
4.2. SCENIC HILLS LANDSCAPE UNIT 2

RABY ROAD TO BADGALLY ROAD (SH-LU2)



Figure 4.2.1. View from Raby Road over SH-LU2 towards Mount Universe. The evidence of the Colonial cultural landscape is still expressed clearly in SH-LU2 through the substantially intact pastoral landscape and high-quality views available even though the footprint of the Unit is a narrow one, with dwellings extending close to the main ridgeline in places. Few structures or evidence of intensive occupation can be seen within the Landscape Unit. With the exception of the golf course development, the landscape reads as an intact one.

Figure 4.2.2. SH-LU2 is a substantially intact pastoral landscape

Figure 4.2.3. Mount Universe viewed from near the entrance to the original Blairmount Estate (in SH-LU3) Mount Universe is an important landmark and is visible from many places throughout the LGA. It also terminates several axial vistas from major roads on the eastern side of Campbelltown's main valley. This vista will become even more important when the link to the Camden LGA is constructed.

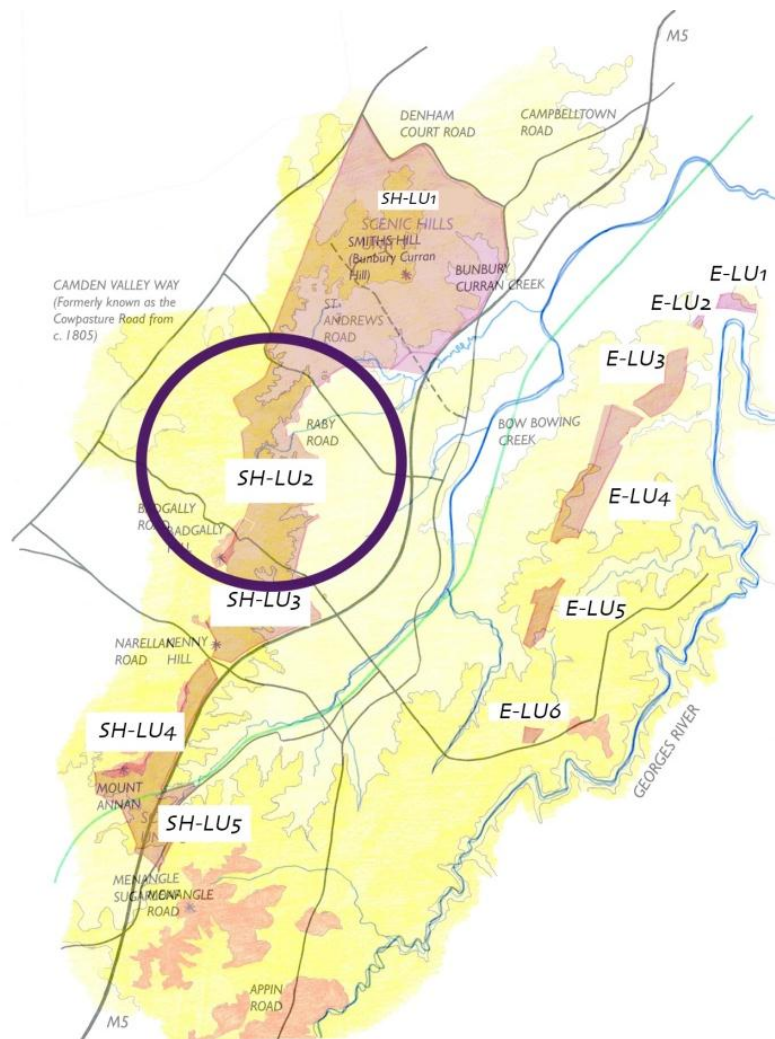


Figure 4.2.4.

Scenic Hills - Landscape Unit 2 is located between Raby Road and Badgally Road.

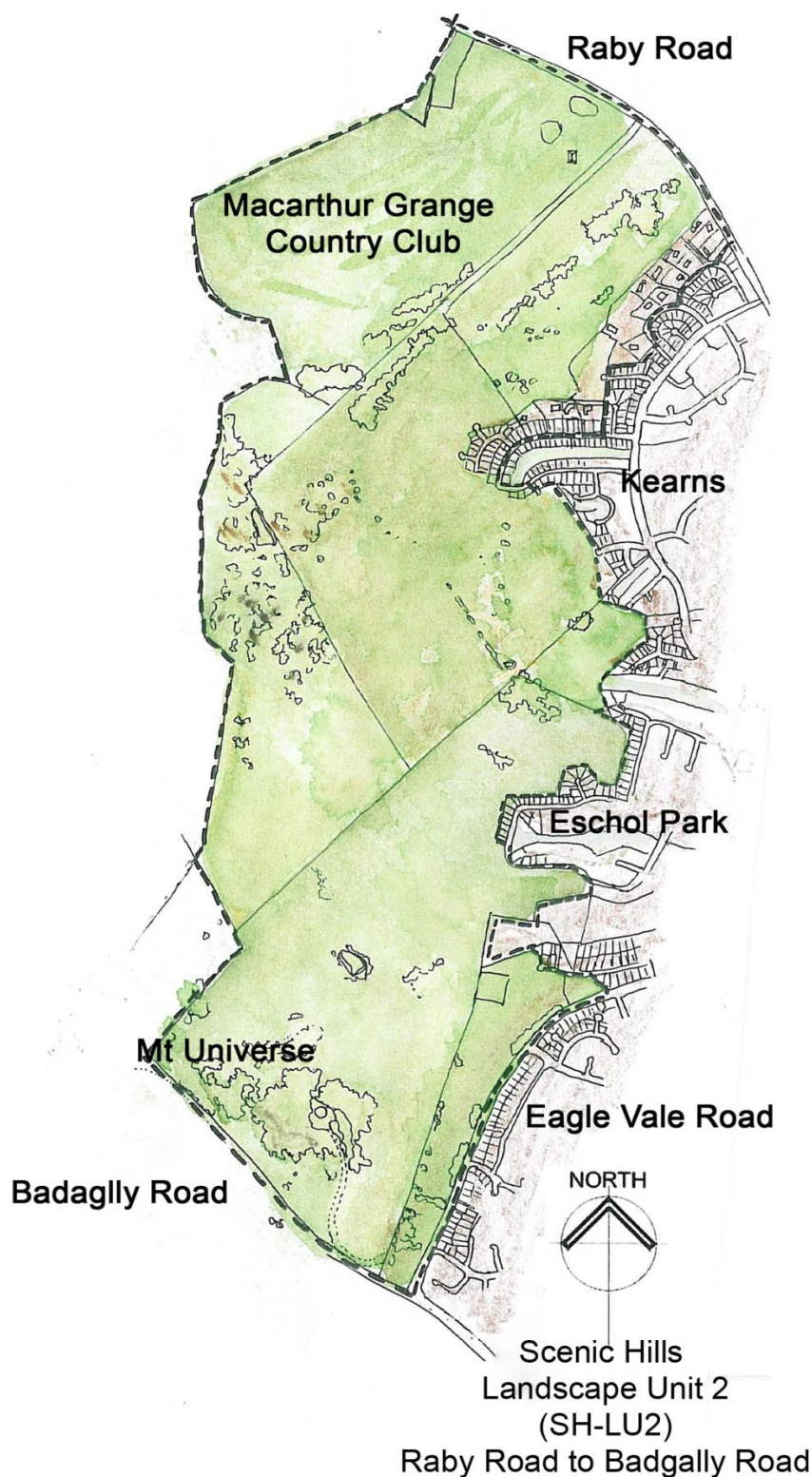


Figure 4.2.5. The prevailing visual character of the landscape is pastoral, with little evidence of any development to be seen on the eastern side of the main ridge line. On the western side of the ridge the parallel valley has been developed for use as a private golf course. The Unit also includes some large-lot residential and standard suburban development which form the interface between the rural landscape of the Scenic Hills and the suburbs of Kearns and Eschol Park.

