



Robertson Park Plan of Management



Adoption date: 29 November 2004

Woollahra Municipal Council

Robertson Park Plan of Management

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



1.0 Introduction

The extensive heritage significance of the Robertson Park area to the early history of Sydney, and its well recognised open space and recreational values to both local and visitor users, make the open space one of the most significant parklands on the Sydney Harbour foreshores.

The park is the public domain focus of the Watsons Bay village and forms an important visual and open space linkage between the Harbour, the iconic visitor destination of the Gap, and the Sydney Harbour National Park.



This Plan of Management seeks to balance open space and recreational values with conservation of the inherent physical and cultural heritage qualities of Robertson Park. The plan will provide a basis for Woollahra Council's ongoing management, enhancement, and maintenance of this important open space resource and provide a suitable basis for day to day and long term decision making.

The Robertson Park study area covered by this Plan of Management is defined by:

- Military Road to the north and east;
- Clovelly Street and Robertson Place to the south; and
- Marine Parade to the west.

As indicated on Figure One on the following page.

The main park area is Crown Reserve under Trust Management for the care, control and management by Woollahra Council on behalf of the Department of Lands, with the area to the south of Clovelly Street (incorporating Dunbar House) Council owned Community land.



Robertson Park is typified by its open parkland character and panoramic views to Sydney Harbour

2.0 Consultation

The Plan of Management has incorporated several consultation streams aimed at assisting in the sourcing of information, development of planning and management strategies, and to inform relevant stakeholders and the local community of the study outcomes as they have developed.

2.2.1 Publicity

An article containing general information about the Robertson Park Plan of Management appeared in the Wentworth Courier (local newspaper) on Wednesday 5 February 2003.

Flyers containing information about the Plan of Management and community workshops were widely distributed by a letter box drop to local residents in streets adjacent to the park and were also posted on community notice boards in the park.

The Community Working Group was informed on the progress of the study through a Council's website, email, and by direct mailout. A copy of the community workshop flyers are included in the Appendix of this report.

2.2.2 Community Working Group

Community consultation was undertaken to ascertain key issues and values in relation to the study area and surrounds. Respondents to the press release and stakeholders sourced through organised groups participated in two community workshops. The workshops involved a minimum level of technical input by the consultants to initiate discussion of topics and issues on the agenda, however the emphasis was on involvement and input by community representatives. Summary notes for the Community Workshops are included in the Appendix.

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2.2.3 Public exhibition

This plan was publicly exhibited throughout September and October 2003. In total 16 submissions were received. The Plan of Management and Masterplan were both amended to take into consideration comments received.

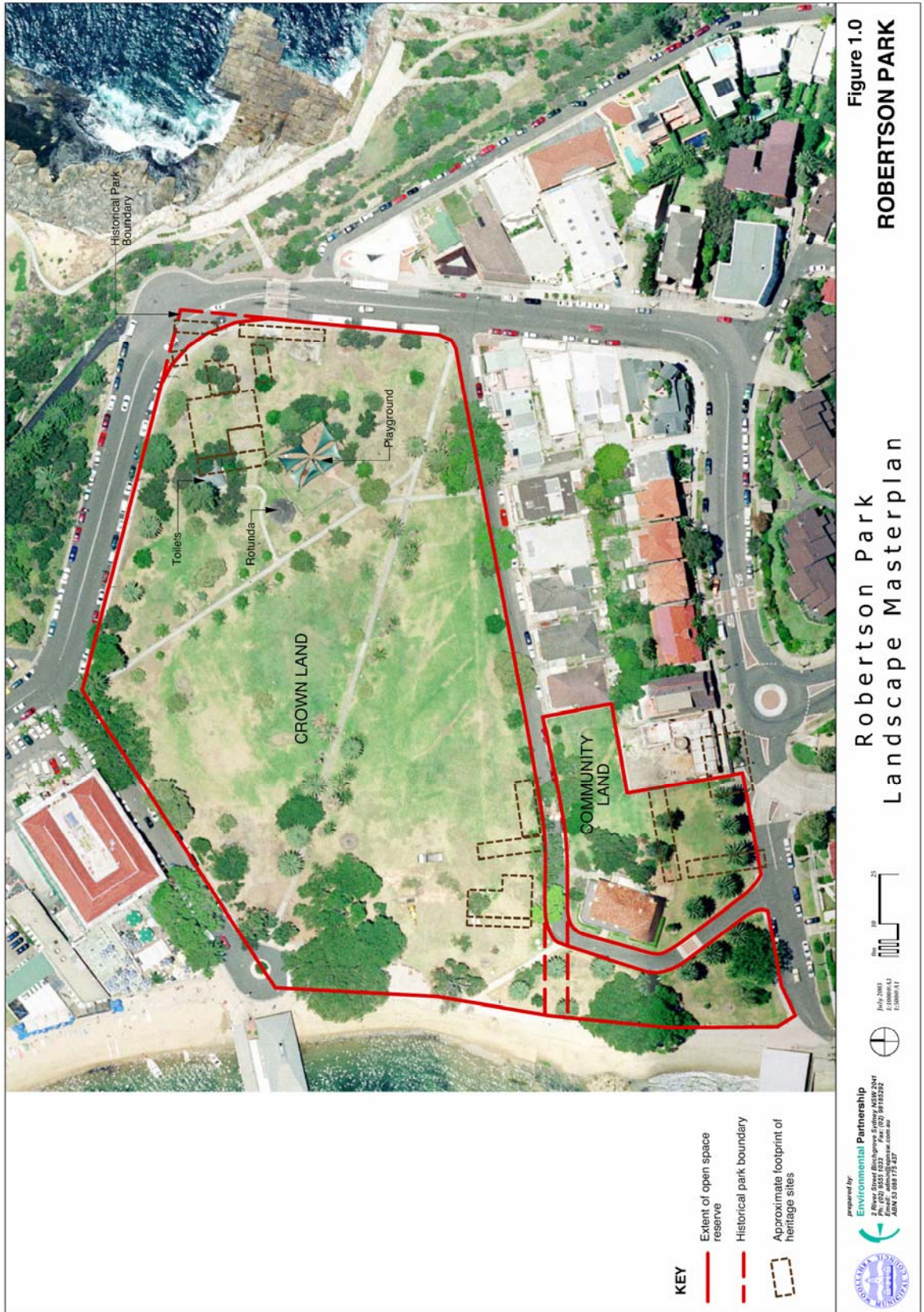
Following this a public meeting was held in the park on 27 January 2004 where the community was provided the opportunity to raise issues such as:

- Loss of car parking and traffic management along Clovelly Street;
- Location of creeks and use of underground water;
- Service access to Doyle's;
- Powerlines;
- Clovelly House;
- Disabled access; pathway locations;
- Position of the playground, amenity building and rotunda;
- Views into the park from surrounding residents;
- Tree replacement program; and
- Expenditure.

A further meeting was undertaken with community representatives on 20 April 2004 where amendments were again made to the park design elements. The Masterplan was finally publicly exhibited in September 2004.

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Figure 1.0 – Robertson Park





Dunbar House

3.0 Pressures and Opportunities

A series of pressures and opportunities affecting Robertson Park need to be addressed in development of planning and management strategies.

Pressures include impacts on the land or environment, and potential conflicts between users or usage and other qualities of the site. Opportunities are the qualities of the site which make it suitable for community uses, recreational activities, or for optimisation of natural or other cultural values, and which may not be fully realised at present.

The following pressures and opportunities are identified in Figure Two overleaf.

1 Significant existing trees

The park is characterised by a range of significant tree specimens including Moreton Bay Figs in particular through the foreshore area, some of which date back to the early periods of Sydney's history (1880s). These trees must be maintained and protected from the impacts of park usage and effectively managed.

2 Existing trees

Other existing trees require selective removal including Norfolk Island Hibiscus specimens, and a range of low branching native species (eg. Banksia's, and Casuarina's) which fragment views and can limit security. Replacement shade tree planting for recent Fig and Canary Island Date Palm removals also need to be addressed as an urgent priority.

3 Heritage importance

The park is of heritage importance both for existing elements such as Dunbar House, various sandstone walls, and individual landscape items, along with its relationship to several demolished residences from the colonies early history. The relationship of park facilities and usage to these building sites needs to be carefully considered.

4 Views

Harbour and city views are an intrinsic feature of Robertson Park appreciated by local residents and large numbers of visitors to Watsons Bay. View corridors need to be conserved and enhanced through the park, where cumulative installations of facilities and lower level plantings have reduced visual linkages.

5 Rock outcrop

The rock outcrop located on the parks eastern boundary with Military Road provides links with the sites natural character and previous 19th century uses (rebates in the rock are believed to be related to the *Clovelly House* stables).

6 Steep landform

Park edges come under a range of pressures due to steep landform impacting useability, access and maintenance.

7 Poor drainage

The existing park landform and surface conditions result in drainage problems in the park, specifically ponding and damp ground near the northwestern park entry.

8 Poorly defined park entries

Major entry points to Robertson Park are generally low key and lack a coordinated treatment and identity.

