

Attachment F

**Draft Inventory Sheet – 2-14 Phelps Street,
Surry Hills**

Heritage inventory sheet

Based on the NSW Heritage Office State Heritage Inventory sheet

ITEM DETAILS			
Name of Item	John J Carroll Kindergarten		
Former name	KU John Carroll Kindergarten		
Item type	Built		
Address	Number 2	Street Phelps Street	Suburb Surry Hills
Property description	Lot 1		DP 50102
Use	Current Childcare facility		Former Kindergarten
Statement of significance	The KU John J Carroll Preschool at 2-14 Phelps Street, Surry Hills, is one of several kindergarten buildings that were designed and constructed by the City of Sydney during the 1950s and 1960s. The building is associated with Albert Alexander Smillie, the City of Sydney's Chief Architect responsible for the City's architectural branch. Smillie was involved with numerous Council projects from the 1930s to the 1960s, which included several kindergartens. 2-14 Phelps Street has aesthetic significance as a modest vernacular example of New Empiricist style architecture, which was a regional form of Modernist architecture and was used extensively by the City of Sydney's architectural branch during the post-World War II period for buildings fulfilling a responsible social agenda. It is notable for the modulation of the building mass, disposition of fenestration and roof overhangs to emphasise entry and to control thermal comfort through shading and cross ventilation. The building is considered to be representative of the kindergartens designed by the City of Sydney during the post-World War II period and has retained a relatively high level of integrity. There is evidence that the KU John J Carroll Preschool has social significance, which would be confirmed by further research.		
Level of significance	State:		Local:
Heritage listings			
DESCRIPTION			
Designer	City Building Surveyor's Department, Chief Architect Albert Smillie		
Builder	J Zenancheff		
Construction years	1953-1954		

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Physical description	2-14 Phelps Street is a single storey brick building with a rectangular plan footprint and a shallow-pitched gabled roof located on the eastern side of the site. Its design shows the influence of what has been termed New Empiricism. This was a term coined by the English journal The Architectural Review in 1947 "to describe buildings produced in the 1940s and early 1950s that demonstrated a homely, unpretentious functionalist architecture, which relied on the honest use of local materials, colours and textures as well as familiar architectural elements such as gable roofs, small-scaled windows and accommodating porches without resorting to extremes of aesthetic abstraction." It was part of a "broader northern and Central European development dominant c. 1930-1955 that combined modern movement structure and planning with materials and forms that asserted region and tradition." It was seen as a "regionally appropriate, crafted and humanist modernism" that was appreciated and interpreted by prominent Australian architects. The building is constructed with brick walls that are rendered internally. The roof is supported off steel trusses and comprises metal decking over timber rafters. The ceiling over the playrooms is raked to follow the pitch of the roof. Floors are constructed of timber. There is a deep recessed porch on the southern side of the building forming the principal entry to the building, while eaves on the eastern side of the building are relatively deep. The heads of the metal framed windows on the eastern and northern elevations are aligned with the eaves and have high sills. The pairs of doors and extensive glazing on the western side of the building is set back to provide sheltered conditions, which have been modified by the construction of the late 1990s pergola and the addition of corrugated metal decking over it. High windows in the eastern elevation would have assisted in cross ventilation of the playrooms. The playground area is heavily planted around its perimeter, effectively screening it from Alexander and Phelps Streets.
Physical condition	The building is in good physical condition.
Modification and Dates	Documented modifications to the building include the following actions: • Installation of a shade structure in the playground, 1997. • Construction of a pergola across the western elevation of the building to shade the extensive areas of glazing and installation of new gates in fencing along the Alexander Street site boundary, 1997. • Installation of baby changing facilities in the locker room between the two playrooms, 2000, which necessitated a limited amount of demolition.
Archaeological potential	The archaeological potential of the site has not been ascertained.