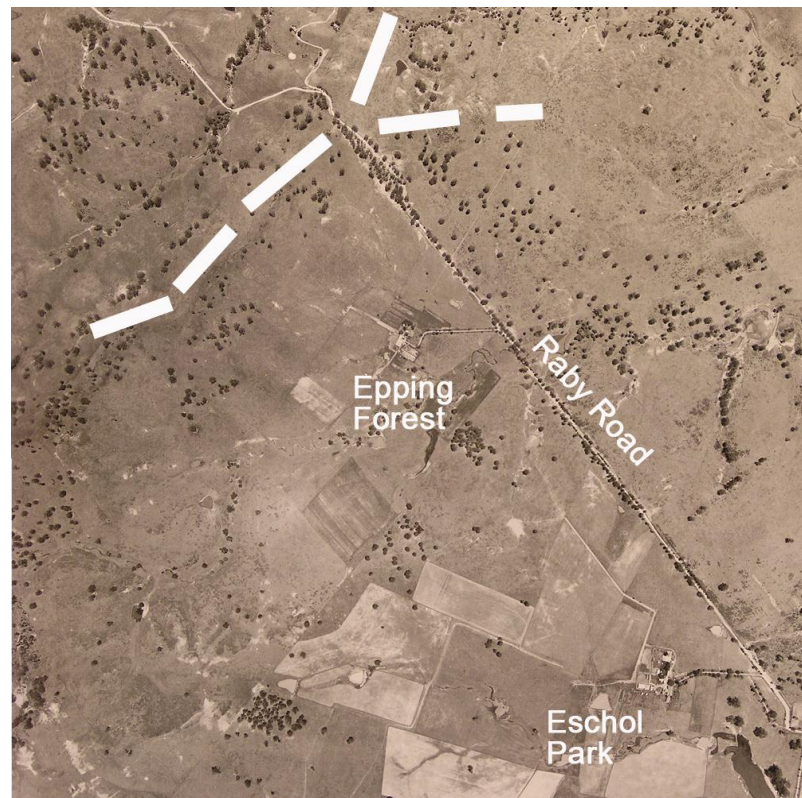


Figure 4.2.6. 1956 aerial covering the area near Raby Road shows the extent of the pastoral landscape before suburban development. (NSW Lands Department photograph)

4.2.1 CONTEXT

Landscape Unit 2 of the Scenic Hills study area (SH-LU2) follows the alignment of the main ridge of the Scenic Hills between Raby Road and Badgally Road. When viewed from the east the Unit reads as a relatively narrow and steeply sloped hillside close to the suburbs of Kearns, Eschol Park and Eagle Vale. The Unit however includes a well-formed valley lying to the west of the main ridgeline near Raby Road which extends to the boundary between the Campbelltown and Camden LGAs. This valley forms the southern end of the 'hidden valley' near Raby Road which was described in SH-LU1. A second small ridge extends to the north from Mount Universe and lies parallel to Eagle Vale Drive, with a shallow valley lying behind.

The landscape then broadens into a complex system of ridges and valleys to the southwest of Eschol Park. This part of SH-LU2 demonstrates high quality scenic values, including a well-defined pastoral landscape of interleaved rolling valleys punctuated only by trees following the gully lines. No buildings other than occasional rural sheds can be seen.

The footprint of the Landscape Unit may have been constrained by roads and suburban development, but SH-LU2 plays a critical role in defining many of the Campbelltown LGA's most significant historic and contemporary views. These include the primary views from the Georgian town centre and the alignment of what is now Minto Road to the important group centred on Mount Universe and Badgally Hill (see Figure 4.0.11 in Section 4.0).

An important characteristic of this Landscape Unit is its almost completely undeveloped quality. The only areas of significant development are the Macarthur Grange Country Club development in the parallel valley behind the main ridgeline and the 'large-lot' (0.4 hectare) residential development adjacent to the suburb of Kearns. The Country Club is an 18 hole golf course and conference centre located in the valley to the west of the main ridge near Raby Road. The urban-edge development is characterised by large-scaled houses and ancillary development with few mature trees which has resulted in it reading as part of the suburban and not the rural landscape. This is particularly evident when viewing the landscape from Raby Road. The Unit also includes an area of rural land zoned for urban development in earlier LEPs but which has not yet been constructed on the edge of Kearns.

The only other significant structure within the Unit is the distinctive 'roundhouse' building near the peak of Mount Universe which is understood to be currently vacant. This development is heavily screened and is not readily visible from the public domain.

The Unit is bordered by several important local thoroughfares including Raby Road, Eagle Vale Drive and Badgally Road. Raby Road provides a link to Leppington and the Camden LGA. At present Badgally Road terminates at St Gregory's College (in SH-LU3) but it is understood that an extension is planned to connect it to Camden Valley Way in the west.

SH-LU2 does not have any internal roads and this means that the landscape can only be viewed closely by the general public from the perimeter or by visitors to the private land uses in the Unit. The main private use is the Macarthur Grange Country Club. This development has had a significant aesthetic impact on the rural landscape through the introduction of a range of highly structured elements such as entry treatments, large clubhouse and facilities building, fairways, greens, linear tree planting (between fairways), carparking and infrastructure and bright white concrete paths for golf carts.

Even though the potential for close engagement with the landscape is limited to views, these are of a high aesthetic quality and contribute strongly to the integrity of Campbelltown's setting. This is described in more detail below.

The early land grants in this area were made to smaller settlers and were more modestly sized than the large estates such as Varroville and St Andrews to the north of Raby Road. No substantial physical evidence of most of these has survived with one notable exception: the very early (c1820s) Indian Bungalow known as Epping Forest. This farmhouse was built by the Kearns brothers on one of a pair of grants which extended originally into the area now protected as the Scenic Hills. This would have originally provided a visually pleasing setting to views toward the property, but the links between the house and the farm landscape have now been interrupted by housing. Epping Forest is not within the study area because it is enclosed by the suburban development of Kearns.

Mount Universe is a particularly prominent element in views to the west when travelling from the Campbelltown City centre along Badgally Road and it, together with the adjacent (unnamed) hill to its west, dominates the southern part of the Landscape Unit. The height and prominence of Mount Universe and the adjacent hill also act to obscure views and vistas into SH-LU2 from the immediately adjacent portion of Badgally Road. Good views over Mount Universe are however obtainable from the ridgeline and within the adjoining SH-LU3.

The interface between the urban development and the landscape of the Scenic Hills in the south-eastern part of the Landscape Unit is notable. The two uses are separated clearly by Eagle Vale Drive, yet the curving carriageway and open character of the adjacent Scenic Hills facilitates a strong sense of visual connectivity to the rural landscape when driving or walking along this busy local distributor. The low ridge north of Mount Universe rises steeply from the roadside and its undeveloped slopes along much of Eagle Vale Drive demonstrate strong pastoral qualities. The quality of the interface is also enhanced by the front elevations of nearby houses addressing the scenic landscape rather than the utilitarian rear elevations found further to the north. Views over the area from the north are also available from Raby Road, although the encroachment of development up the slope to a point close to the ridgeline has limited the opportunity to what would have been available before the major residential subdivisions of the 1970s and 80s. This retention of the undeveloped edge to Raby Road and the open, rural quality of the slopes of the Scenic Hills viewed from this position are enhanced by an atmospheric sense of recession found in views towards Mount Universe, Badgally Hill and Kenny Hill to the south. These links have helped to ensure that the visual and functional importance of the Scenic Hills as the setting of the urban area of the Campbelltown LGA remains to this day.

