

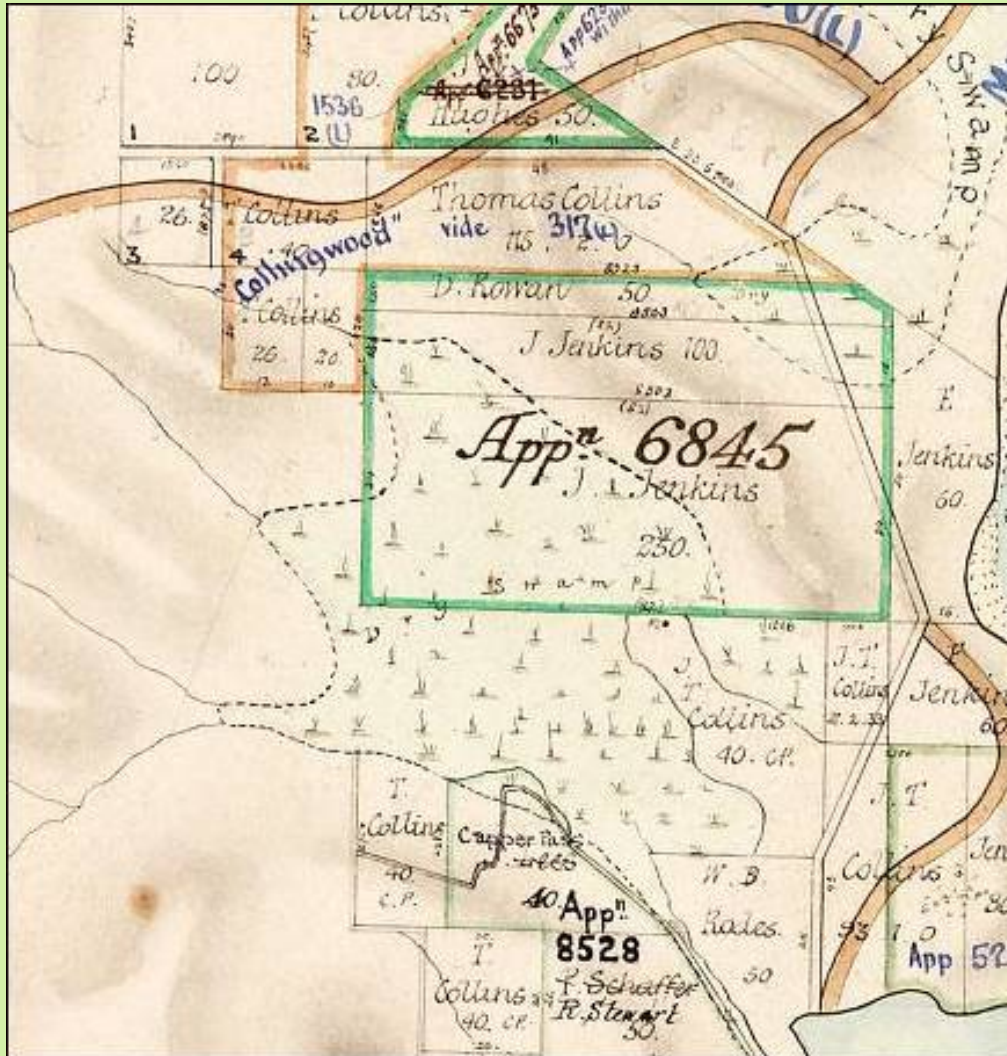
# People in glass houses: the disappearance of 'Crystal Valley', Warriewood, NSW and implications for heritage conservation



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Banksia Heritage +  
Archaeology

# Development history

- 1800s scattered farming
- 1906 “Great Warriewood” subdivision
- 1927 First glasshouses
- 1950s Peak of market gardening
- 1980s Start of industrial / suburban development
- 2010s Completion of redevelopment



An early parish map showing the swampy nature of the land [NSW Dept of Lands Image 14073201]

# THE GREAT WARRIEWOOD ESTATE

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Comprising nearly 500 Acres  
absolutely the Pick of the District  
and all first class

Subdivided into

- 133 TOWNSHIP LOTS including a mile of Main Road frontages.
- 83 HILL SITES with magnificent Panoramic Views.
- 56 FARM BLOCKS with Creek frontages and deep fertile Soil.