HISTORY

The coastal regions of Sydney between Port Jackson and Botany Bay are the ancestral territories of the Eora people. The traditional owners of the land now within the City of Sydney local government area were the Cadigal (Gadigal) people. In common with other tribes living by Sydney Harbour, the Cadigal lived in harmony with the natural resources within their country, fishing from canoes or hunting the animals that lived in their surroundings. The tribe appears to have moved within its territory in response to the seasons and family connections. Shell middens and other archaeological remains in the area provide material evidence of many centuries of sustained connection to the land that also sustained them. The arrival of white settlers caused the wholesale disruption of traditional life and the cultural practices of the Eora people generally. Despite enormous challenges, today many Indigenous people identify as Eora and maintain cultural practices and a connection to Country.

The site of 2-14 Phelps Street is part of 28.33 hectares (70 acres) granted to commissary John Palmer on 1 April 1794. Businessman and speculator John Terry Hughes acquired at least a

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part of Palmer's grant by January 1837. He took out a mortgage over it with the Bank of Australia in March 1842. The Bank, as mortgagee, sold a substantial amount of land that included a triangle of land within the subdivision of Palmer's grant that included the future site of 2-14 Phelps Street, in January 1851. It was acquired by Edward Bennett, described on title documents as an engineer or "gentleman". At that time Phelps Street was identified as Jamieson Street. The name was changed to Phelps Street in 1873, honouring Thomas Phelps (c.1836-1880), a property owner who contributed to the development of the street and other parts of Surry Hills.

In June 1873 Bennett sold part of this land, consisting of the subject site, to Surry Hills builder William Wagg. Wagg subsequently sold the land to Enos Napper, a market gardener living at Randwick, in October 1876. Development of the land is understood to have commenced during the second half of the 1870s. Napper sold it to freeholder Samuel Bridgement in July 1885. About three years later Bridgement sold the land to commercial traveller Carl Freidrich Riemenschneider.

In December 1892 Carl Riemenschneider transferred the property title to his wife Alice. Following her death in July 1894 at the age of 33, the property passed back to him. He sold it to James Webber, described in title documents as a "gentleman," in June 1901. Webber subsequently sold the property to Miss Ida Gilder in August 1911.

The site of 2-14 Phelps Street was resumed by the Municipal Council of Sydney. The resumption of the western part of the site, consisting of 2-4 Phelps Street and 16-18 Alexander Street, was resumed on 6 May 1925 and gazetted two days later. The remainder of the site was resumed on 5 November 1926. Houses occupying the site were demolished and a children's playground established in their place.

During World War II trenches providing shelter from air raids were excavated across the open space. After the war ended the trenches were filled in.

Architectural drawings describing what was termed a children's play group centre signed by architect Albert Smillie were lodged with Council on 24 March 1953. The play group centre comprised a building located on the southern side of the site containing two playrooms separated by a locker room and lavatories and supported by a kitchen, storage spaces, teacher's room and a raised play space. The building was extensively glazed on its southern and western sides to provide the interior with generous amounts of daylight. The glazing was set back and provided with deep roof overhangs. The rest of the site was given over to a carefully laid out playground that balanced areas for play equipment with paved areas.

Approval was given to name the facility the John Carroll Kindergarten on 22 June 1953. John James Carroll (1890-1957) was an alderman for Flinders Ward between December 1934 and December 1953. He was Deputy Lord Mayor in 1949-1950 and Council representative on the City of Sydney Eisteddfod Council between 1949 and 1954. Carroll was a member of several Council committees at various times and a Member of the Metropolitan Water Sewerage and Drainage Board from 1939 to 1955. Prior to his election as alderman, he worked for the Council's Assets Department between 1909-1915 and 1931.

It is understood that the kindergarten opened in August 1954. There are relatively few documented modifications that have taken place since the building was completed.