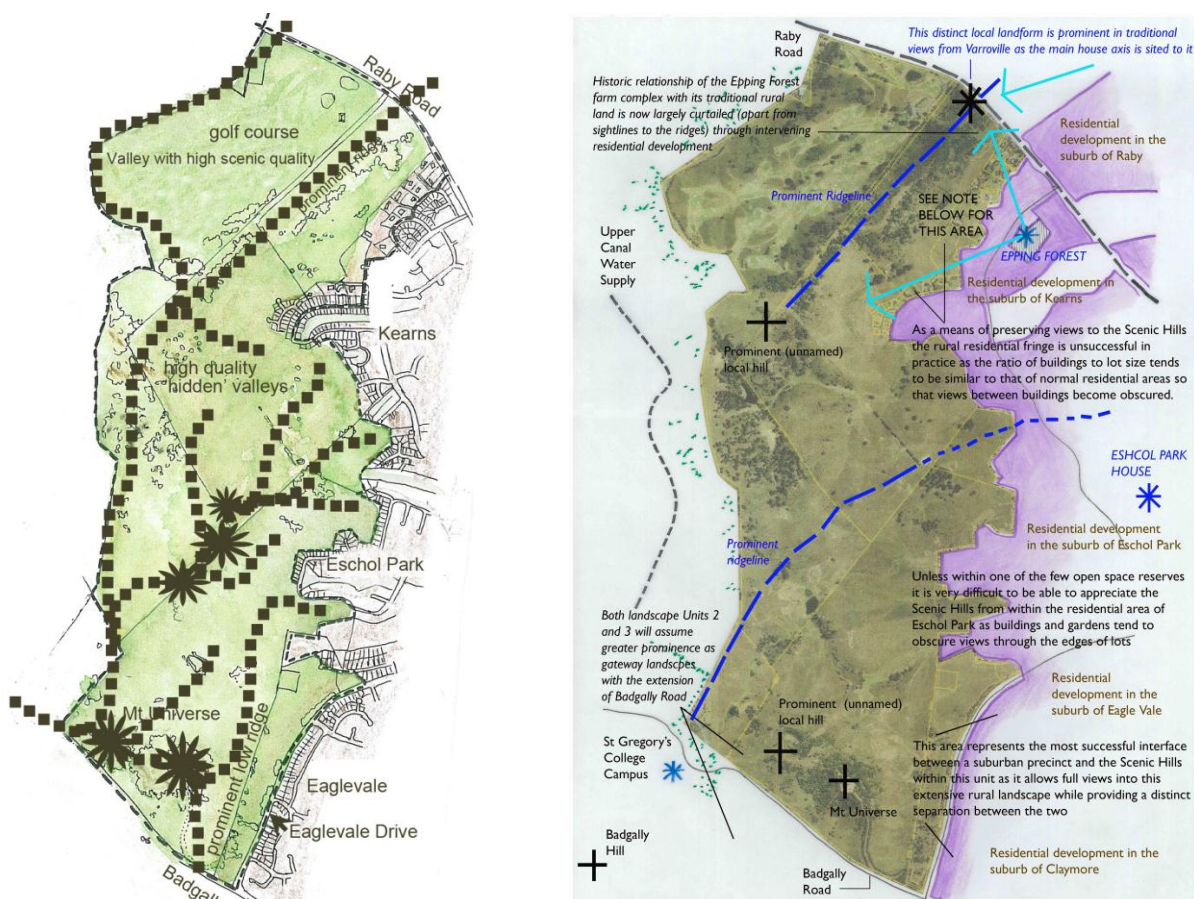


Figure 2.4.7 and Figure 4.2.8. SH-LU2 is located between Raby and Badgally Roads and is the only unit on the western side of Campbelltown's main valley that does not make physical contact with the freeway reservation. Its footprint 'on the ground' is narrower than the other units due to the steep slopes that rise sharply behind the residential development to the strong skyline formed by the ridge. The Unit extends well beyond this ridge, and demonstrates a range of topography and landscape elements of a high quality.



Figure 4.2.9 and 4.2.10. The views from Raby Road extend to Badgally Hill in SH-LU3 in the south.

SH-LU2 shares a long border with the suburban developments of Kearns, Eschol Park and Eagle Vale. The nature of the residential development along the urban-rural interface and the steep slope of the adjacent topography has created a 'compressed' quality to the landscape in this part of the Landscape Unit, particularly in the north near Raby Road where the development rises close to the ridgeline. Its quality remains high however with strongly expressed scenic values. This development was approved after the original planning of Campbelltown which recommended that the whole of the foothills remain non-urban. Although the development along the edge is nominally 'large lot' (0.4 hectare minimum lot size), its character is residential and not rural or semi-rural in character. The remainder of the landscape east of the main ridgeline is strongly pastoral with no evidence of unsympathetic development. The only dwelling in the area is located on Mount Universe and is screened by vegetation.



Figure 4.2.11. The view to the east along Raby Road is highly directed due to the straight alignment of the road. The contrast with the open rural views to the south over SH-LU2 and north (SH-LU1) is stark and emphasises the unique quality of Campbelltown's setting.



Figure 4.2.12. The southern slopes of Mount Universe (to the left of this image) are visually and physically contiguous with SH-LU3 (right) and together they define the route of Badgally Road. Although Badgally Road at present is privately owned, it is easily and regularly accessed by visitors to St Gregory's College and must be considered an accessible viewing point (from Badgally Hill in SH-LU3). The extension of Badgally Road to Camden Valley Way is planned, and this new link to the Camden LGA will mean that the views from Badgally Road will provide a spectacular entrance to Campbelltown valley for thousands of vehicles daily.



Figure 4.2.13. Badgally Road forms an extension to the edge of Campbelltown's original grid and the vista to the Unit from the east-west streets in the CBD is terminated by the green slopes of Mount Universe. The bulk of the warehouses in the main valley are intrusive in the east-west linearity of these views, but their visual impact could be reduced if slightly darker and less reflective materials had been used in these buildings. Notwithstanding this, the succession of vegetated ridgelines and soft contrast provided by the trees and grassed slopes of the Scenic Hills beyond continue to enhance the scenic quality of Campbelltown's setting (photograph taken from Innes Street adjacent to St John's Cemetery).

Figure 4.2.14. The road now known as Minto Road is one of the earliest local routes in the Campbelltown LGA and is also aligned to Mount Universe. It remains an important distributor road which is used by thousands of residents and visitors daily. These and the other 'everyday' views of the Scenic Hills contribute strongly to Campbelltown's 'sense of place'. On a clear day the layers of vegetation and pastoral grasslands are visible, even from this distance.





Figure 4.2.15. This is but one of many mid-distance views to the Scenic Hills that are not available from immediately adjacent to the Unit. Some idea of the original quality of the landscape setting that the Scenic Hills provided to the early homesteads of the Campbelltown LGA can be appreciated from 'accidental' viewpoints such as these. The buildings on the horizon are within St Gregory's College on Badgally Hill. Most of the structures visible are within the Camden LGA. Their impact on the quality of the ridge line is unfortunate due to their hard edges and lack of canopy planting behind the buildings.



Figure 4.2.16. The 1820's Indian Bungalow of Epping Forest has survived although it is in urgent need of conservation. It is one of the few surviving intact early Colonial houses in NSW.



Figure 4.2.17. Epping Forest (rear view).

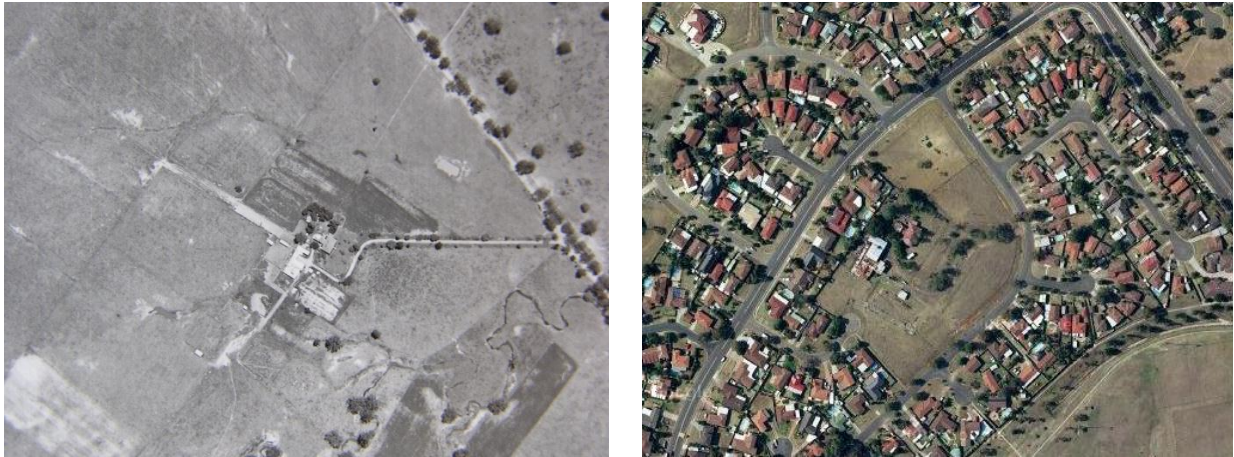


Figure 4.2.18 and Figure 4.2.19. The closest substantial evidence of the early Colonial landscape to SH-LU2 is the early Indian bungalow homestead of the Kearns brothers known as Epping Forest. Its pastoral setting extended almost to the ridge but has been disconnected from the house by the residential subdivisions of the late 20th Century. Traces of the original alignment of the driveway near the house can still be seen in the contemporary aerial photograph on the right. (NSW Lands Department images 1958 and 2009)

Figure 4.2.20. Although Epping Forest is a very rare early Colonial house and is listed on the State Heritage Register, the ability to fully appreciate its historic setting within the landscape of the Scenic Hills has been obstructed by suburban development. Retaining only a view of the top of a ridgeline is not an acceptable solution. It is important that the foreground, mid ground and background all remain undeveloped if the view is to read as a high-quality pastoral landscape. Note also the invasion of weeds on the hillsides of the Scenic Hills due to cessation of intensive grazing use (looking to SH-LU2 from Epping Forest Drive).





Figure 4.2.21. The valley to the west of the main ridge near Raby Road is of a very high quality. Enclosed by the ridge and including richly folded topography, it forms the southern termination of the larger valley extending to Bunbury Curran Hill in SH-LU1. Its scenic qualities are enhanced also by the sweeping bends of Raby Road as it dips and rises up the other side. The Macarthur Grange Country Club and golf course development occupies much of this valley. Although uses such as golf courses are nominally non-urban and permissible under the existing zone, their detailed design creates a regulated landscape which when imposed upon the historic pastoral landscape changes its character from a natural to constructed one. It is however of a lower visual and land use impact than many other uses would be, including residential.