9 Pedestrian pathways

Existing pathways bisect and fragment open space areas. In addition the formal diagonal path / links established in the 1930s do not have regard for the earlier 19th century phase of the parks history in particular the heritage curtilage of the *Clovelly House* site.

10 Pedestrian desire lines

Worn grass areas are evident from high pedestrian use in areas where path provision fails to meet user requirements, such as the link between the main park area and toilet facilities to the Military Road public bus stop.

11 Pedestrian focal point

A major pedestrian junction located at the north western corner of Robertson Park at the intersection of Marine Parade, Military Road, and the Watsons Bay Ferry Wharf is a vehicle dominated space that constrains pedestrian flow and safety. Potential exists for enhancing pedestrian priority and amenity at this point.

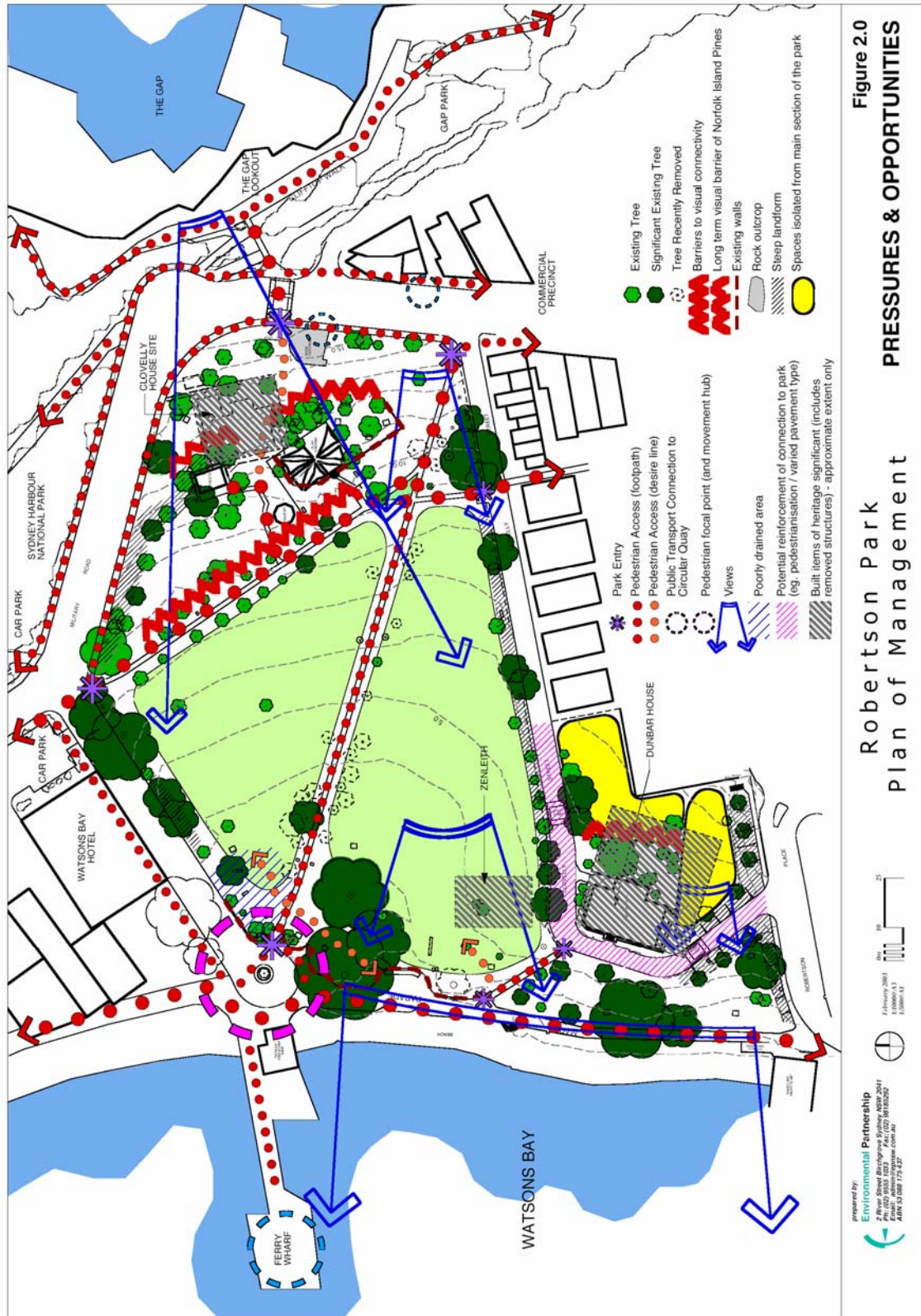


Path links bisecting the park



Playground facilities reduce visual continuity and usage of the eastern park area

Figure 2 – Pressures and Opportunities



3.0 Pressures and Opportunities (continued)

12 Potential reinforcement of links between park areas

Clovelly Street separates Dunbar House and the grassed areas from the remainder of Robertson Park. Pedestrianisation strategies aimed at increasing visual and functional linkages between the spaces would be desirable.

13 Barriers to visual and functional continuity

The existing toilet block and playground facility and associated native planting create physical and visual barriers in the eastern park. These facilities also reduce the public useability of the eastern park area. The walling to Marine Parade although of heritage importance, reduces the accessibility between Marine Parade and the Park.

14 Park usage

The park is a significant focus for visitation by tourists and day users. This leads to a high intensity of usage (particularly on weekends) which can compromise the physical character of the park through grass erosion and soil compaction, rubbish, and indiscriminant access.

15 Public transport connections

Two public transport nodes are located adjoining Robertson Park with the Watsons Bay Ferry Wharf to the north west of the park and public bus stops to the east. The park as such provides a functional and visual linkage between these facilities, and benefits from its accessibility to public transport for visitor access.



The sandstone outcrop adjoining Military Road

4.0 Community and Crown land management requirements

Local Government Act

Council is required to identify a Community Land Categorisation for the area of the park defined by Clovelly Street and Robertson Place that comprises community land under Council title.

The Local Government (Community Land Amendment) Act 1998 includes guidelines for categorisation and core objectives for community land categories that are listed in section 4.4 Community Land Categorisation. The core objectives must guide management of the land in accordance with it's inherent categorisation.

The Community land parcel is categorised as:

- Park; and
- General Community Use.

Crown Lands Act 1989

As stated previously the main area of the park is Crown Reserve under Trust Management for care control and management by Council. The trust is known as "Watson Bay Public Park (R500460) Reserve Trust". As such a range of requirements of the Crown Lands Act 1989 apply to Robertson Park.

The Department of Lands land management philosophy directly relates to the principles of Crown land management that are listed in Section 11 of the Crown Lands Act 1989. These principles affect all aspects of the departments activities and, specifically, the major elements of land assessment, reservation / dedication of land and preparing plans of management. The principles are that:

- Environmental protection principles be observed in relation to the management and administration of Crown land.
- The natural resources of Crown land (including water, soil, flora, fauna and scenic quality) be conserved wherever possible.
- Public use and enjoyment of appropriate Crown land be encouraged.
- Where appropriate, multiple use of Crown land be encouraged.
- Were appropriate, Crown land should be used and managed in such a way that both the land and its resources are sustained in perpetuity.
- Crown land be occupied, used, sold, leased, licensed or otherwise dealt with in the best interests of the State consistent with the above principles.



Panoramic views from The Gap across the park

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Crown Lands Act 1989 (continued)

Additional requirements under the Crown Lands Act relating to plans of management are:

- that the Minister administering the Crown Lands Act or Minister assisting the Minister for Natural Resources (Lands), gives consent for the preparation of a plan of management and consent for a draft plan going on public exhibition;
- that the plan of management observe appropriate reserve policy applicable to the site along with relevant land management case law; and
- that the draft Plan of Management shall be placed on public display for not less than 28 days to allow for submissions to be made on the Plan of Management.

5.0 Planning and Management Principles

Visions provide a basis for long term decision making in the park along with evaluation of potential planning and management strategies. Principles aim to provide direction to realising the Visions through the development of public domain improvements and management solutions.

An overall Vision for Robertson Park is defined below. This was compiled by the study team through a synthesis of the Community Workshop Outcomes and study team investigations.

Overall Vision:

That Robertson Park provides an appropriate informal parkland setting to its heritage significant 19th century building sites and past uses, reinforcing visual links across and from the open space to the harbour, consolidating family passive recreational grassed areas and related facilities for both local and visitor usage, and increasing native vegetation canopy for shade and visual amenity. Refer to principles reference plan overleaf.

