within this listed sheet reflects this revised curtilage.
- Should the opportunity arise, a Heritage Interpretation Plan should be prepared for the park to assist in telling its social history.



Listings

Heritage Listing	Listing Title	Listing Number
Heritage Act – State Heritage Register	N/A	-
Local Environmental Plan	Wyatt Park Sporting Complex, Stand of Eucalyptus Microcorys and Associated Landscape	1192
Heritage Study	Wyatt Park Sporting Complex, Stand of Eucalyptus Microcorys and Associated Landscape	1192
National Trust Australia Register	N/A	-

Previous Studies

Type	Author	Year	Title
Heritage Study	Extent Heritage Pty Ltd	2019	Cumberland LGA Heritage Study
Heritage Study	Neustein & Associates	1996	Auburn Heritage Study
Heritage Study	Terry Kass	1995	Draft Historical Context Report: Auburn Heritage Study

Other References

- Kass, T 2008, *Lidcombe*, retrieved 27 March 2019, <https://dictionaryofsydney.org/entry/lidcombe>
- Godden Mackay Logan 2002, *Lidcombe Hospital Site – Conservation Management Plan*, Godden Mackay Logan.
- Cumberland Argus, Xmas Number, 19 Dec 1907, p. 25
- Liberty Plains Parish Map no. 235, Sydney NSW.

Limitations

1. Access to all heritage items was limited to a visual inspection from the public domain. The interiors of buildings and inaccessible areas such as rear gardens were not assessed as part of this heritage study.
2. Condition and site modification assessment was limited to a visual inspection undertaken from the public domain.
3. Unless additional research was required, historical research for all heritage items was based on an assessment of previous LGA heritage studies, the Thematic History (prepared by Extent Heritage, 2019) and existing information in former heritage listing sheets.

Additional Images



Overview of Lidcombe Oval.



Front entrance to Auburn Ruth Everuss Aquatic Centre.



Auburn Ruth Everuss Aquatic Centre.



Youth Centre.



Lidcombe Oval.



Haslam's Creek Stormwater Drain.



Haslam Creek Stormwater Drain.



Channel of Haslam creek Stormwater Drain.



Stand of Eucalyptus microcorys.



Stand of Eucalyptus microcorys.