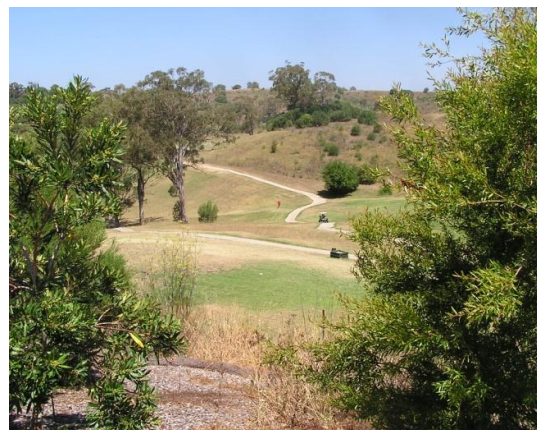


Figure 4.2.22 and Figure 4.2.23. The bright white concrete golf buggy paths winding throughout the golf course are visually distracting in a natural landscape. The use of a visually neutral finish would have reduced their visual impact significantly (Raby Road).



Figure 4.2.24. Parts of the golf course without paths and evidence of non-rural infrastructure are pastoral (if tamed), in character. The main building is well screened from this angle, allowing the dam to dominate the view over the valley (Raby Road)



Figure 4.2.25. Further opportunities for appreciating the Scenic Hills from the adjacent suburban area are to be found from the end of existing roads protruding into the base of SH-LU2. When viewed from the edge of the suburban development the ridgeline is abrupt and terminates the view emphatically, preventing views into the next valley from this low viewpoint. This contrast between hidden and public areas of the rural landscape is integral to its integrity and is not merely a token backdrop to the urban area, but rather as a substantially intact and spatially complex landscape (Somme Place).



Figure 4.2.26. One of the most important qualities of this Landscape Unit is its undeveloped character which enables it to still be appreciated as an substantially intact rural cultural landscape (from Somme Place).



Figure 4.2.27. Part of the Unit has been zoned for residential development but development has not commenced. Houses will cover much of this valley (view from Canadian Place).



Figure 4.2.28. Vegetation on the main ridge behind Kearns. The introduced pest plant, the African Olive, is spreading over the slopes (from the end of Somme Place).



Figure 4.2.29. The extent of the residential footprint has expanded recently with construction of new dwellings on fringes of the suburban area. This land had been zoned for residential development under earlier LEPs (Waikato Place). A small adjacent area has been zoned for residential development but not developed.



Figure 4.2.30. Looking to Mount Universe from Badgally Road.



Figure 4.2.31. Looking south from Eagle Vale Drive toward Mount Universe. The rural character of this landscape contrasts with the suburban development of Eagle Vale across the road to the east. The form of this interface both maximises the opportunities for the local community to engage with the views over the landscape and emphasises the compact nature of the urban footprint; as opposed to the character of urban sprawl that prevails in other parts of the urban fringe.



Figure 4.2.32 and Figure 4.2.33. Looking north along Eagle Vale Drive. The road forms an effective boundary between the urban and non-urban landscapes. The potential for appreciating the rural quality of Campbelltown's setting from this location is maximised by the long and visually accessible edge and lack of any intrusive development between the road and the rural landscape. The verges are soft and natural and the boundary between urban and rural is emphasised by the contrast with the kerbing and footpaths on the eastern side of the road. The low ridge extending north from Mount Universe forms the skyline and creates a sense of enclosure and intimacy to the landscape from the level of the roadway.



Figure 4.2.34. In stark contrast to the edge along Eagle View Road, that along the more recently constructed interface behind Kearns is brutally defined. The rear elevations of houses and their tall, opaque back fences 'turn their back' on the pastoral land and do little to contribute to the scenic values of this part of the landscape. They also prevent the public from being able to appreciate the scenic landscape. This development is typical of standard contemporary suburban development, with small lots and large building footprints leaving little space for trees or gardens behind houses.



Figure 4.2.35. The suburban development has encroached within 250m of the main ridge in places, particularly at the northern end of the Unit near Kearns. This has occurred because this part of the Unit is relatively lower and the profile of the valley shallower than elsewhere. The ridge itself is sharply defined and its immediate slopes are relatively steep. The existing zoning of the land along much of the urban/rural interface is 7(d6) Environmental Protection, with a minimum lot size of 0.4 hectare. This larger lot size has facilitated the development of large dwellings that have extended, not blended, the suburban edge (taken from Jordan Place).



Figure 4.2.36. A small portion of the land zoned for residential development at the western edge of Eschol Park has remained undeveloped until recently. The impact of the contemporary suburban built environment on a rural landscape is clearly evident in the forms, scale and siting of this development.. (looking to Canadian Place).



Figure 4.2.37 to Figure 4.2.38. Further examples of how development between the public domain (the roadway) and the Scenic Hills destroys the potential for the wider community to make a personal connection with the landscape (Kearns). The integration of garages under the main roof and building footprints extending almost boundary to boundary create a wall that prevents access to the scenic quality of the landscape to all but those who live in the houses.

4.2.2 SIGNIFICANT VIEWS AND VISTAS

Although SH-LU2 does not demonstrate the same level of depth and scenic complexity as some of the other Landscape Units within the Scenic Hills it is substantially intact with minimal evidence of residential or other development (apart from the Macarthur Grange Golf Course) and plays an important role in many of the Campbelltown LGA's most significant views and vistas.

The prominence of the northern part of this Landscape Unit as the ridgeline drops slightly into the adjacent SH-LU1 (where now crossed by Raby Road) is a visually minor element when compared against more spectacular features such as Mount Universe and Bunbury Curran Hill, but the end of this ridge is highly significant as it forms part of the visual curtilage of the Varroville Estate, the orientation of the house being determined on an axis between this ridge and Macquarie Fields House.

As noted above, Mount Universe provides the termination for the directed vistas from the eastern side of the main Campbelltown Valley, with two of the most important local roads in the LGA each aligned to its peak and providing prominent focal points for today's community. The road now known as Minto Road was aligned as an axis from Mount Universe in the mid-19th Century and the hill continues to terminate views when travelling south-west.

The alignment of Broughton Street was formed by the eastern edge of the Georgian town grid, which in itself was oriented to maximise viewing opportunities towards the focal point created by the grouping of Mount Universe and Badgally Hill within the wider landscape of the Scenic Hills. Broughton Street then stretches across the valley floor and becomes Badgally Road, providing direct physical access to SH-LU2 and SH-LU3. Once the first crest after the freeway is passed Mount Universe becomes an increasingly prominent element in the local landscape until it is more visually dominant than the higher Badgally Hill which is offset to the left and reads as a more peripheral element from this perspective.

Upon entering the Landscape Unit from the south along Eagle Vale Drive the view is dominated by the low but steep ridge extending north from Mount Universe. The lack of development to the west of this road facilitates a strong sense of connectivity with the landscape of the Scenic Hills which is in contrast with the alienated landscape created by the row of houses and fences towards the north.

Raby Road crosses the main ridgeline in a direct and functional manner, the undulations in topography providing a series of panoramic views towards the centre of the City of Campbelltown and the eastern slopes of the valley in the distance. When travelling west along Raby Road the entry point into the 'hidden' valley beyond the main ridge provides a surprising and aesthetically pleasing view as the valley is entered and the road sweeps to follow the contours before rising up the slope and into the Camden LGA. Further high-quality views are available from Raby Road immediately to the east of the ridgeline over the landscape of the Scenic Hills towards Mount Universe, Badgally Hill and the distant landscape to the south-east of the Campbelltown LGA's urban area.

It is likely that many additional and highly significant views are available from within the Landscape Unit but these were not accessible to the study team.

Figure 4.2.39. Views toward SH-LU2 emphasise its quality as an integral part of the Scenic Hills. They include both constructed and apparently accidental vistas as well as broad panoramic views from near and distant viewpoints.