Detailed Visions and Principles

In addition to the Overall Vision, Detailed Visions and Principles are provided for key values of the park:

Natural Environment

Vision

Natural environmental values and processes related to vegetation, water cycle management, and fauna habitat are optimised, recognising historical cultural influences on the open space, which should appropriately shape its parkland character

Principles

- Supplementary native tree planting of Port Jackson Fig, Norfolk Island Pines and Tuckeroo adjoining park edges to be provided integrating consideration of view corridor management and heritage interpretation of historic building sites
- Upgrade seating areas under existing significant foreshore trees, enhancing tree protection
 - potential for incorporation of interpretation related to early site history including Pilots Cottages and stream that crossed the site
- Provide where practical and sustainable – lower level planting that enhances habitat value of park landscape eg. to bank to northern park edge
- Reinforce visual and access link from The Gap through improved pedestrian crossing and potential harbour viewing point at the edge of park
- Park edge planting to provide a backdrop to views within the park, buffering visual impacts from adjoining commercial / residential areas whilst maintaining views into the park
- Park vegetation management to remove lower branching planting that impede cross site views, divides park, and reduces user safety through passive surveillance
- Incorporate subsoil drainage at problem drainage areas and potentially provide underground storage tank for recycling of drainage for irrigation
- Provide native tree planting adjoining National Park interface providing contextual link to sandstone vegetation community (eg Sydney Red Gum) and Norfolk Island Pines

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Heritage

Vision

Interpretation and recognition of the pre 20th century character, role and function of the site in Sydney's early European settlement related to its residences, other buildings and the pre 20th century informal park-like landscape is facilitated

Principles

- Mitigation of park developments that have eroded conservation and interpretation of heritage features and character including:
 - the toilet block (encroaching on Clovelly house site curtilage)
- Interpretation of 19th century heritage elements aimed at facilitating an understanding of the first phase of European history, related site use, and informal landscape character for park users
- Interpretative facilities integrated in park design improvements
- Remove landscape elements incompatible with heritage curtilage of Dunbar House including brick masonry walling and more recent plantings to rear grassed area
- Improved pedestrian relationship between grassed area adjoining Dunbar House and the main park – potential paved shared zone
- Interpretation of Zenleith house site through appropriate landscape elements (eg sandstone markers to building corners) following site investigations
- Protection of existing heritage elements and provision of interpretation to improve community understanding
- Enhanced pedestrian circulation amenity and safety at Military Road / Marine Parade intersection through provision of pedestrian plaza
- Upgrade seating areas under existing significant foreshore trees, enhancing tree protection
 - potential for incorporation of interpretation related to early site history including Pilots Cottages and stream that crossed the site
- The Sydney Harbour National Park at Watsons Bay provides the most effective context for major interpretation of Aboriginal significance of the area

Visual

Vision

A simple, informal, and safe parkland character (reflecting pre 20th century site character) that reinforces and enhances significant view corridors, the harbour front setting, and visual links through, from and to the park

Principles

- Consolidation of open grassed area through centre of park through selective tree removal, and relocation of bus layover parking to Military Road to enhance harbour views from The Gap and within the park
- Park vegetation management to remove lower branching planting that impede cross site views, divides park, and reduces user safety through passive surveillance
- Park improvements to promote simple informal landscape character of pre 20th century site
- Cater for both local and visitor user needs through provision of a balanced and sustainable range of facilities located to park edges:
 - toilets
 - playground
 - Shaded seating areas
- Pole top lighting to be provided to major through park path access and at park entry points in consideration of potential night view corridor impacts and relationship to residential housing

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Reinforce effective and comfortable link within the park between The Gap and Marine Parade without compromise of parkland character and use
- Reinforce effective and comfortable direct link between Watsons Bay Village Centre and Camp Cove
- Enhanced pedestrian circulation amenity and safety at Military Road / Marine Parade intersection through provision of pedestrian plaza

Social / Cultural

Vision

A balanced and sustainable community role for the park recognising both local and visitor (tourism) significance and acknowledging the park's civic role in the Watsons Bay village

Principles

- Consolidate extent of open grass areas to enhance flexibility of use for a range of passive recreational activities
- Consolidate extent of open grass areas to enhance flexibility of use for a range of passive recreational activities
- Upgrade seating areas under existing significant foreshore trees, enhancing tree protection
 - potential for incorporation of interpretation related to early site history including Pilots Cottages and stream that crossed the site
- Enhanced pedestrian circulation amenity and safety at Military Road / Marine Parade intersection through provision of pedestrian plaza
- Pole top lighting to be provided to major through park path access and at park entry points in consideration of potential night view corridor impacts and relationship to residential housing
- Cater for both local and visitor user needs through provision of a balanced and sustainable range of facilities located to park edges:
 - toilets
 - playground
 - Shaded seating areas

Recreation / park use

Vision

Robertson Park provides an educational link to the 19th century history of settlement in Sydney, the natural environment, and our contemporary community in an outdoor harbour side setting

Principles

- Interpretation of 19th century heritage elements aimed at facilitating an understanding of the first phase of European history, related site use, and informal landscape character for park users

Intrinsic

Principles

- Enhanced pedestrian circulation amenity and safety at Military Road / Marine Parade intersection through provision of pedestrian plaza
- Military Road / Marine Parade intersection through provision of pedestrian plaza
- Enhanced visual and functional relationship of park to Watsons Bay Village Centre and Marine Parade including:
 - upgraded street frontage incorporating management of pedestrian access points to park
 - upgraded park entries
- Reinforce effective and comfortable link within the park between The Gap and Marine Parade without compromise of parkland character and use

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Enhanced accessibility between grassed area of park and Marine Parade – potential for localised sitting and walking steps along part of edge to enhance accessibility and informal seating
- Improved pedestrian relationship between grassed area adjoining Dunbar House and the main park – potential paved shared zone
- Interpretation of 19th century heritage elements aimed at facilitating an understanding of the first phase of European history, related site use, and informal landscape character for park users
- Consolidation of open grassed area through centre of park through selective tree removal, and relocation of bus layover parking to Military Road to enhance harbour views from The Gap and within the park
- Mitigation of park developments that have eroded conservation and interpretation of heritage features and character including:
 - the toilet block (encroaching on Clovelly house site curtilage)
- Park improvements to promote simple informal landscape character of pre 20th century site
- Reinforce effective and comfortable direct link between Watsons Bay Village Centre and Camp Cove
- Upgrade seating areas under existing significant foreshore trees, enhancing tree protection
- potential for incorporation of interpretation related to early site history including Pilots Cottages and stream that crossed the site

Management / maintenance

Vision

Community use to be supported by a coordinated and quality park setting and a sustainable effective park maintenance regime

Principles

- Recognise dual recreational role of park in provision for both local and visitor use through a balanced and sustainable provision of shaded seating and informal recreation areas with access to toilet and playground facilities to waterfront and edges of park oriented towards views
- Locate park furniture (eg. table settings, park benches, bins, etc.) to provide for comfortable recreational use and effective maintenance access
- Improved furniture and materials provision with coordinated, hard wearing elements (and wearing surface under) providing sustainable maintenance requirements based on Councils approved furniture range
- Upgrade seating areas under existing significant foreshore trees, enhancing tree protection
 - potential for incorporation of interpretation related to early site history including Pilots Cottages and stream that crossed the site
- Pole top lighting to be provided to major through park path access and at park entry points in consideration of potential night view corridor impacts and relationship to residential housing
- Consolidate extent of open grass areas to enhance flexibility of use for a range of passive recreational activities
- Provide where practical and sustainable -lower level planting that enhances habitat value of park landscape eg. to bank to northern park edge
- Existing structures and facilities (toilet and playground) relocated and upgraded adjoining park edges improving visual continuity and recreational amenity of park

The principles have been implemented in the development of a Management Strategy and Action Framework (refer section 3.2), and provide the basis for development and review of a concept masterplan for the site.

6.0 Implementation

The Management Strategy and Action Framework identifies priorities for planning and management strategies identified.

Key priorities are as listed:

- Formalisation and approval of Masterplan
- Tree planting to replace vegetation canopy and shade amenity
- Further heritage investigations of early house sites to enable effective interpretation

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The introduction identifies the objectives of the Plan of Management, the format of the Plan of Management document, and existing management background for the study area

1.1 Background

The Robertson Park Plan of Management was commissioned by Woollahra Council in November 2002 and was undertaken by a consultancy team led by Landscape Architectural consultants Environmental Partnership over December 2002 – July 2003. The plan supersedes a previous Plan of Management (1996). Review and replacement of the 1996 plan is required to achieve the following objectives:

- address a range of pressures from local and regional visitation and usage;
- facilitate coordination of management and masterplanning issues and implementation of improvement works; and to
- meet the requirements of the Crown Lands Act 1989 and the Local Government Amendment (Community Land Management) Act 1998.

Robertson Park incorporates both Council owned Community Land and Crown Reserve which is managed by the "Watsons Bay Public Park (R500460) Reserve Trust" controlled by Woollahra Council.

The Crown Reserve comprises Lots 91-93 DP 752011. The Community Land comprises Lots 1-4 DP 975647, and Lot 1 DP 921820. Clovelly Street that separates the two reserve areas is Council owned road reserve.

Robertson Park is located within Watsons Bay, an eastern harbour front residential area in Sydney's Eastern Suburbs. The open space forms a significant recreational and tourist destination for both local residents and visitors from Australia and overseas. The park is the focus of the public domain of Watsons Bay and provides an open space and visual link between The Gap and Sydney Harbour.

The plan seeks to balance open space and recreational needs with conservation of the inherent cultural heritage and physical qualities of Robertson Park. It aims to provide a basis to guide Woollahra Council's ongoing enhancement and maintenance of this important open space asset.