HISTORICAL THEMES

Australian Theme	State theme	Local theme
4. Building settlements, towns and cities	Towns, suburbs and villages	Post-World War II provision of community services in Surry Hills
6 Educating	Education	Council financed kindergarten
7 Governing	Government and administration	Council activities relating to social welfare in the electorate

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8 Developing Australia's cultural life	Creative endeavour	Architectural significance
9 Marking the phases of life	Persons	Associations with Albert Smillie

HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE ASSESSMENT	
Historic significance SHR criteria (a)	The John Carroll Kindergarten at 2-14 Phelps Street is one of several that were designed and constructed by the City of Sydney during the 1950s and 1960s. Its site history, of a block of land that was resumed for the purposes of a children's playground and then developed as a kindergarten site, is not unusual. 2-14 Phelps Street does not meet the threshold for listing.
Historical association SHR criteria (b)	2-14 Phelps Street is associated with Albert Alexander Smillie, who joined the Sydney Municipal Council's Architectural Branch as an architectural draftsman around 1924, registered as an architect in April 1926 and in September 1936 was promoted to the position of architectural assistant to the City Building Surveyor. In November 1949 Smillie was appointed the City of Sydney's Chief Architect and was responsible for the City's architectural branch. Smillie was involved with numerous Council projects, which included a number of kindergartens. 2-14 Phelps Street meets the threshold for listing at a Local level.
Aesthetic significance SHR criteria (c)	2-14 Phelps Street has aesthetic significance as a modest vernacular example of New Empiricist style architecture, which was a regional form of Modernist architecture that exploited regional design and construction techniques. The style was used extensively by the City of Sydney's architectural branch during the post-World War II period for buildings fulfilling a responsible social agenda. The building is notable for the modulation of the building mass, disposition of fenestration and roof overhangs to emphasise entry and to control sun ingress, as well as provide thermal comfort through shading and cross ventilation. 2-14 Phelps Street meets this criterion at a Local level.
Social significance SHR criteria (d)	There is some evidence that the John Carroll Kindergarten has social significance. A community celebration was held at the 60th anniversary of the kindergarten's opening in August 2014. It continues to fulfil an important role within the local community. Further research may confirm this level of heritage significance. 2-14 Phelps Street may meet the threshold for listing at a Local level.
Technical/Research significance SHR criteria (e)	Several kindergartens within the City of Sydney that are contemporary with 2-14 Phelps Street still fulfil the role for which they were designed. They have similar potential to yield information contributing to an understanding of the cultural history of the City of Sydney. 2-14 Phelps Street does not meet the threshold for listing at a State or Local level.

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Rarity SHR criteria (f)	2-14 Phelps Street is not rare. There are several contemporary kindergartens fulfilling their original purpose in the City of Sydney. 2-14 Phelps Street does not meet the threshold for listing at a State or Local level.
Representativeness SHR criteria (g)	2-14 Phelps Street is representative of the kindergartens designed by the City of Sydney during the post-World War II period. This is because of its architectural design, planning and selection of materials. It is also representative more generally of kindergartens designed by architects in private practice for community groups in other parts of metropolitan Sydney. 2-14 Phelps Street meets the threshold for listing at a Local level.
Integrity	Notwithstanding modifications that have taken place, 2-14 Phelps Street has retained a relatively high level of integrity.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations	• Manage the KU John J Carroll Preschool in accordance with Sydney LEP 2012 and Sydney DPC 2012. • The KU John J Carroll Preschool should be retained and conserved. • The external form of the building, any original spaces, fabric and finishes should be retained and conserved in any future development. • All conservation and new works should be undertaken in accordance with the Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance (The Burra Charter). • It is recommended that a Conservation Management Strategy be prepared to guide future works and conservation at the place. A heritage impact statement should be prepared prior to any major works being undertaken. • Unpainted brickwork should remain unpainted.
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INFORMATION SOURCES

Type	Author/Client	Title	Year	Repository
Written	TKD Architects	Former John Carroll Kindergarten, 2-14 Phelps Street, Surry Hills Heritage Assessment	2025	City of Sydney

AUTHOR OF THIS REPORT

Name	Date
TKD Architects	2025

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IMAGES

Image Caption	Interwar period children's playground that was established on the site of 2-14 Phelps Street.
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Image Year	C.1930	Image author and Copyright Holder	City of Sydney Archives Unique ID A-00015354
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IMAGES

Image Caption

Architectural drawing describing the proposed kindergarten at 2-14 Phelps Street.