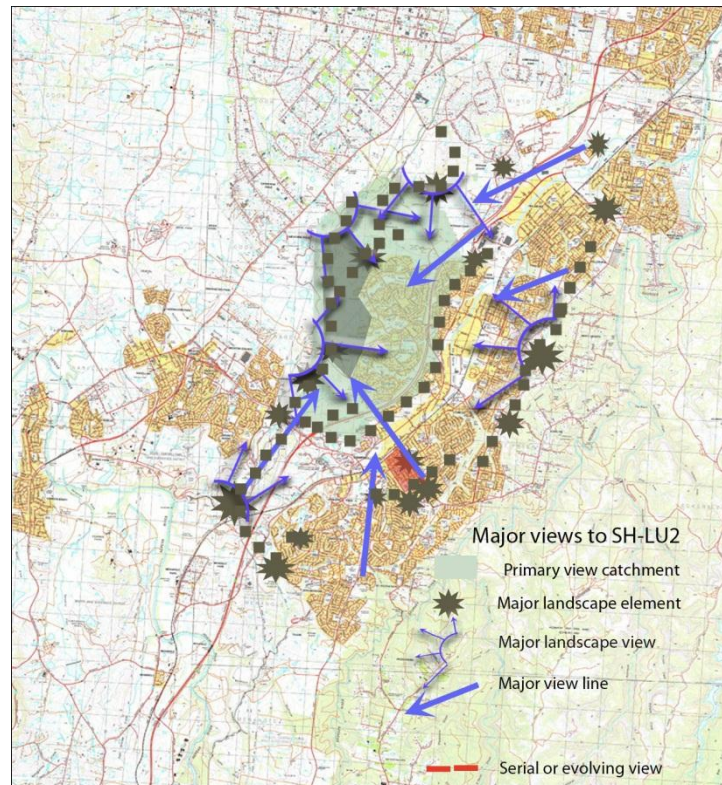
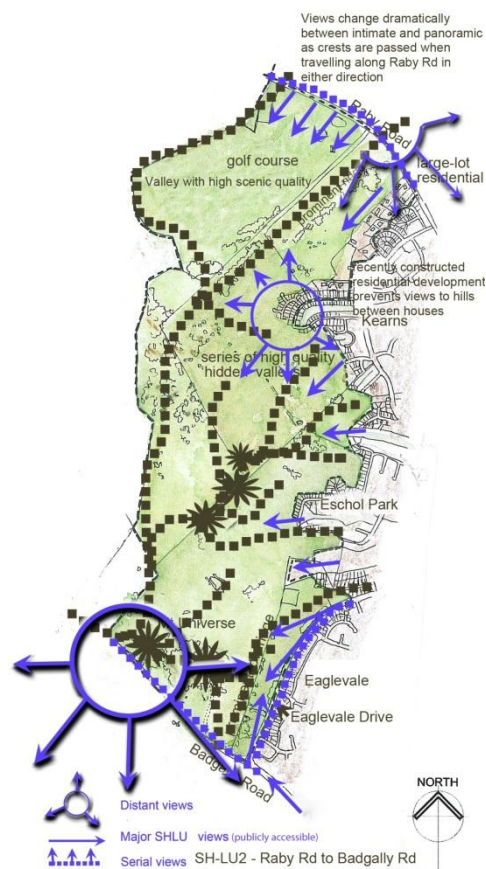


Figure 4.2.40. Views from SH-LU2 are more limited on this diagram than other Units of the Scenic Hills because the ridge was not accessible to the study team. The views identified here are found from the edge of the Landscape Unit. They are limited therefore to those areas where the edge is not blocked by development. Examination of the local topography suggests that the views from the ridge and high points such as Mount Universe would be of a panoramic quality and extend over the main valley and EESPLs towards the coastal plateau beyond.



4.2.3 SUMMARY OF LANDSCAPE QUALITIES AND VALUES IN SH-LU2

The landscape qualities of SH-LU2 are complex in character and highly contributory to the quality of the Scenic Hills' landscape. Much of the Unit is hidden from casual view due to the topography and form of adjacent residential development which has spread over the whole of the lower parts of the original pastoral landscape. The landscape of this 'hidden' area was not accessible to the study team, but documentary evidence including current aerial photography and topographic maps suggest that it is an intact pastoral landscape.

The Unit is also highly significant in distant views from throughout the LGA, including terminating some carefully constructed views from across the main Campbelltown valley. It also features in most panoramas from vantage points throughout the middle part of the valley and eastern ridgelines of the East Edge Scenic Protection Lands.

SH-LU2 demonstrates the following characteristics:

- It continues to define the setting and scenic quality of the Campbelltown LGA, including forming the focus of some of the most historically and aesthetically significant vistas in the LGA. It provides the termination to many of the most significant vistas towards the Scenic Hills from the Georgian town grid, across the valley floor and from the eastern slopes of the valley; and provides physical evidence of the application of principles of cultural landscape design based on the scenic qualities of the landscape since the earliest settlement in the beginning of the 19th-Century;
- It has remained substantially free of any significant development and continues to read as a pastoral landscape of high historic and visual integrity;
- The shallower average profile of its topography has allowed development in the 1970s to extend almost to the ridgeline at the northern end of the Unit. Although the linear separation is still sufficient to allow the Scenic Hills to read as a single connected landscape from north to south, the shorter slope and apparent lack of visual complexity along this part of the Scenic Hills have resulted in a landscape which is highly sensitive and vulnerable to being significantly compromised by any further development proposals, either within or adjacent to the Unit;
- The open nature of the treatment of the edge of Eagle Vale Drive near the base of Mount Universe provides one of the best opportunities for close engagement with this part of the Scenic Hills by the general community. This contrasts strongly with the alienating design of suburban development towards the northern end of the unit which has allowed the construction of houses on both sides of the road, the scale and detailed urban design of which obscures any meaningful connection between the public domain and the landscape of the Scenic Hills; and
- The western part of SH-LU2 beyond the main ridge is revealed suddenly and spectacularly when passing over the ridge along Raby Road. The route traces the rise and fall in the local topography and adds to the quality of the experience of the rural landscape. Excellent views of Bunbury Curran Hill also are available from this different perspective, and assist in understanding and appreciating the three-dimensionality of the Scenic Hills' landscape.

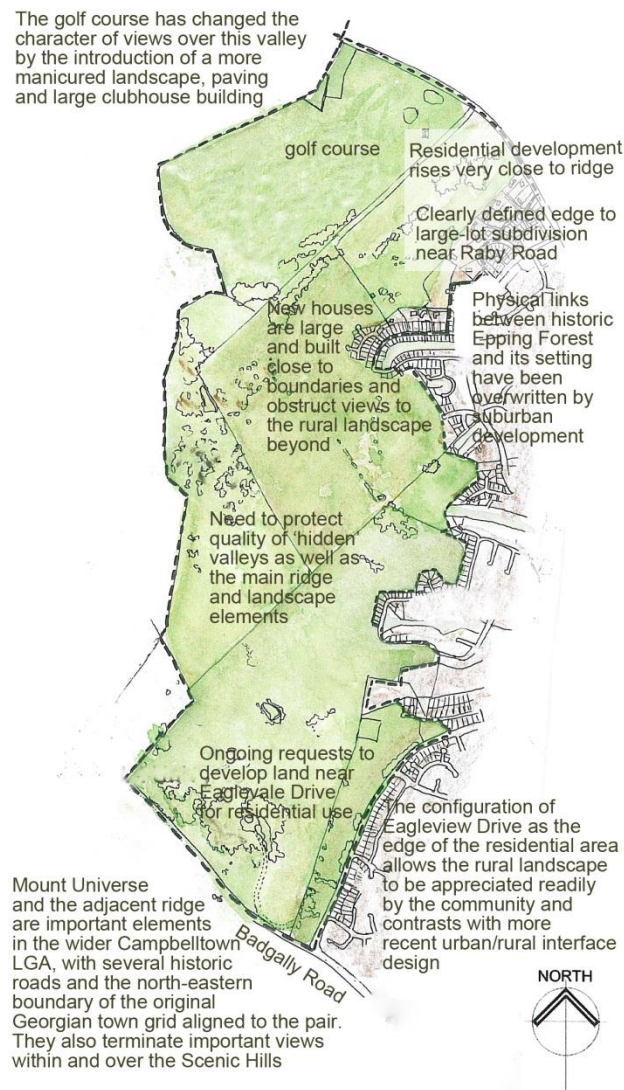


Figure 4.2.41. Main landscape characteristics and issues relevant to the development of appropriate planning controls in SH-LU2.

4.2.4 NATURAL CONSERVATION VALUES AND THE VISUAL QUALITIES OF SH-LU2

The landscape has retained the substantially cleared, pastoral character highly representative of the Colonial cultural landscape layer. Most original vegetation has been cleared and the prevailing landscape is pasture grasses, with some aesthetically significant remnant mature trees scattered across the otherwise open slopes and sheltered in the valleys of watercourses. The only substantial area of vegetation is to be found on the slopes of Mount Universe.

No detailed information was available about significant ecological habitats or species within the Scenic Hills Landscape Units and the lack of internal roads prevented detailed physical inspection of parts of the area.