It is intended that the Plan of Management also provide the basis for the preparation of a Masterplan which will apply the principles and strategies developed through this document to the Robertson Park site.

The Masterplan will provide the basis for detailed design and implementation of a program of required improvements to the park.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.2 Structure of the Plan of Management

The Plan of Management process is presented in two parts:

Part One – Plan of Management

2 Basis for Management

Outline of the consultation process for the plan of management and the identification of values, and desired outcomes to be considered in the development of planning and management strategies. Review of Community land and Crown land management requirements.

3 Management Vision and Policies

Identification of an overall and detailed visions for Robertson Park, upon which a Management Strategy Framework is developed. The framework provides the rationale for development of planning and management strategies, along with monitoring and evaluation targets. Detailed management policies that further develop the Framework strategies are provided in practical categorisations relevant to open space management.

4 Planning Principles

Identification of planning principles in response to the identified visions for the park that provides a basis for ongoing development of a masterplan for park upgrading.

5 Funding

Prioritisation of actions required for the implementation of strategies including potential funding / management responsibilities, and possible funding services.

Part Two – Background

6 Review

Review of the existing physical and cultural character of the site as a basis for identification of values, desired outcomes and issues, and subsequent development of planning and management strategies.

7 Relevant Background Information

Appraisal of literature, reports, and studies relevant to the Plan of Management process, along with an identification of key implications of legislation and guidelines pertaining to the Park.

8 Appendix

Supporting documentation and related information

2.0 BASIS FOR MANAGEMENT

2.0 BASIS FOR MANAGEMENT

The basis for management describes the approach to determining management strategies for the site. This includes consultation and the identification of values and desired outcomes, based on consultation and the outcomes of Section 2.

The Community land categorisation for the land area defined by Clovelly Street (including Dunbar House) is also defined as required by the Local Government Act.

2.1 Methodology

In accordance with the guidelines established in "Succeeding with Plans of Management" (DLWC / Manidis Roberts 1996), the Robertson Park Plan of Management has been prepared based on a "values based approach". Using values as the foundation of the Plan of Management process ensures the plan will remain valid for longer.

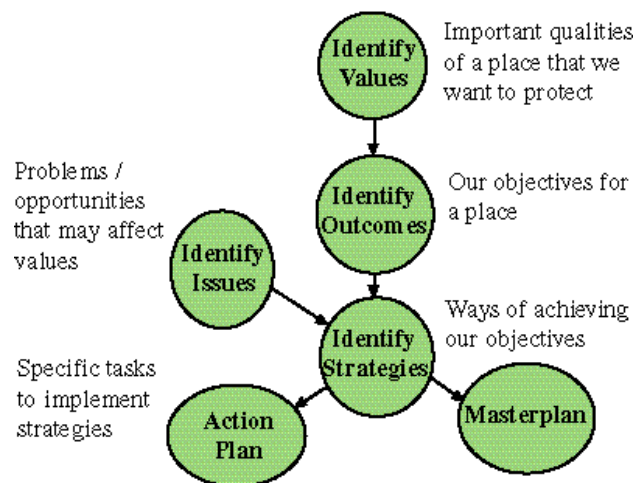
Alternatively an issues based approach (as often followed in plan preparation in the past) whilst dealing effectively with the issues of the day has no flexibility to deal with new issues that arise over time, and may quickly become out of date. This is "based on the assumption that community values change at a much slower rate than issues" (DLWC / Manidis Roberts 1996).

The identification of values for Robertson Park (refer 4.3) has provided a foundation for decision making which enables each step in plan preparation to relate and cross reference back to the established values.

Through a synthesis of the findings of the preceding review and assessment phase with the outcomes of the Community Working Group, a basis for management has been resolved that identifies:

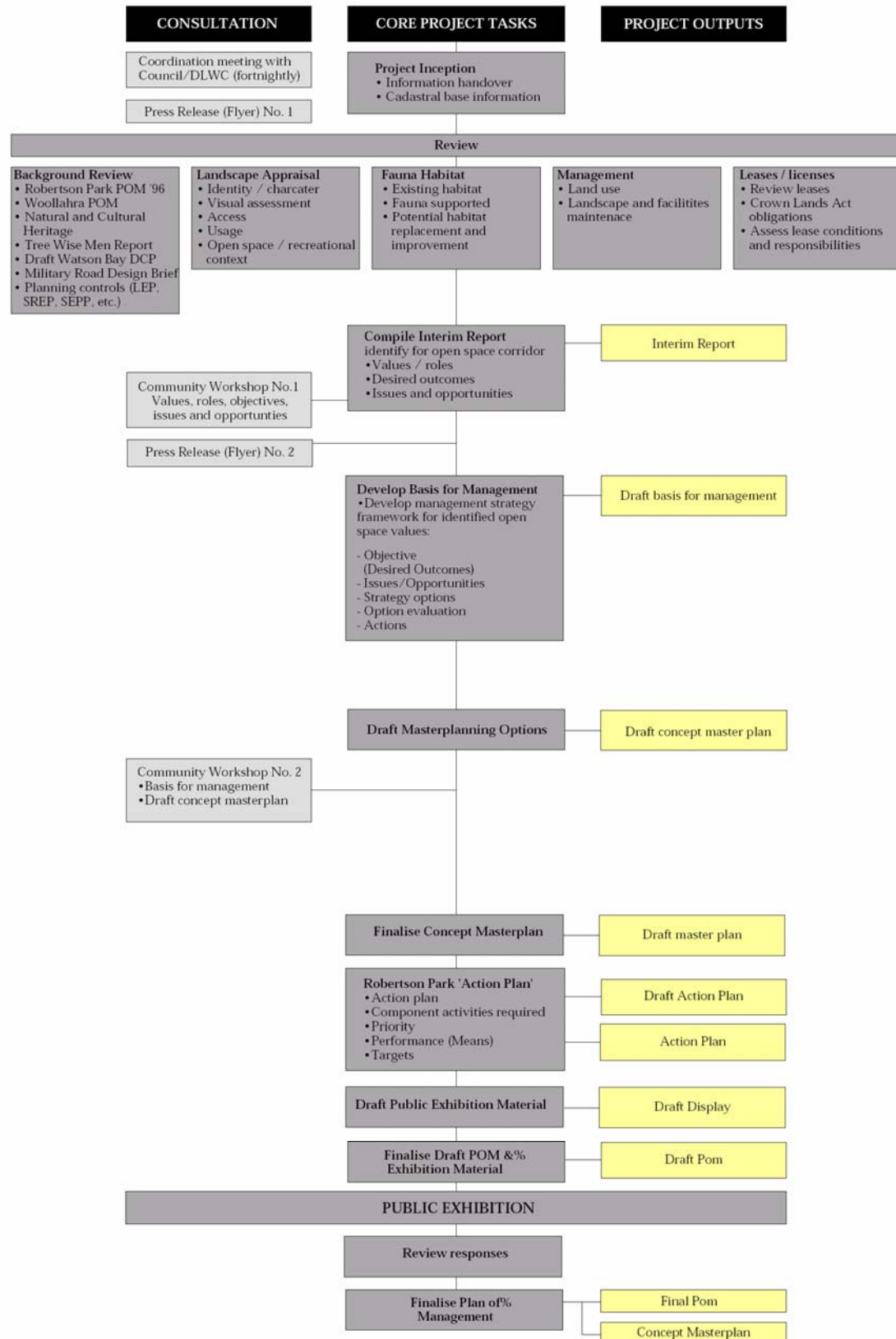
- values and roles of Robertson Park;
- issues and opportunities to be addressed in developing, planning and management strategies; and
- desired outcomes for the Masterplan and Plan of Management.

The diagram below outlines the key steps in preparing the Plan of Management.



2.0 BASIS FOR MANAGEMENT

The diagram below outlines the study process for the Robertson Park Plan of Management incorporating the relationship of site values to plan development, and the integration of consultation with the key study phases.



2.0 BASIS FOR MANAGEMENT

2.2 Consultation

The Plan of Management has incorporated several consultation streams to assist in the sourcing of information to develop planning and management strategies, and to inform relevant stakeholders and the local community of the study outcomes as they have developed.

2.2.1 Publicity

An article containing general information about Robertson Park Plan of Management appeared in the Wentworth Courier (local newspaper) on Wednesday 5 February 2003.

Flyers containing information about the Plan of Management and community workshops were widely distributed by a letter box drop to local residents in streets adjacent to the park. Flyers were also posted on community notice boards in the park and throughout the municipality.

The community working group was informed on the progress of the study through Council's website, email, and by direct mailout.

A copy of the newspaper article and the community workshop flyers are included in the Appendix to this report.

2.2.2 Community Working Group

Community consultation was undertaken to ascertain key issues and values in relation to the study area and surrounds.

Respondents to the press release and stakeholders sourced through organised groups participated in two community workshops. The workshops involved a level of technical input by the study team to initiate discussion of topics and issues on the agenda, however the emphasis was on involvement and input by community representatives.

