

# CARETAKER'S COTTAGE

Rouse Hill Estate, Sydney, NSW

## CLIENT

Historic Houses Trust of NSW

## COMPLETION

1998 - 2000

## DESCRIPTION

### NEW BUILDING IN SENSITIVE RURAL ENVIRONMENT

The project was to design a new caretaker's residence to replace a temporary building within a sensitive rural heritage curtilage. The residence also needed to incorporate the farm manager's office and an accessible public toilet for visitors. The caretaker oversees the security and care of the site for the Rouse Hill Estate, which is both a house museum and a working farm. Design 5 Architects designed the building for the Historic Houses Trust of New South Wales, a state government agency with responsibility for the care and presentation of a number of key historic properties.

The siting of the new building had to provide good surveillance and security for the main house and outbuildings, but not intrude on the visual relationships between buildings and major views to and from the site. To one side of the main house is a significant garden and to the other a collection of important outbuildings.

Because of the coherence of the cultural landscape, the client wanted the new building to be visually discrete and befitting its status. The client also required the building to utilise the language of the existing buildings on the site, but in a contemporary manner. The new building was to be a harmonious insertion into the cultural landscape.

The building had to be low maintenance, low energy and use passive means of cooling.



The new house from the south paddocks, looking up the hill, with Rouse Hill house in the background



Uses simple rectangular form of outbuildings. Gabled roof with raised ridge for light and to distinguish as new



The new house settles neatly into the existing landscape with its ensembles of sheds, outbuildings and timber fences. The language of the building is similar but more refined than the other outbuildings



Timber and iron uses language of site but modern versions of the local vernacular



Simple details belie date of new building and place it within the hierarchy - below the main house but above the outbuildings (early 19th century outbuilding on the right)



The outbuildings on the estate from the rear of Rouse Hill House with the new caretaker's residence behind the water tower