4.2.5 EXISTING STATUTORY PLANNING CONTROLS AND THE QUALITIES OF THE VISUAL AND SCENIC LANDSCAPE OF SH-LU2

The statutory planning controls applicable to this area are consistent with those found throughout the Scenic Hills. Almost all land falls within Campbelltown LEP District 8 (Central Hills Lands) and is zoned 7(d1) Environmental Protection (Scenic). The primary aim of LEP D8 is to ensure that the Central Hills Lands District (the Scenic Hills) retains the rural character that was envisaged for it during the planning that preceded the urbanisation of the Campbelltown LGA. The area east of the main ridgeline is also subject to the special 'escarpment preservation area' control which prescribes urban design requirements to ensure that new development will blend successfully with the surrounding landscape.

Development within the Landscape Unit has been generally consistent with the existing statutory planning controls. Most of the area has retained its rural character. The only substantial development within the area is the Macarthur Grange Golf Course which is broadly consistent with the permissible use of land within the zone for the purposes of recreation. Although uses such as golf courses achieve a nominally low-density development outcome, the style and form of the ancillary developments such as clubhouse, car parking and maintenance buildings, together with the formal layout of golf courses with fairways, greens, bunkers and bright white cement pathways for buggies has meant that the formerly natural pastoral landscape has changed into a more constructed one. The area around the Mount Universe house shows evidence of earlier cultivation overlaid by a network of dirt tracks on the 'hidden' side of the hill.

Part of the Unit lies within the boundaries of Campbelltown (Urban Area) LEP 2002. The strip of land acting as the interface between the Scenic Hills and the suburban areas of Kearns and Eschol Park was zoned 7(d6) environmental protection with a 0.4 hectare minimum lot size near Raby Road and 7(d1) environmental protection 100 hectare minimum near Mount Universe. Part is zoned 2(b) Residential B, the general residential zone in the LGA.

The purpose of the 7(d6) 0.4ha zone was to allow residential development at a lower density to provide a buffer or transitional zone between the suburban and scenic landscapes. The development that has occurred is typical of that found in this type of subdivision, the larger lots simply being occupied by larger houses and the resultant landscape reading as suburban, not rural. The land within the 7(d1) 100 hectare zone has retained its pastoral character.

The Unit demonstrates the implications for the accessibility to an open, pastoral landscape resulting from different approaches to the design of the urban-rural interface. Urban development near the northern end of the Unit reaches close into the hills, with the edge marked by the large houses built on the 0.4 hectare lots, and in the areas of more recent development, by 'standard' sized suburban allotments. Physical and visual accessibility between the two areas is available nominally through the network of open space links through this part of the landscape. These links are narrow and functional in their character, following drainage lines and sitting low in the landscape. In most cases they are lined by the secondary elevations and back fences of the surrounding houses and do not form an inviting

pedestrian network. The pastoral nature of the Scenic Hills landscape is largely hidden until the intersection of the open space network and the undeveloped land is reached.

The difficulty of accessing views over the Scenic Hills from within the adjacent urban areas is exacerbated by the detailed design of the subdivisions themselves. The strong sense of visual connectivity between the public domain and the landscape of the Scenic Hills which is available so successfully from Eagle Vale Drive immediately to the south is not found to the north in the urban/rural fringe of Eschol Park and Kearns, where dwellings, fences and ancillary development effectively alienate the rural landscape from the public domain.

One of the most telling implications of this can be seen in the way that the historic curtilage and setting of the State Heritage Register-listed property known today as Epping Forest were separated from the homestead by the suburban development of Kearns.

In contrast, the southern part of Eagle Vale Drive provides both a clearly defined separation and high degree of visual accessibility between the suburban development and the landscape of the Scenic Hills. Eagle Vale Drive is an important and well used local distributor road which provides one of the few opportunities for residents in the area to readily see and appreciate the aesthetic qualities of the Scenic Hills and the way that early planning for the area was designed to protect the quality of these hills for the community in perpetuity. The experience is enhanced by the winding alignment of the Drive which affords multiple viewing opportunities towards Mount Universe and the adjacent hills when travelling along it. The contrast between the two land uses is further emphasised by the urbanised quality of the roadside to the south, with kerbing, guttering and footpath, and that of the unformed, natural raw edge and simple wire fences defining the edge of the Scenic Hills.

4.2.6 EXISTING LOT SIZES AND THEIR IMPACT ON THE VISUAL QUALITIES OF SH-LU2'S LANDSCAPE

The minimum lot size required for the subdivision of land and/or the erection of a dwelling in the 7(d1) zone of LEP D8 is 100 hectares. The purpose of this control was to protect the traditional balance between land uses, property sizes and scenic qualities in the area by facilitating viable rural uses and discouraging the development of the land for any other purpose.

Concessional provisions are available under LEP D8. These enable the erection of dwellings on lots that existed prior to 1974 (when the original detailed planning controls were introduced) and which were in separate ownership at this time, and for the provision of accommodation for farm workers. Each of the lots existing in 1974 had already been subdivided and partially included in the residential development of Kearns, Eschol Park and Eagle Vale, so this concessional provision is not available to any properties in this Unit. Figure 4.2.42 and 4.2.43 (below) shows the distribution of lot sizes within the Unit.

The relatively small size of this Landscape Unit and its lack of subdivision have meant that unlike parts of SH-LU1, most of the parcels in SH-LU2 have retained a scale and character highly sympathetic to with the traditional pastoral landscape of the Scenic Hills.

The group of battleaxe blocks on the western edge of Kearns have all been developed to their maximum potential and read as part of the suburban landscape. Their contribution to

the landscape of the Scenic Hills immediately to the west is marginal, and mainly arises from the straight line of the fences directing the eye when looking to the south from Raby Road.

The recent development at the interface between SH-LU2 and the earlier suburban development of Eschol Park has been built according to the contemporary standards for suburban development. The impact of this density has been to introduce a wall of development between the public domain and the landscape of the Scenic Hills, with only the top of the ridgeline being visible from many places, and the hill and ridge being fully obstructed from much of Kearns. This wall has been of significantly greater impact than earlier generations of housing in the Campbelltown LGA because it is almost without exception two storeys in height and built effectively boundary-to-boundary, with tall Colourbond fencing between the building lines of adjacent dwellings. Earlier housing was on larger lots, had smaller building footprints and most houses were only a single storey in height.

Further land has been zoned for residential development. It is appreciated that the zoning is longstanding, but this land is located in one of the areas of highest scenic value within SH-LU2 and its development will have a significant adverse impact on the visual quality of the pastoral landscape and its visual accessibility to the community unless very careful attention is given to the design and siting of each house in the development.

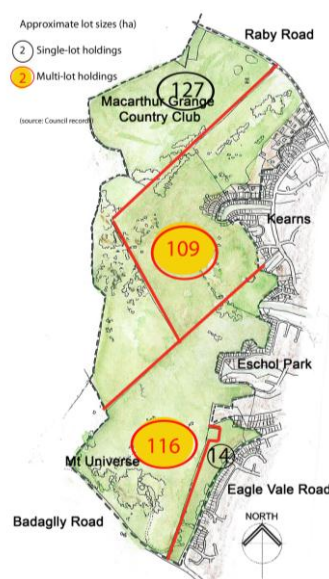


Figure 4.2.42. Distribution of lot sizes in SH-LU2 (excluding the areas zoned 7(d6) 0.4ha or smaller). Only two of the lots within the Unit zoned 7(d1) are larger than the 100ha required for the erection of a dwelling. One of these is the site of the Mount Universe 'roundhouse' and the other has been developed as the Country Club. Neither is large enough to have further subdivision potential. The remaining units have been subdivided already as part of the development of the adjacent residential areas and have no additional development potential.

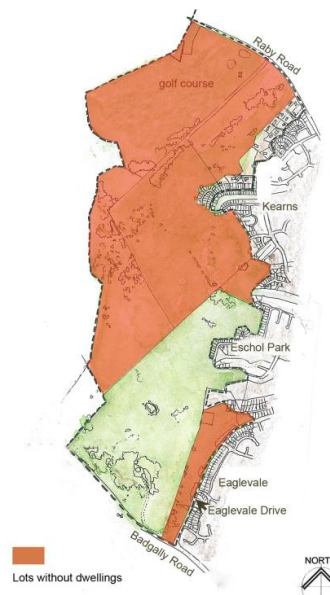


Figure 4.2.43. Distribution of lots without a dwelling. The consolidated ownership of most lots in the Unit has meant that few dwellings have been built under the concessionary provisions in the existing LEP (these allowed small-scale land owners to erect a dwelling on an otherwise undersized lot). This has allowed this Unit to retain a high degree of integrity and scenic value.

