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**Babies Memorial**  
**Royal Hospital for Women's Park, Paddington**

**Concept Design Project Proposal**



Russell Rodrigo  
Katrina Simon



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# Project Overview

## Client

Woollahra Council

## Description

Concept design for a memorial to babies who lost the fight for life in the Royal Hospital for Women, Paddington.

## Background

The Royal Hospital for Women was established in 1901 and was dedicated to improving conditions and treatment for all women and children. The hospital was renowned for its high standard of care and for significant innovations in medical practice including the opening of the first baby health centre in Australia in 1906 and the development of Australia's first diagnostic ultrasound unit in 1962. By the time of its closure, 280,000 babies had been delivered at the Hospital.

The Royal Hospital for Women Paddington was closed in 1997 and later demolished for residential development. As part of the development agreement, a half hectare site fronting Glenmore Road was reserved as open space by Woollahra Council.

## Memorial Site

The Royal Hospital for Women's Park, Paddington is a neighbourhood park reflecting the village atmosphere of the surrounding area. It is the largest open space in the heart of Paddington and functions as a meeting place and informal passive recreational space for residents.

The park was designed and constructed by Woollahra Council and opened in 2005. Turf Design Studio undertook design development, documentation and construction management of the park Masterplan prepared by Woollahra Council's Urban Design Team in association with Terragram.

The park is structured as two distinct levels: as a broad lawn sloping north toward Glenmore Road, overlooked by an upper seating terrace. Sandstone fragments of the demolished hospital buildings are placed throughout the park, evoking memories of the past. Interpretative signage is incorporated in the design of the park to explain the significant history of the site.

## Stage 1: Concept Design

It is proposed to undertake the Concept Design of the design of the memorial, as a student design project offered to UNSW Faculty of the Built Environment students and UNSW College of Fine Arts students. A minimum of 18 students will be enrolled in the studio.

The outcome of the studio will be the identification of a preferred scheme, in consultation with client and stakeholders.

Following the concept design stage, it is proposed that design development, documentation and construction management be undertaken by landscape design consultants identified by Woollahra Council. The opportunity for ongoing involvement by the concept designer may be incorporated in these stages.

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**Stakeholder Management**

Management of stakeholders, including the Royal Hospital for Women and local residents to be co-ordinated by Woollahra Council.

**Role of Public Art Advisory Committee**

Memorial projects are a significant type of commemorative public art that are increasingly being utilised by communities to give recognition and built form to significant events, people and histories.

In determining a suitable design for the memorial therefore, the Public Art Advisory Committee has an important role to play in guiding the aesthetic and functional (including maintenance and public safety) outcomes for the project.

It is proposed therefore that the Public Art Advisory Committee be included as part of the client input process.

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## Design Studio

### Staff

*Russell Rodrigo, M.Urb Des (Syd), B.Arch (Syd)*

Russell Rodrigo has a wide range of experience in architecture, urban design and development management gained over 15 years with the NSW Government Architect's Office. Russell has taught design at the University of Sydney since 2000 and in 2007 was appointed as a Lecturer in the Faculty of the Built Environment, UNSW.

Russell Rodrigo's research interests focus on how public and private memory is represented in the built environment. Russell is currently completing a research-through design PhD which seeks to question the basis of the way scholars and designers think, if at all, about how memory is spatialized in the design of public memorial spaces and how spaces of memory can be designed as ongoing, meaningful places of engagement in late modernity. In 2009 Russell won a Design Researcher Award from the British Council to undertake research in the UK into the challenges of memorialisation in existing recreational landscapes.

*Katrina Simon, M. Landscape Arch (Lincoln), B. Arch (Auckland)*

Katrina Simon has a background in architecture and landscape architecture and exhibits frequently as a designer and visual artist. Her research interests include the history and design of cemeteries and related memorial landscapes, and the relationships between cartography and the form and transformation of the urban landscape. Katrina Simon is currently Senior Lecturer in Landscape Architecture at the Faculty of the Built Environment, University of New South Wales, and is studying towards a PhD in Fine Art at Sydney College of the Arts, University of Sydney.

### Studio Aims

In this design studio students learn the processes of artful and meaningful site design, with a focus on designing in response to the site and its context. The studio will be focussed on the design of a place of memory within an existing recreational landscape.

The detailed aims of the studio are to

- Introduce students to contemporary landscape design theory as it relates to urban parks and the design of memorial space;
  - Explore ways in which places of remembrance and reflection can be created in a recreational landscape
  - Encourage creative thought and cross disciplinary collaboration between students
  - Develop students' capacity to conceptualise, develop, communicate, test and evaluate design proposals;
  - Develop students' ability to integrate programmatic, social and ecological issues into artful design proposals;
  - Develop student's ability to develop a design language appropriate to the context, both physical and cultural;
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## Proposed Program

It is proposed to run the course as a 6 Unit Elective studio with a total of 48 hours face-to face contact. A draft program of activities showing client and stakeholder input is as follows:

Wk	Date	Hrs	Lecture	Studio	Client Input	Stakeholder Input
1	25/7	4	Project Introduction Overview of existing documents – Masterplan, POM etc	Site Visit with Woollahra Council staff	✓	—
2	—	—	—	—	—	—
3	8/8	6	—	Presentation: Site Analysis Design Principles Refined Masterplan	✓	✓
4	15/8	6	Memorial Design- Contemporary Approaches	Presentation: Precedent Study- Memorial Design	—	—
5	22/8	6	—	Design Development: Masterplan & Memorial	—	—
6	29/8	6	Memorial Design- Contemporary Approaches	Design Development: Masterplan & Memorial	—	—
7	—	—	—	—	—	—
8	19/9	6	—	Interim Presentation Refined Masterplan Memorial – Precinct Design Memorial – Detailed Design	✓	✓
9	26/9	4	—	Design Development	—	—
10	3/10	4	—	Design Development	—	—
11	—	—	—	—	—	—
12	17/10	6	—	Final Presentation & Exhibition: Refined Masterplan Memorial – Precinct Design Memorial – Detailed Design	✓	✓

## Supporting Council Documents

Public Art Policy, Woollahra Municipal Council

[http://www.woollahra.nsw.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0003/15978/Public\\_Art\\_Policy\\_October\\_2006.pdf](http://www.woollahra.nsw.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0003/15978/Public_Art_Policy_October_2006.pdf)

Royal Hospital for Women's Park - Design

[http://www.woollahra.nsw.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0006/17664/Royal\\_Hospital\\_for\\_Women\\_Presentation.pdf](http://www.woollahra.nsw.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0006/17664/Royal_Hospital_for_Women_Presentation.pdf)

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**Fees**

While no fees are proposed overall for undertaking the concept design phase on behalf of Woollahra Council, it is proposed that a nominal fee of \$5,000 in the form of a research grant be awarded to UNSW to cover the following costs associated with the project:

- incidental printing costs for background documents, existing drawings etc
- travel funds for guest lectures by Sue Anne Ware (RMIT Landscape Architecture Lecturer and designer of 'anti-memorials') and Jennifer Turpin (public artist specialising in water projects)
- exhibition related costs including opening night

If the above is acceptable to Council, the grant can be established either informally through a letter of offer or through a formal contract. The grant will be managed by UNSW's Grants Management Office.

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