For Auction Sale  
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**INDUCTION TERMS**

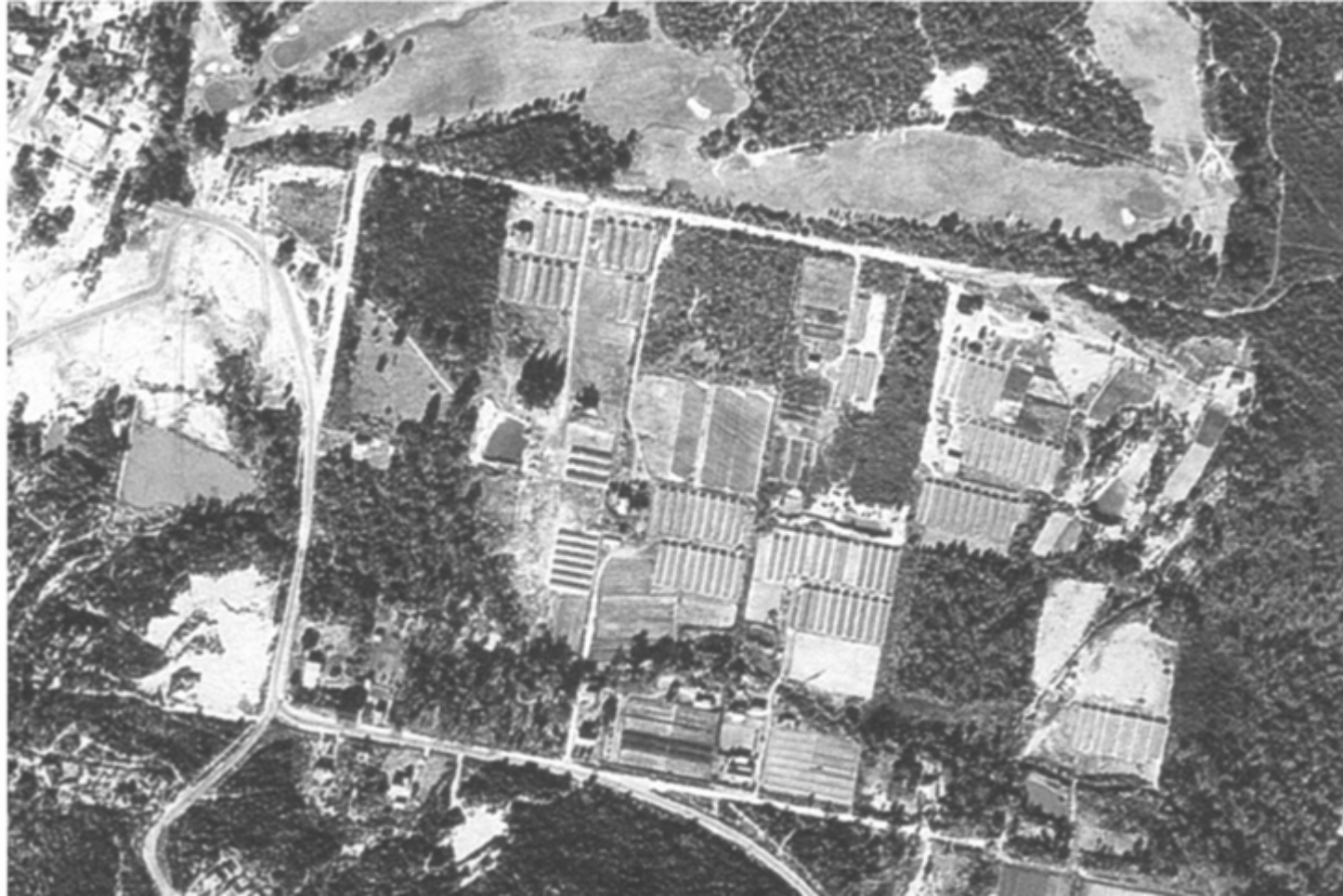
TOWNSHIP LOTS - 64 Acres. 100' frontage.  
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FARM BLOCKS - 56 Blocks. 2 to 100 Acres.  
All lots are subject to the usual conditions of sale.  
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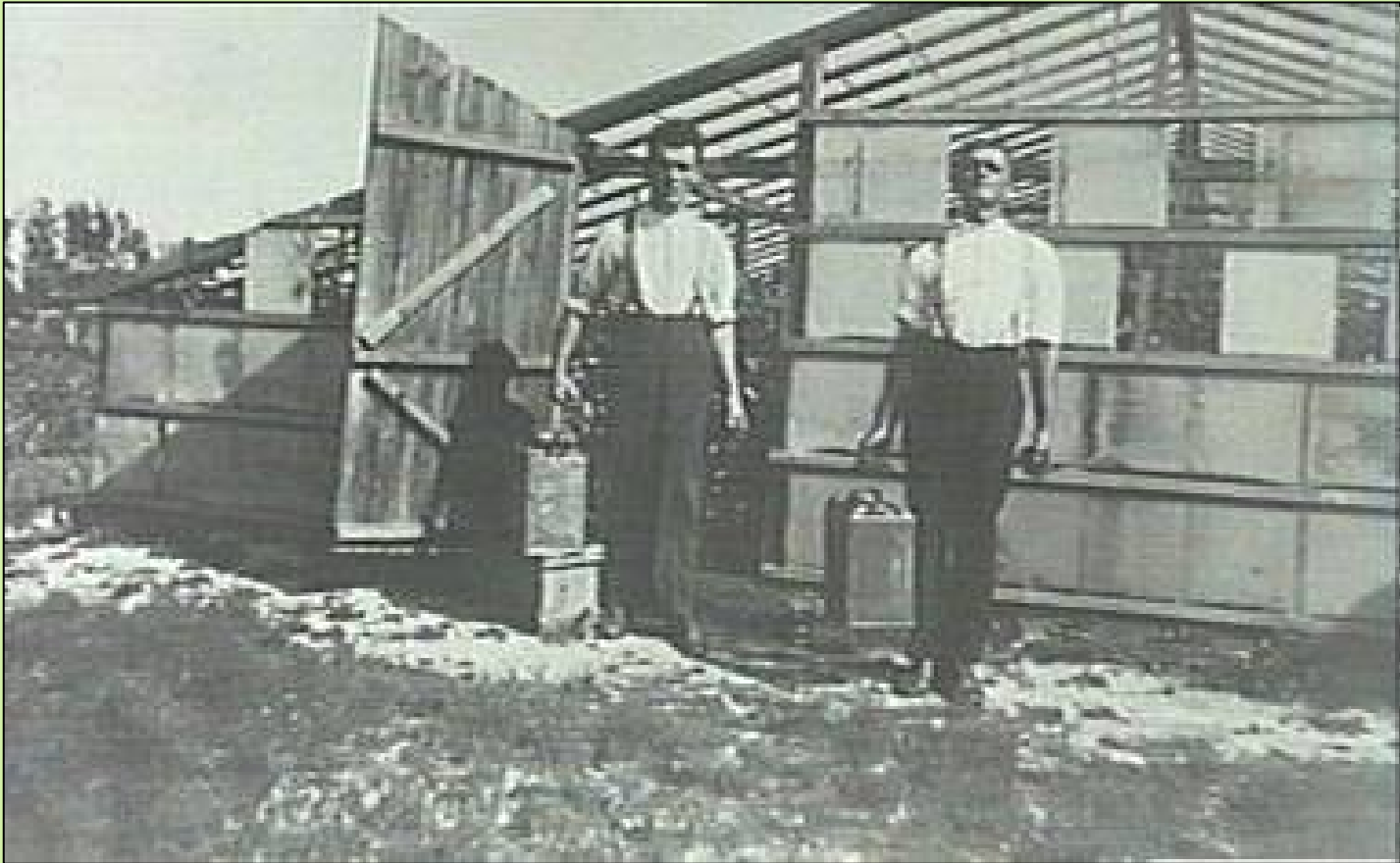
The Great Warriewood Estate - 1906  
[Pittwater Library]