4.2.7 EFFICACY OF EXISTING STATUTORY CONTROLS IN PROTECTING THE VISUAL AND SCENIC QUALITIES OF SH-LU2'S LANDSCAPE

The existing statutory controls were found to have protected the visual and scenic qualities of the Landscape Unit reasonably effectively.

The main east facing slope of this Landscape Unit has not undergone any significant development since the making of LEP D8 and has retained its rural landscape qualities almost intact. The adverse impacts of the nearby suburban development, including the management of the interface between the urban and rural areas and the excision of Epping Forest from most of its historic curtilage are the outcome of statutory controls which preceded the current LEPs. This earlier suburban development has overwritten the earlier pastoral landscape of the foothills and lower slopes areas of SH-LU2. The character of the landscape on these lower areas has been redefined by the overlay of infrastructure, houses and exotic vegetation. Only the topography of the earlier landscape remains readable under the suburban development.

The golf course in the second valley along Raby Road may seem at first to be a low-impact development that is consistent with the scenic values of the landscape and the zoning, being a recreational use hidden from the primary views over the area from the east. The evidence of the landscape itself reveals however that it has introduced urbanised elements that compromise the historic cultural landscape of the Scenic Hills.

The land within SH-LU2 zoned for large-lot residential development has not resulted in development that creates a sympathetic transitional form between the suburban and rural landscapes. Most houses are large and have minimal landscaping and read largely as part of the suburban landscape, and have effectively allowed suburban-style development to creep further up the hillsides. In the northern part of the unit this development has extended to within approximately 250m of the ridgeline near Raby Road. Most of this earlier phase of development was however a single-storey in height and the landscaping is now reaching maturity. Although still not sympathetic to the aesthetic values of the Scenic Hills the visual impact of much of this residential area is significantly less than more recent development which has occurred and is currently being proposed in the area near Eschol Park.

4.2.8 POTENTIAL IMPACTS OF LAND USES ON THE IDENTIFIED VISUAL QUALITIES OF SH-LU2

The study team is aware that this Landscape Unit has been subject to intense pressure for further residential and/or commercial development in recent months. The scale and potential returns to developers in part arising from exploitation of these views suggest however that pressure will continue to be exerted by developers who see the Scenic Hills as a landscape of opportunity.

An application to build a major residential development on part of the golf course site was refused by Council. It is understood that a preliminary approach has also been made to expand the urban area adjacent to Eschol Park further into the Scenic Hill lands; and that concept plans have been submitted to develop the land near Mount Universe and extending to the north along the low ridge. Each has been rejected by Council due to the impact that they would have on the scenic and environmental qualities of the landscape.

Any further expansion towards the ridgeline will reduce the already modest sense of space available between the urban development and the ridge line. If this gap is breached there will be an irreversible break in the contiguity of the north-south chain of hills and the quality of the ridgeline dominating views towards the Scenic Hills area. Justification of development on the basis that it cannot be seen from a particular viewing point, or due to the angle of view from a particular level, or because it is capable of being serviced by utilities, or for whatever other reason, should not be considered because any intensification of development in this highly sensitive location would have a significant adverse impact on the integrity of the Scenic Hills.

It is of critical importance for the retention of the aesthetic qualities and integrity of the setting of both the LGA's historic and Satellite City layers of development that the footprint of the urban area remain compact and that the pastoral setting of the landscape continues to be able to be seen and appreciated as a three-dimensional landscape, with successive layers of ridgelines and textures created by series of open, grassed grazing paddocks and patches of natural vegetation.

The potential impacts of introducing additional land uses into an area can be difficult to predict without knowing the detailed scale and nature of the proposed new use. In the case of the Scenic Hills it is highly probable that any new urban or pseudo-urban use will have a direct and potentially serious adverse impact on the scenic qualities of the landscape for many reasons, including the following:

- New land uses will irreversibly change the balance of historic pastoral, historic and contemporary scenic and low impact contemporary elements within the Unit.
- Introducing new land uses in the vicinity of the ridgeline near Raby Road will be likely to compromise the visual setting and curtilage of the highly significant colonial cultural landscape of Varroville.
- New non-rural land uses demand specialised structures. These have the potential to compromise the ability to appreciate and interpret the pastoral landscape character of the Scenic Hills by:
 - altering the balance of built and natural elements within the landscape;
 - obscuring existing significant elements or views;
 - introducing new elements into existing significant views. The evidence of recent developments within the Scenic Hills demonstrates that the contemporary preference of many owners is to locate new structures on the highest point within the site to maximise views. Surrounding planting is kept to a minimum so that views are not obscured. Development of this type will remain prominent elements in any view over the subject land;
 - introducing contradictory elements such as non-rural built forms; and
 - non-rural and non-residential land-uses will be likely to demand buildings of a scale and footprint which will be bulky and visually disturbing elements within the rural landscape. Non-residential land uses also demand extensive car parking facilities and other infrastructure such as formal gardens, fencing and

gates which are intrinsically contrary to any cultural landscape significant for its scenic qualities.

The southern end of Eaglevale Road provides a better example of urban/rural interface than found elsewhere in the Scenic Hills. It is honest, unaffected and allows the community to view and engage with the rural landscape. It is understood that the rural land in this area is also being sought for residential development. Development set between the road and the prominent small ridgeline directly behind it would intrude on views of the skyline and the ability to appreciate the hills and ridgeline beyond as part of the rural landscape. Development on the western slope of this ridgeline would have an adverse impact on the integrity of this area as part of the Scenic Hills and would potentially also intrude into the highly significant views towards the Unit as land owners inevitably seek the highest point possible for their home to maximise their private views. In doing this, the house/s will intrude into the public views from many different vantage points within the Scenic Hills and from other parts of the Campbelltown LGA. Development in this area would also create a precedent for similar development throughout the Scenic Hills landscape.

The introduction of additional land uses will also be likely to have significant aesthetic and other environmental impacts through the subsequent increases in traffic generation, demand for car parking, driveways and the like, as well as contributing to a cumulative erosion of the integrity of the landscape, increases in pollution, water run-off from hard paved surfaces into Bunbury Curran Creek (a tributary of the Georges River).

The scenic quality of the landscape of SH-LU2 is very high and the introduction of any new non-urban use will be likely to have an adverse impact on these scenic values. The primary land use should continue to be rural - and any other development (including the erection of a dwelling house) should only be ancillary to this.

4.2.9 POTENTIAL IMPACTS OF INCREASED DENSITIES ON THE IDENTIFIED VISUAL QUALITIES OF SH-LU2

The existing density controls apply both to the minimum lot size for further subdivision and to the site area required for the erection of a dwelling. The physical footprint of existing development already extends over the lower slopes of the landscape. Any new development will further reduce this distance and erode the potential for the ridgeline to read as part of a rural landscape, with areas of cleared and uncleared land and no significant structures.

It should be noted that the Department of Planning and Infrastructure continues to endorse the use of lot sizes larger than those existing in order to achieve particular environmental or other relevant outcomes.

It is very important that the scenic qualities of SH-LU2 are not interpreted as being significant only when viewed from a major public place or identified viewpoint. If this were to occur, the Scenic Hills would lose their integrity as a unified and spatially complex landscape unit, where the 'hidden' areas are just as valued for this hidden value as are the grand panoramas over the Unit. Any further subdivision or increases in density will introduce unsympathetic built elements into this sensitive landscape and should not be supported.

The potential impacts of decreasing minimum lot sizes to 50 hectares per lot and then 20 hectares per lot were assessed.

LIKELY IMPACT OF REDUCING THE MINIMUM LOT SIZE TO 50 HECTARES

If the minimum lot size was to be halved from the existing 100 hectares to 50 hectares two additional dwellings would be possible in the Unit. This may seem a minor increase, but given the narrow footprint of the Unit, its complex topography and the configuration of existing lots any structure built on a subdivision of these lots would be prominent in the landscape. No new structure should be permitted where it would be visible from the main town grid or within other views from the public domain.

LIKELY IMPACT OF REDUCING THE MINIMUM LOT SIZE TO 20 HECTARES

If the minimum lot size for development in SH-LU2 was to be reduced any further the impact on the visual qualities of the landscape would be significant. At a density of 20 hectares/dwelling for example, more than 20 additional dwellings could be expected to be built in SH-LU2. This number of dwellings could not be accommodated without significant impacts on the views towards and over the Unit. The minimum lot size required in SH-LU2 should not be reduced to 20 hectares.

LIKELY IMPACT OF REDUCING THE MINIMUM LOT SIZE OF PROPERTIES ON THE RURAL/URBAN EDGE

Although the properties zoned 7(d6) 0.4ha have been substantially developed and 'read' as part of the suburban landscape, the impact of rezoning them to a standard residential density (in this case approximately 600 m²) was also assessed.