Workshops were held at Vacluse Yacht Club Wastson Bay, as listed below:

- Workshop No.1 – Wednesday 12th February 2003
- Workshop No.2 – Wednesday 12th March 2003

Community Workshop Notes the Workshops are included in the Appendix.

2.2.3 Public exhibition

This plan was publicly exhibited throughout September and October 2003. In total 16 submissions were received. The Plan of Management and Masterplan were both amended to take into consideration comments received.

Following this a public meeting was held in the park on 27 January 2004 where the community was provided the opportunity to raise issues such as:

- Loss of car parking and traffic management along Clovelly Street;
- Location of creeks and use of underground water;
- Service access to Doyle's;
- Powerlines;
- Clovelly House;
- Disabled access; pathway locations;
- Position of the playground, amenity building and rotunda;
- Views into the park from surrounding residents;
- Tree replacement program; and
- Expenditure.

2.0 BASIS FOR MANAGEMENT

A further meeting was undertaken with community representatives on 20 April 2004 where amendments were again made to the park design elements. The Masterplan was finally publicly exhibited in September 2004.

2.3 Community values and desired outcomes

Values

Values, as identified in conjunction with the community working group, are the features / qualities of the park that should be protected or enhanced. Desired outcomes (also known as goals and aims) are objectives for the park that provide a basis for decision making.

The values and desired outcomes following were developed by the study team through a synthesis of the community workshop outcomes and study team investigations as outlined earlier in the document (Section 6.0 Review). Values are listed under key topics (as established in "Succeeding with Plans of Management", DLWC and Manidis Roberts) ranging down from higher priority to lower with each topic. Priorities are also based on the community workshop discussion and study team assessment.

2.0 BASIS FOR MANAGEMENT

Value	Desired Outcome
Natural Environment	
Established trees within the park	Optimal health maintained to all tree specimens
Trees – recreational amenity	Reinstatement of the shade and green character lost in recent tree removals
Natural landform / geological features	Park planning and use responds to the opportunities and constraints presented by existing site conditions
Biodiversity	Replacement and supplemental plantings optimise wildlife habitat and movement corridors
Heritage	
Robertson Park	Protection of park heritage significance
	Appropriate heritage conservation mechanisms in place
Clovelly house site	Protection and recognition of house site and curtilage
	Appropriate interpretation of Clovelly House site
Dunbar House (Zandvliet) cont.	Improved curtilage to Dunbar House compatible with heritage character
Zenleith house site	Protection and recognition of house site and curtilage
Rotunda	Protection and recognition of heritage interest - minimising conflict with earlier heritage items and their curtilage (eg Clovelly House)
	Improved condition and accessibility of Rotunda
Milestone Obelisk	Protection and recognition of heritage significance
Robert Watson Memorial Seat	Protection and recognition of heritage significance
Heritage tree plantings	Protection and conservation of heritage tree species.
Aboriginal Heritage	Robertson Park plays role in the recognition and interpretation of Aboriginal life and culture in the local area
Creekline through park	Recognise pre existing creekline and natural drainage characteristics of park site
Visual	
Views and vistas	Visual character of the park enhanced without affecting the amenity of adjoining commercial / residential areas
	Vistas and view lines integrated with tree management
Open grassland character	Open grassland areas provide community village green and relief from surrounding urban development
	Visual impact of adjoining commercial and residential uses minimised
Simple parkland character	Simple parkland character and natural elements as key park features
Residential amenity	Conflicts of park facilities / usage with residential amenity are minimised
	Privacy of the residential areas adjoining the park is respected
Integrated relationship to Military Road Commercial Centre	Strong relationship of the park with the adjoining urban centre whilst conserving parkland character
Social / Cultural	
Cultural heritage	European and Aboriginal heritage of the site and Watsons Bay area is protected and recognised
	Park plays an integral part of the Watsons Bay experience for visitors from the Sydney region, interstate and overseas
Community use of Dunbar House	Appropriate and sustainable level of community use as public library is maintained

2.0 BASIS FOR MANAGEMENT

Recreation / Park Use	
Passive recreational use	Robertson Park continues to function as a venue for the local community and visiting tourists seeking passive recreation in a waterfront atmosphere*
	Passive recreation as primary park use
Children's play	Informal and formal play opportunities for children of all ages
	Playground appearance and condition improved
Education	
Interpretation	Natural and cultural heritage features of the park are effectively interpreted where appropriate
Intrinsic	
Green open focus of Watsons Bay Centre for locals and visitors	Community open space area
	Ease of access and viability of park for local and visitor recreation
Simplicity and legibility of park character	Simple park layout provides for functional park use
	Coordinated park directional signage
	Strong inter-relationship between park spaces
	Equal access to park pathways and facilities
Individual park like no other	Essential qualities that provide Robertson Park with its distinctive character are conserved
	Structures are minimised and compatible / unobtrusive to landscape character
Open space connection between ocean and the harbour	Visual and functional link between the Harbour and The Gap is conserved and enhanced
Management / Maintenance	
Provision of passive recreational facilities	Functional unified character of furniture elements throughout the park
Quality of park environment	A clean and well kept park*
	Improved toilet facilities within the park without on park visual character, heritage sites, and park use
Availability of funding	Staged implementation programme addresses community and environmental priorities
Availability of leases, licenses, and bookings	Leasing and licensing of park facilities where there is no conflict with the community values / objectives of the park
	Potential use of park for corporate functions during non peak periods to supplement park improvement funding
	Permanent / fixed commercial uses within the park area are avoided
	Relevant leases / licences and casual bookings are authorised by this Plan of Management.

2.0 BASIS FOR MANAGEMENT

2.4 Community Land Categorisation

Council is required to identify a Community Land Categorisation for the area of the park defined by Clovelly Street and Robertson Place which community land under Council title.

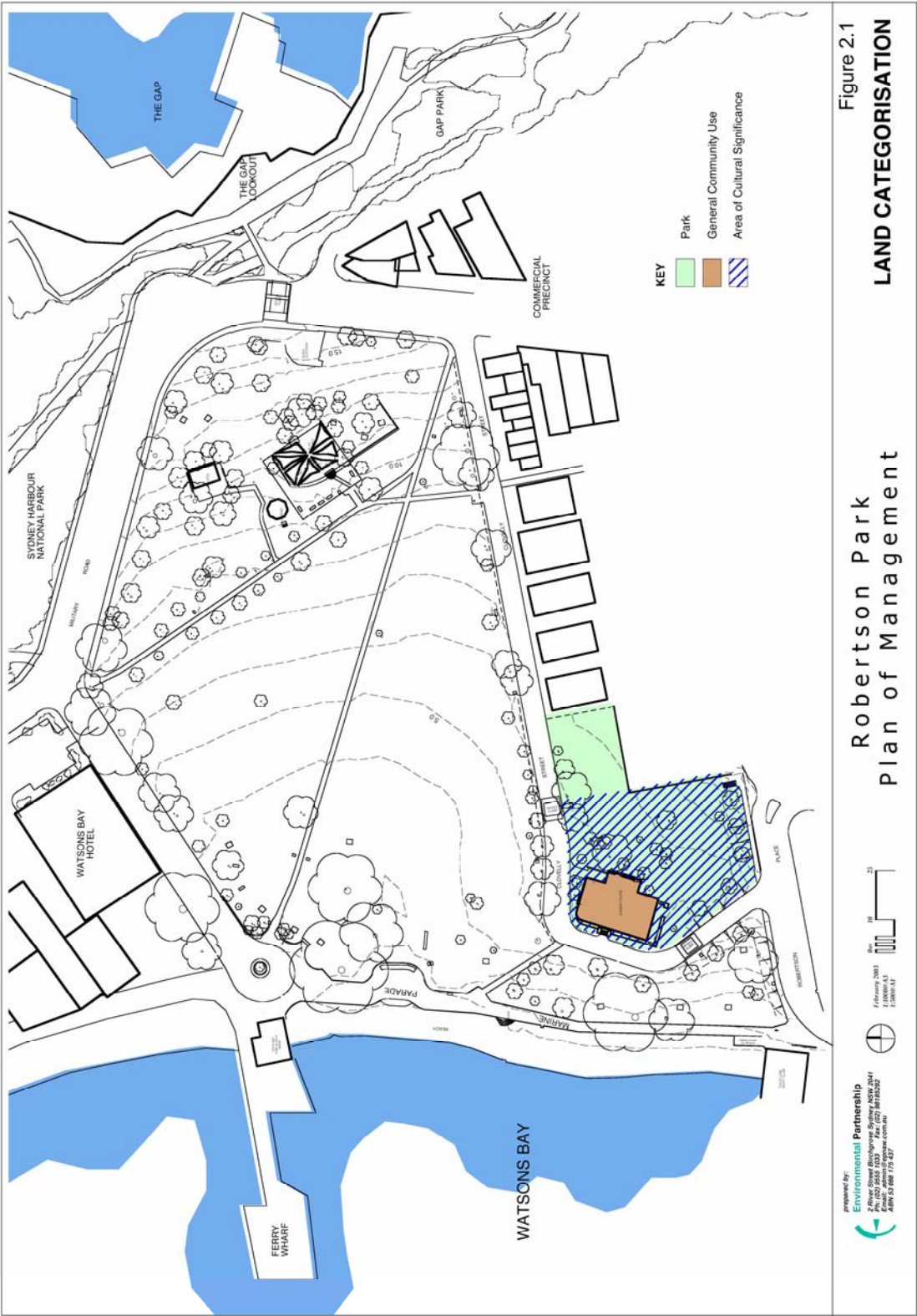
The table below provides a summary of the guidelines for categorisation and core objectives for community land categories that are set out in the Local Government (Community Land Amendment) Act 1998. The guidelines have been applied in the confirmation of the park and general community use categorisations as listed for the community land parcel. The core objectives must guide management of the land in accordance with its inherent values.