# Market gardening

- Initially Anglo-celtic farmers
- Soon multi-ethnic, dominated by Dalmatians and other Yugoslavs
- Primarily glasshouse tomatoes, later cucumbers, flowers
- Open field – green vegetables, beans, potatoes
- Co-operative farming, share farming



Air photo of 1940 showing the field systems associated with market gardening [NSW Dept of Lands]



Slavich brothers c.1930s [Warringah Library Services]



Warriewood Valley in the 1960s [Pittwater Library]





A section of the Warriewood Valley 1951 [left] and 1965 [right]

Slid black – glasshouses; hatched areas – open field farming

[Rutherford *et al* 1971, Figures 9 and 10]

# Unique glasshouses

- **Developed as copies of commercial types - iron frame on brick foundation**
- **Required to be moved to fresh soil**
- **Low productive efficiency**
- **Initiated by glass tariff war in 1920s**
- **Unique adaptation of technology**



Warriewood Valley glasshouses and open field crops in the 1960s [Pittwater Library]



# **Key heritage issues**

- **Uniqueness of vernacular architecture  
– glasshouses**
- **Conserving fabric vs process**
- **Finite and now ‘lost’ ethnic enclave**
- **Lack of recognition by former farmers**
- **Is it too late to do anything?**







Part of the Warriewood Valley in 2008 [Google Maps]





A tomato grower in the early 1930s [Warringah Library Services]