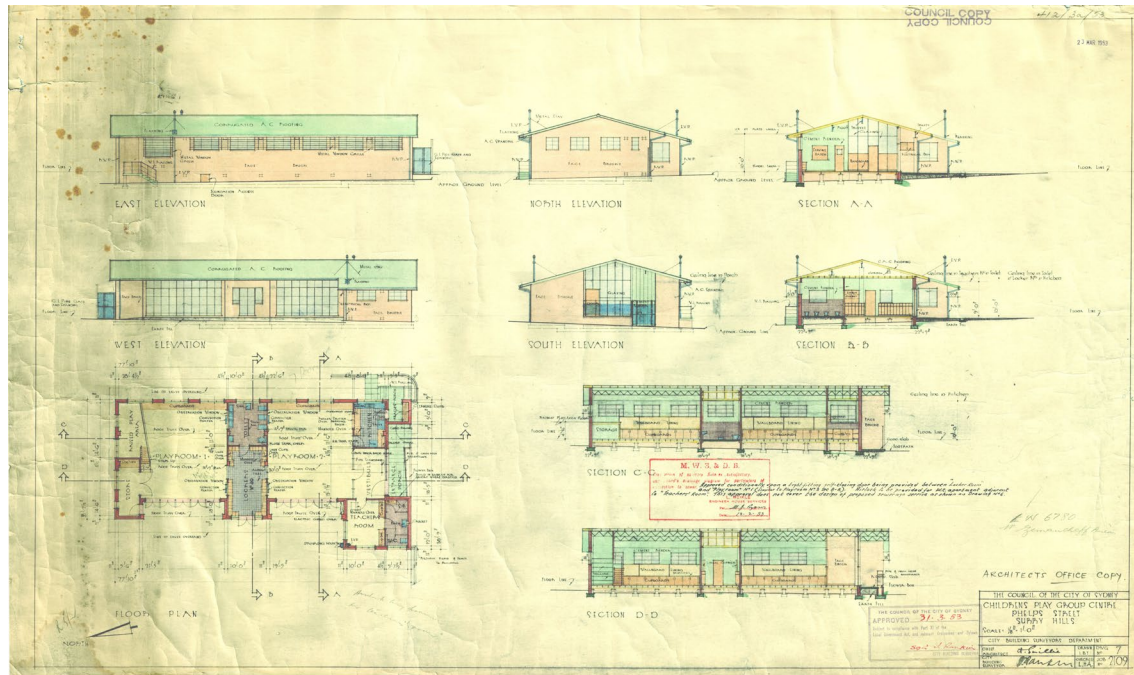


Image Year

1953

Image author and Copyright Holder

City of Sydney Archives Unique ID A-0054871

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IMAGES

Image Caption	The John J Carroll Kindergarten nearing completion.
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Image Year	1953	Image author and Copyright Holder	
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IMAGES

Image Caption

The John J Carroll Kindergarten shortly after it was opened for use.



**Image
Year**

1954

**Image author
and Copyright
Holder**

City of Sydney Archives Unique ID
A-00042863

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IMAGES

Image Caption

Principal southern elevation of the KU John J Carroll Preschool facing Phelps Street.



Image Year

2023

Image author and Copyright Holder

TKD Architects

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IMAGES

Image Caption

Looking north along Arthur Lane to the eastern elevation of the building.



**Image
Year**

2023

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Holder**

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IMAGES

Image Caption

Looking south-east along Phelps Street towards the main building entrance.



Image Year

2023

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IMAGES

Image Caption

Western side of the KU John J Carroll Preschool viewed from Alexander Street.



Image Year

2023

Image author and Copyright Holder

TKD Architects