The following diagram confirms these categorisations as they relate to the site. Extent of categorisation is identified in Figure 2.1 (following page).

Category	Guidelines for Categorisation Local Government Amendment (Community Land Amendment) Act 1998	Core Objectives for Community Land Categories Local Government (Community Land Amendment) Act 1998
<i>Park</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The land is used or proposed to be, improved by landscaping, gardens or the provision of non-sporting equipment and facilities, for use mainly for passive or active recreational, social, educational and cultural pursuits that do not unduly intrude on the peaceful enjoyment on the land by others 	(a) Encourage, promote and facilitate recreational, cultural, social and educational pastimes and activities; (b) Provide for passive recreational activities and pastimes and for the casual playing of games; (c) Improve the land in such a way as to promote and facilitate its use to achieve the other core objectives for its management. (Clause 36G)
<i>General Community Use</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The land may be made available for use for any purpose for which community land may be used, whether by the public at large or by specific sections of the public; and Is not required to be categorised as a natural area and does not satisfy the guidelines for categorisation as a natural area, sportground, park or an area of cultural significance. 	Promote, encourage and provide for the use of the land, and provide facilities on the land to meet the current and future needs of the local community and the wider public in relation to: a) public recreation and the physical, cultural, social and intellectual welfare or development of individual members of the public; and b) purposes for which a lease, licence or other estate may be granted in respect of the land (other than the provision of public facilities) (Clause 36I)

2.0 BASIS FOR MANAGEMENT

Figure 2.1 – Land Categorisation



2.0 BASIS FOR MANAGEMENT

2.5 How this Plan of Management satisfies the principles of Crown land management (s.11 of *Crown Lands Act*)

Principle of Crown land management	How this Plan of Management is consistent with the principles
a. Environmental protection principles be observed in relation to the management and administration of Crown land.	a. The plan focuses on the conservation of the parks existing environmental qualities (eg. Native tree plantings) along with ensuring that cultural use of the park does not compromise environmental values of the park and adjoining areas (eg. harbour)
b. The natural resources of Crown land (including water, soil, flora, fauna and scenic quality) be conserved wherever possible.	b. Whilst not containing significant or extensive native vegetation this “cultural parkland” is typified by its heritage fig plantings where conservation and management is a key planning and management principle for the POM. The plan also outlines the conservation and enhancement of the visual qualities of the park (in particular its relationship to the Gap and Sydney Harbour).
c. Public use and enjoyment of appropriate Crown land be encouraged.	c. The plan aims to consolidate the existing passive recreational use of the park as its focal public use. Strategies seek to enhance the quality of passive amenity provided through enhanced shade / visual amenity tree planting, park facilities, and path access that better responds to contemporary usage pattern of the park and adjoining areas.
d. Where appropriate, multiple use of Crown land be encouraged.	d. The nature of passive recreational use of Robertson Park is of such high value that it is a significant local and visitor destination for recreation. In addition passive users occur across a range of functions as described by the community.
e. Where appropriate, Crown land be used and managed in such a way that both the land and its resources are sustained in perpetuity.	e. The plan provides a series of long term strategies to conserve the heritage significant passive parklands, and enhance these where possible.
f. Crown land be occupied, used, sold, leased, licensed or otherwise dealt with in the best interests of the State consistent with the above principles.	f. No existing or proposed leases apply to the Crown Land portion of Robertson Park. Intermittent licenses for event usage are considered by Council as land manager where conforming with Plan of Management, Council and Crown Policy.

2.0 BASIS FOR MANAGEMENT

3.0 MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

Management visions and policies will provide Council and those involved in management and maintenance of the open space with a frameworks for decision making and design and implementation of open space improvements.

3.1 Vision

Visions provide a basis for long term decision making in the park along with evaluation of potential planning and management strategies. The overall vision for Robertson Park developed through a synthesis of values as identified in the community workshop and study team investigations are listed below. Detailed visions for the park are listed in the Management Strategy Framework by framework category.

Overall Vision:

Robertson Park shall provide an appropriate informal parkland setting to its heritage significant 19th century building sites and past uses, reinforcing visual links across and from the open space to the harbour, consolidating family passive recreational grassed areas and related facilities for both local and visitor usage, and increasing native vegetation canopy for shade and visual amenity.

3.2 Management Strategy Framework

The framework provides the rationale for decision making in the Reserve as open space and related improvements evolve over the next 10 - 15 years. The framework also provides the basis for the establishment of principles for the development of a Concept Masterplan as outlined in Section 6.1. The Masterplan will provide a planning structure on which to formulate detailed design schemes for implementable improvement projects as funding becomes available.

3.2.1 Definitions

The management strategy framework describes the process of developing recommended management responses under the following headings:

Visions

All encompassing, broad vision (goal) statements for open space management against which decision making both current and future can be evaluated

Objectives

Values: as identified with the community working group, are the features / qualities of the park that should be protected or enhanced, and for which measurable outcomes should be established.

Desired outcomes: are objectives for the identified park values that provide a basis and direction to decision making.

Pressures and Opportunities

Pressures may include impacts on the land or environment, and potential conflicts between users or usage and other qualities of the site. Opportunities are the qualities of the site which make it suitable for natural value connection / enhancement, for community or recreational uses or activities, and which may not be fully realised at present.

Means

Strategies and actions to achieve the desired outcome.

Priority

Provides outline prioritisation of strategies based on community concerns and environmental and heritage management issues. Includes:

High:	target within 2 years
Medium:	target within 2-5 years
Low:	target within 2-8 years

Planning Principles

Provide a basis for achieving the identified strategies through the development of appropriate public domain design and materials solutions on the site.

3.2.1 Definitions (continued)

Assessment

Performance criteria: are physical / measurable effects of the desired outcomes usually driving monitoring programs.

Monitoring technique: How the performance criteria are monitored.

Framework Categories

The framework presents the above as a series of site specific categories aimed to provide commentary across Council's site specific open space planning strategies (based upon Succeeding with Plans of Management – DLWC and Manidis Roberts):

- Natural Environment – Physical and environmental factors relating to site quality and usage.
- Heritage – Conservation significance of and historical fabric.
- Visual – Relationship of the park to surrounding areas in terms of internal views and views into and out of the park area.
- Social / Cultural – Factors relating to the role of the park as an amenity for social interaction and use.
- Recreation / park use – Usage of the park for passive and active pursuits.
- Education – Role of the park as a community educational resource.
- Intrinsic – Specific factors contributing to site identity and character.
- Management and maintenance – Factors relating to open space management and maintenance.

2.0 BASIS FOR MANAGEMENT

3.2.2 Framework

Item	Objectives		Pressures and Opportunities	Means (Strategies)
	Values	Desired Outcome		
1.0 Natural Environment:				
VISION: Natural environmental values and processes related to vegetation, water cycle management, and fauna habitat are optimised, recognising historical cultural influences on the open space which should appropriately shape its parkland character				
1.1	Established trees within the park	Optimal health maintained to all tree specimens	<p>A number of landmark trees in the park have been removed due to poor health including:</p> <p>2 Moreton Bay Figs due to safety concerns; and</p> <p>whole avenue of Canary Island Date Palms due to infestation with <i>Fusarium oxysporum</i> (no known cure).</p> <p>Replace trees with species that are compatible with park use and heritage constraints</p> <p>Potential danger of falling branches from declining trees</p> <p>A number of Canary Island Date Palms were retained adjoining Dunbar House however <i>Fusarium oxysporum</i> may effect these specimens in the future</p> <p>High levels of park usage have led to root compaction problems to base of existing shade trees*</p> <p>Large trees often have mulch installed individually</p> <p>Connect mulch areas between adjoining trees</p> <p>Harsh site conditions that make tree establishment and maintenance difficult include:</p> <p>shallow sandstone soils;</p> <p>waterlogged soils; and</p> <p>strong sea winds</p> <p>A range of appropriate tree species are evident on the site:</p> <p>Moreton Bay Fig</p> <p>Port Jackson Fig</p> <p>Norfolk Island Pine</p> <p>Garden bed planting can create high recurrent maintenance requirements</p>	<p>Tree planting location and spec resolved through development masterplan options</p> <p>Undertake regular arborist rep ensure trees are well maintain reduce risk of personal injury fr branches</p> <p>Monitor trees for signs of infest</p> <p>Investigate potential treatments existing heritage significant tree minimise compaction and relati</p> <p>Consolidate mulched areas wh are close together to provide g; and potential for under-planting discourage access / compactio</p> <p>Select hardy species for replac plantings</p> <p>All new planting works to incor comprehensive establishment</p> <p>Garden bed planting to be rest key focal areas and resolved th development of masterplan opt</p>
1.2	Trees – recreational amenity	Reinstatement of the shade and green character lost in recent tree removals	<p>The recent required removal of mature trees has impacted park character and amenity</p> <p>Potential replacement with appropriate sympathetic species</p> <p>Tree removal has resulted in a general lack of shade provision through the centre of the park and along the foreshore</p> <p>Potential for enhanced planting to edges of the park</p> <p>Banksia's planted to the eastern section of the park are poor shade trees, constrain views / visibility and conflict with cultural park character</p> <p>Selectively remove plantings that obstruct views and replace with a more suitable species in an alternative location</p>	<p>Tree planting location and spec resolved through development masterplanning</p> <p>Replace shade trees through p park edges of existing site spec Port Jackson Fig) and appropri species (eg. Tuckeroo, Smoot Apple) in accordance with Mas</p> <p>Selective removal of inappropri plantings</p>