The recent development on the fringe of Kearns provides an indication of the impact that this would have on the remainder of the urban/rural interface. The differences between the more modestly scaled development of this type in the 1970s and 1980s and the larger footprint and building bulks of contemporary development are clearly visible in this area. Recent houses are almost universally two storeys in height, with at least two garages under the main roof, further increasing building bulk. The precedent established in recent development throughout Campbelltown indicates also that little or no land on each site would be likely to ever be available for the planting of trees and other vegetation that could otherwise eventually achieve some softening of the interface between the pastoral landscape of the Scenic Hills and that of the suburban area on the slopes below.

Any intensification of this rural-edge development would also require additional infrastructure such as the provision of roads or other access, and would further increase the impact that the suburban development of Kearns has had on the quality of the surrounding landscape.

These properties have all been developed and the configuration and siting of the houses and outbuildings mean that there is little effective development potential without demolition and/or site amalgamations. The houses are relatively new with high levels of embodied energy and such a course of action would be environmentally irresponsible.

It is recommended that the existing lot size of 4000m² be retained as a transitional area between the rural and urban landscapes. It is also recommended that the planting of these

lots and the rural area immediately adjacent with traditional rural species such as Forest Red Gums be encouraged.

Other lots on the urban edge have been zoned Residential 2(b) with no transitional or buffer zone. Not all have been developed, but many of those that have been built provide evidence of the abrupt and unsympathetic characteristics of the interface designed in this way and further development of this type should not be supported. It is not known if or when the remaining zoned lots will be built, but much more careful attention should be paid to the scale and bulk of development, the transparency through blocks and the need to preserve open driveway-width space between houses and the amount of space available for landscaping of a scale and location in both the public and private domains that will create a soft vegetated canopy over the area in the future such as are seen in the older residential areas of Campbelltown.

LOT SIZES IN SH-LU2: CONCLUSIONS

The essential character of the pastoral landscape of the Scenic Hills is derived from its extensive areas of open, grassed paddocks set in complex local topography. Any further intensification of development of this landscape will result in the loss of the historic scenic and environmental values of this Unit and thus the landscape of the Scenic Hills as a whole.

4.2.10 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE CONSERVATION OF THE VISUAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL VALUES OF SH-LU2

The following recommendations are made to ensure the conservation of the visual and environmental significance of SH-LU2's cultural landscape. They should be read in conjunction with the recommendations for the whole landscape described in section 4.0.

SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SH-LU 2

- Encourage active and genuine agricultural land uses such as grazing and viticulture. Associated buildings and other infrastructure should be designed and located to minimise their impact on the scenic qualities of the Landscape Unit.
- Badgally Road demonstrates high-quality scenic values consistent with those of a traditional rural landscape as it describes the edge of the study area. When travelling downhill from the upper slopes near Mount Universe, high quality panoramic views are revealed across the landscape of Blairmount (see SH-LU3).
- The alignment of Badgally Road also has a high level of aesthetic and historic value as it marks the early extension of the Georgian town plan grid to provide access to the Scenic Hills. It also directs the eye in the vistas from the streets across the northern part of the grid towards Mount Universe and Badgally Hill. These scenic qualities not only provide tangible evidence of the reasons that the town centre was located and oriented in the way it was, but it also informs Campbelltown's 'sense of place'. The protection of these views and the aesthetic quality of its elements should be a high priority.
- Protect the quality of the 'hidden' valleys west of the main ridge and those areas obscured by earlier development. Their relative obscurity or visual detachment from

the remainder of the landscape of the Unit should not be used as a justification for development. This hidden quality is highly significant and provides an intimate contrast to the broader and more panoramic views from the other side of the ridge. This quality cannot be protected through an intensification of development or land-use activity. It should remain part of the non-urban landscape of the Scenic Hills.

- Any other new development within the Landscape Unit, including that associated with legitimate rural land uses should be required (through urban design controls such as a development control plan) to be located well below any nearby hilltop or ridgeline so that they do not 'break' the skyline when viewed from any point, whether close, middle distance or from the EESPLs. This is consistent with the historic development model of the Colonial cultural landscape which extends over the Scenic Hills and helps to ensure that new development respects the qualities of the area.
- It is recommended that no further golf course development be permitted in the Scenic Hills; and that the demand for 'lifestyle' medium density housing continue to be resisted since this form of development reads clearly as urban in its character and would have a significant and permanent adverse impact on the intrinsic and scenic values of the Landscape Unit that would be impossible to ameliorate.
- Urban/rural interface: it is recommended that no further expansion of urban development be permitted in this area, whether large-lot or standard in size. The full extent of the surviving hillside must be protected in its entirety. Canopy planting along the rural/residential interface should also be considered to both reinforce the edge and lessen the impact of existing two-storey residential development when viewed over houses from the east (medium distance views).
- It is recommended however that all new structures are subject to stricter urban design controls to ensure that new dwellings are of a scale, form, footprint and material palette that will minimise their intrusiveness on the aesthetic and scenic values of the adjacent landscape.
- The many short streets opening into the rural lands suggest a presumption of future development opportunity above the area already zoned 2(b) residential. They should be retained as fully accessible openings to undeveloped land for the wider community in partial offset for the significant obstruction to through-site views to the hills caused by the adjacent development.

PROTECTING CAMPBELLTOWN'S COMPACT FOOTPRINT AND TIGHTLY DESCRIBED URBAN EDGE - RECOMMENDED URBAN EDGE: SH-LU2

It is recommended that the existing edge of the Scenic Hills be retained.

Although it would be preferable if the land zoned 2(b) remains undeveloped, it is recognised that Council has resolved in the past to approve this form of development in this location and it is likely to occur. If this is the case it is particularly important that a 'wall' of development is prevented, and that the general community is able to engage closely with the scenic values of the hillscape.

The urban edge of any development should be formed in accordance with the Model for the urban-rural edge and include generous amounts of land in both the public and private

domains dedicated for landscaping that will grow taller than the house and soften the views over the area in the future.

The model described in Appendix 1 for development on the edge of the pastoral landscape should be used to help achieve this. If this is done this development should have less adverse impact on the scenic qualities of the Scenic Hills than other more recent development in the area has had.

The recommended boundary of the urban edge is shown in Figure 4.2.44 below.

PROTECTING CAMPBELLTOWN'S COMPACT FOOTPRINT AND TIGHTLY DESCRIBED URBAN EDGE - RECOMMENDED LAND USE ZONES: SH-LU2

The Department of Planning's Standard LEP Template provides zones for Councils to apply to land within their areas.

- It is recommended that the land within SH-LU2 be zoned E3 Environmental Management in accordance with the Standard Template zones as described in Section 3.
- It is recommended that the minimum lot size in the Unit remain 100 hectares.
- It is recommended that the existing 7(d6) large-lot residential zone on the urban edge be zoned E4 - Environmental Living with a minimum lot size of 4000m².
- The areas zoned Residential 2(b) should ideally not be developed; but if Council determines that development is appropriate the lots should be zoned R2 – Low density residential.
- Concessional lot entitlements should not be included in the LEP.

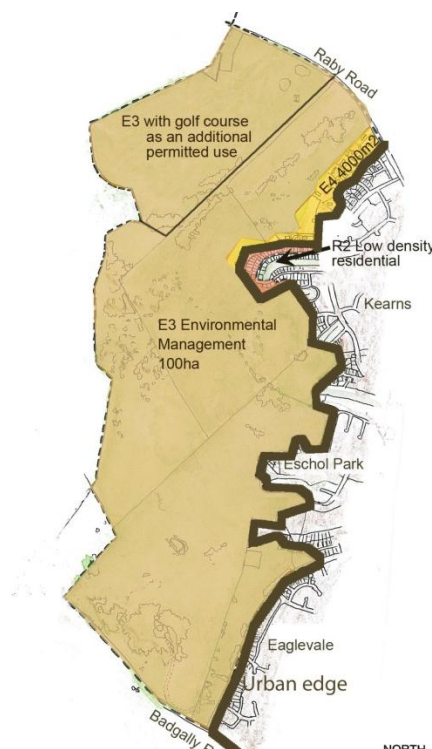


Figure 4.2.44. Recommended urban edge of development in the vicinity of SH-LU2. The area shown shaded pink (indicative only; refer to LEP 2002 zoning map for accurate boundary) near Kearns has been zoned 2b Residential under the existing LEP 2002 and will extend the urban edge if developed. Any development of this land should be designed and sited to respect the sensitivity of the urban-rural edge. When developed however this land will read as part of the urban area and could be excluded from the formally identified landscape of the Scenic Hills. It is recommended that the area shown hatched be subject to urban design controls to protect the quality of the urban-rural interface.