2.0 BASIS FOR MANAGEMENT

Item	Objectives		Pressures and Opportunities	Means (Strategies)
	Values	Desired Outcome		
			<p>Norfolk Island Hibiscus planting in the park causes skin irritation to many park users and the seed pods are a problem to maintenance staff (mowing)</p> <p>Norfolk Island Hibiscus characterised by good floral displays – flowering trees to be considered for replacement species</p> <p>Tree species for replacement plantings should be carefully considered</p> <p>Consider replacement tree species which has the following characteristics</p> <p>hardiness</p> <p>heritage compatibility</p> <p>wildlife habitat</p> <p>recreation</p> <p>visual compatibility</p>	<p>Removal of Hibiscus and replanting of species with culturally appropriate character</p> <p>Preferred tree planting species</p> <p>-Port Jackson Fig: existing park and common harbour foreshore</p> <p>-Tuckeroo: evergreen native tree will visually integrate with Figs, compatible with heritage theme can maintain clear sight lines</p> <p>-Sydney Red Gum: open native Sydney sandstone areas providing adjoining National Park</p> <p>- Norfolk Island Pines</p>
1.3	Natural landform / geological features	Park planning and use responds to the opportunities and constraints presented by existing site conditions	<p>A stream originally flowed through the site providing fresh water for early settlers</p> <p>Potential to interpret natural stream line with water feature and / or planting</p>	<p>Interpret the former creek align through the park and Marine Parade (Refer 6.1 Interpretation)</p>
			<p>Naturally poor drainage in the north west section of park near the hotel is further impacted by blocked stormwater drains</p> <p>Undertake drainage improvements to reduce ponding</p>	<p>Improvements to drainage to be through development of masterplan options to include:</p> <p>soakage tank for water storage use and surface water removal</p>
			<p>Sandstone outcrops adjoining Military Road – incorporating grooves from Clovelly House era</p>	<p>Protect sandstone outcrops and recognise as park feature</p>
			<p>Natural springs / watercourse underneath the South Head peninsula are a potential source of water</p> <p>Potential investigation of underground water sources</p>	<p>Liaise with National Parks and Service regarding investigation underground water sources and use in local area</p>
			<p>Potential water feature within park</p>	<p>Water element within Robertson preferred by Council due to ongoing maintenance and potential safety concerns</p>
1.4	Biodiversity	Replacement and supplemental plantings optimise wildlife habitat and movement corridors	<p>Some native plantings may conflict with park heritage character</p> <p>New plantings to potentially include site indigenous (native to the local area) tree, shrub and herbaceous (grasses) planting to appropriate location</p>	<p>Tree planting species and potential layout to be resolved through development of masterplan options</p>
			<p>The park has a different character from the bushland character of Gap Park and Gap Bluff</p>	<p>Park planning to recognise cultural heritage character of Robertson unique and separate from adjoining spaces</p>

2.0 Heritage:

VISION: Interpretation and recognition of the pre 20th century character, role and function of the site in Sydney's early European settlement related to its residences, other buildings and the pre 20th century informal park-like landscape is facilitated

2.1	Robertson Park	Protection of park heritage significance	<p>Original site character as harbour foreshore private allotments has been lost in progressive park works</p> <p>Improve relationship of park facilities / layout with heritage significant building sites</p>	<p>Park planning to identify opportunities to recognise 19th century site character use</p>
			<p>Robertson Park has a long history of being a destination for picnics / gatherings</p>	<p>Interpretation to integrate display information on early function / character of the site and tourist visitation</p>

2.0 BASIS FOR MANAGEMENT

Item	Objectives		Pressures and Opportunities	Means (Strategies)
	Values	Desired Outcome		
			The park provides curtilage to a number of heritage features	Park improvement works to respond to heritage elements
		Appropriate heritage conservation mechanisms in place	Robertson Park is an important heritage resource, but is not properly heritage listed Undertake steps to ensure that Robertson Park is protected through heritage listing	Robertson Park to be listed as State significance on the State Register and on the heritage s Woolahra LEP
2.2	Clovelly house site	Protection and recognition of house site and curtilage	The historical remnants of Clovelly House located within the eastern zone of the site (c.1824-1903). The house has high heritage significance as one of the first mansions in the area and its occupation by two former NSW Premiers Potential for sub-surface heritage significant elements (eg. Clovelly House footings)	Clovelly to be acknowledged / i through park improvement plan aimed at improving relationship park planning elements Provide coordinated interpretat
2.2 (cont.)	Clovelly house site (cont.)	Appropriate interpretation of Clovelly House site	Footing holes and steps in sandstone outcrop adjoining Military Road (formerly Clovelly House stable site) warrant investigation and interpretation	Undertake archaeological inve of Clovelly site following provisi archaeological permit Design park improvements in a Clovelly site to reflect interpre opportunities
				Investigate opportunities to reir original park boundary at north corner (encroached by Military enhancing interpretation potent Clovelly house out - buildings
2.3	Dunbar House (Zandvliet)	Protection and recognition of existing house and curtilage	Significant as an example of a 19th century Marine Villa associated with persons of importance in the cultural history of NSW	Park planning to identify opport better interpret the historical rol building and understanding of i character
		Improved curtilage to Dunbar House compatible with heritage character	Low masonry wall (c.1970-80's) to front / side of Dunbar House conflicts with heritage character The native planting garden (to the rear) is out of character with the rest of the park and provides poor curtilage to Dunbar House The existing roadway separates Dunbar House from the rest of the park	Improved heritage curtilage arc Dunbar house to be resolved th development of masterplan opt -improvement of disabled acce -removal of inappropriate mase walling Park planning to consider selec removal of inappropriate plantin appropriate replacement planti Park planning to consider optio improve relationship of Dunbar site with remainder of park corr with heritage character
2.4	Zenleith house site	Protection and recognition of house site and curtilage	Significant as an example of a pilots cottage	Park planning to consider pote interpretation of the house site
2.5	Rotunda	Improved condition and accessibility of Rotunda	Disabled access is currently not provided	Review potential for incorporat ramp access in any future upgr Rotunda (incorporate Heritage of design solution)
2.6	Milestone Obelisk	Protection and recognition of heritage significance	Milestone Obelisk (for Old South Head Road) located on steep bank with poor curtilage treatment Alternative locations with improved curtilage are available but would conflict with historical locations and potential for increased vandalism due to more prominent position Investigate appropriate interpretation	Retain existing location
2.7	Robert Watson Memorial Seat	Protection and recognition of heritage significance	Robert Watson residence was located to the south of the site – Thomas Watson had a residence closer to this location	Conserve seat structure in park and management Potential development of pede square at Military Road / Marin intersection as Watsons Squan
2.8	Heritage tree plantings	Protection and conservation of heritage tree species.	High levels of park usage have led to root compaction problems to base of existing shade trees*	Investigate potential treatments existing heritage significant tre minimise compaction and relat
2.9	Aboriginal Heritage	Robertson Park plays role in the	Limited knowledge / facts on Aboriginal heritage in the	Undertake further investigation

2.0 BASIS FOR MANAGEMENT

Item	Objectives		Pressures and Opportunities	Means (Strategies)
	Values	Desired Outcome		
		recognition and interpretation of Aboriginal life and culture in the local area	area	Oral History) as to Aboriginal C Heritage of Watsons Bay area and review potential for appropriate interpretation in Robertson Park adjoining National Park
2.10	Creekline through park	Recognise pre existing creekline and natural drainage characteristics of park site	Potential interpretation	Consider potential interpretation creekline without impact on park (eg. artwork in pavement)

3.0 Visual:				
VISION: A simple, informal, and safe parkland character (reflecting pre 20 th century site character) that reinforces and enhances significant view corridors, the harbour front setting, and visual links through, from and to the park				
3.1	Views and vistas	Visual character of the park enhanced without affecting the amenity of adjoining commercial / residential areas	Robertson Park is characterised by its excellent views of Sydney Harbour and the city skyline* Park planning to incorporate view protection as a fundamental principal Good views are available from western section of Robertson Park, however views are limited from the eastern section due to obstruction by planting and structures Potential to improve views from the eastern section of the site	Park planning to investigate and improve spatial layout, function and visual sight lines in the park
		Vistas and view lines integrated with tree management	Recent Norfolk Island Pine avenue planting along the north south pathway could potentially add to park separation and limitation of harbour views from eastern park and The Gap Potential to remove selectively trees to prevent future view obstruction from The Gap and eastern section of the park	Undertake selected removal of (planted prior to 1980) Norfolk Pines to centre of park to provide term retention of view lines from in accordance with the Masterplan
			Potential for shade tree planting to park edges without compromising views	
3.2	Open grassland character	Open grassland areas provide community village green and relief from surrounding urban development	Community desire for coverage of the park by hard surfaces and fencing to be minimised Park improvements to retain all grassed areas and avoid new structures and large areas of concrete pavement Large open grassed areas are often used for informal play but use is limited on hot days Investigate potential for new tree plantings (shade provision) within grass area Retain open grassed area for family ball games	Park planning to consider optimum maximisation and consolidation of grassed areas: - relocation of path access to a fragmentation and improve curb heritage features - improvement of path surfacing widths Provide shade tree planting adjacent open grassed areas to provide complimentary use
		Visual impact of adjoining commercial and residential uses minimised	Visual impact of surrounding area (eg. bus layover, commercial and residential areas) Potential for additional edge planting to screen surrounding uses	Amelioration of visual impact to be addressed through development masterplan options (eg. additional plantings) and Military Road improvement works
			Landscape elements adjoining Clovelly Street such as the treated pine fence and speed humps fail to compliment park character	Park improvement works to replace inappropriate furniture elements
3.3	Simple parkland character	Simple parkland character and natural elements as key park features	Potential for proliferation of "built" elements	Park masterplanning and complementary elements should contribute to a unified park character
3.4	Residential amenity	Conflicts of park facilities / usage with residential amenity are minimised	Potential impacts of lighting	Lighting of park features to complement residential amenity as key outcome
		Privacy of the residential areas adjoining the park is respected	Local residents have previously expressed concerns over the impact of developments and improvements to the park*	To ensure that residents' concerns are voiced and addressed, Council consult with the community over the park that may affect them

2.0 BASIS FOR MANAGEMENT

Item	Objectives		Pressures and Opportunities	Means (Strategies)
	Values	Desired Outcome		
3.5	Integrated relationship to Military Road Commercial Centre	Strong relationship of the park with the adjoining urban centre whilst conserving parkland character		Park planning to integrate with streetscape planning

Item	Objectives		Pressures and Opportunities	Means (Strategies)
	Values	Desired Outcome		
4.0 Social / Cultural:				
VISION: A balanced and sustainable community role for the park recognising both local and visitor (tourism) significance and acknowledging the park's civic role in the Watsons Bay village				
4.1	Cultural heritage	European and Aboriginal heritage of the site and Watsons Bay area is protected and recognised	Lack of interpretative reference to previous Aboriginal occupation / use of the site	Develop coordinated interpreta strategy Interpret cultural heritage featu 6.1 Interpretation)
		Park plays an integral part of the Watsons Bay experience for visitors from the Sydney region, interstate and overseas	The park experiences high levels of local and tourist visitation	Park improvements to emphasi and tourist family use and reinf roles through development of n options
4.2	Community use of Dunbar House	Appropriate and sustainable level of community use as public library is maintained	Limited parking	Reinforce current library use wi limitation of existing space

5.0 Recreation / park use:				
VISION: A sustainable range of passive family recreation activities in a quality landscape and visual setting that is not compromised by recreational uses and can facilitate long term flexibility of community use				
5.1	Passive recreational use	Robertson Park continues to function as a venue for the local community and visiting tourists seeking passive recreation in a waterfront atmosphere	Users are generally attracted to the western zone of park being closer to water Maintain the park as an open space for passive recreation (picnics, children's play area)	Passive recreational use to be emphasised and developed in masterplan options Park planning to investigate opportunities for enhancement of popular park areas to meet community usage and relieve pressures
		Passive recreation as primary park use	Park condition in the north western zone of Robertson Park (adjoining Military Road turning circle) is impacted by high use	Masterplan options to investigate alternative surface treatments and furniture provision
			Demand for dog use – currently not permitted in the park The rear of Dunbar House may be a suitable location for off leash dog use	Previous Council consideration management determined that a level of visitation and picnic use. Park remain dog free
			Potential conflicts of desired dog use with passive recreational uses Potential provision of off leash dog area adjoining Dunbar House Provision of dog waste bins and bags required	Off leash dog areas allowable at Christison Park (4.30pm-8.30am) Existing on leash dog areas at all Camp Cove Reserve (all times), Samuel Park (all times)
			Anti social behaviour / noise (especially at night) Potential for improved lighting to reduce levels of anti-social behaviour	Detailed design of park improvements ensure adequate light levels to social behaviour
			Active recreational uses such as a designated bike track conflict with existing passive recreational uses. The Woollahra Bike Plan requires modification in this	Liaise with internal Council department to ensure that a bike track is not

2.0 BASIS FOR MANAGEMENT

Item	Objectives		Pressures and Opportunities	Means (Strategies)
	Values	Desired Outcome		
			regard.	constructed within the park
5.2	Childrens play	Informal and formal play opportunities for children of all ages	Existing playground will require medium term improvements Revitalise playground appearance	Childrens play equipment to be in compliance with guidelines e by Australian Standards and V Council Playground Policy*
		Playground appearance and condition improved	Playground gate needs improved childproof locking mechanism Existing wood chip surface to playground should be upgraded Lack of play facilities for children aged 5 yrs and over and for disabled users.	Safety considerations to feature purchase, installation and layout facilities* Potential upgrading to "Wetpou Playground improvements to c enhancement of equipment for and abilities.
			Informal play opportunities exist within the grass areas of the park	Consolidate open grassed area recreational use
			Lack of access for children with disabilities	Relocate playground in accordance w Masterplan and provide graded pathw

6.0 Education:

VISION: Robertson Park provides an educational link to the 19th century history of settlement in Sydney, the natural environment, and our contemporary community in an outdoor harbour side setting

6.1	Interpretation	Natural and cultural heritage features of the park are effectively interpreted where appropriate	A range of natural and cultural heritage features elements exist within the park Interpret former heritage uses of the site (eg. Clovelly House, Cork House, and Dunbar House)	Undertake coordinated Interpretation Strategy aimed at developing tl and styles for a coordinated sig approach throughout the park
			Lack of heritage interpretation through Robertson Park and Marine Parade promenade Recognise unique role / function of the site – only park joining Harbour and ocean	Refer also section 2.0 Heritage

7.0 Intrinsic

7.1	Green open focus of Watsons Bay Centre for locals and visitors	Community open space area	Expanded park visitation is limited by parking provision especially during peak use periods – existing parking facilities limited to onstreet parking and two carparks located adjoining the northern boundary Emphasise the role of public transport in providing access to the Watsons Bay area	Promote public transport as a means of accessing Robertson the Watsons Bay area through transport related facilities
		Ease of access and viability of park for local and visitor recreation	Frequency of ferry service fails to meet community expectations A residential parking scheme has been implemented along Clovelly Street with zones designated for resident parking* – this reduces the amount of parking available for visitors Consider time limit and pay for parking provisions	Liaise with Sydney Ferries for improvement to service Council to consider introductory parking and residential parking place of resident only parking s
7.2	Simplicity and legibility of park character	Simple park layout provides for functional park use	Major pedestrian nodal point occurs at intersection of Military Road, Ferry Wharf and Marine Parade and is compromised by vehicular roadway and associated low level traffic The roundabout at the end of Military Road is an activity hub characterised by pedestrian and traffic movements Robertson Park is located between public transport nodes with the Ferry terminal located to the west and bus stop located to the east – most direct connection route is through the park Poor physical relationship between the park and The	Options for revised traffic config aimed at improving pedestrian be resolved through development masterplan options Relationship between park and surrounding uses to be enhanced resolved through development masterplan options: - improved path access - enhanced visual character - potential pedestrianisation of Road turning circle (as above) - enhanced pedestrian entry pc

2.0 BASIS FOR MANAGEMENT

Item	Objectives		Pressures and Opportunities	Means (Strategies)
	Values	Desired Outcome		
			Gap Provide improved access between the park and The Gap	
			Potentially reinforce park role as a land access when viewed from the Gap lookout	
			Major entry points to the park are low key	Improve park entry points with entry pavements, sandstone wall entry signage as appropriate
7.2 (cont.)	Simplicity and legibility of park character (cont.)	Simple park layout provides for functional park use (cont.)	The existing sandstone wall along Marine Parade reduces the level of pedestrian access / connectivity between the park and foreshore promenade	Potential to provide stepped access seating edge to southern section provide more free access and improve relationship between the park and promenade
		Coordinated park directional signage	Directional signage is poorly provided for visitors to the Watsons Bay area Clear way-finding signage is required	Prepare coordinated signage integrating: way finding information interpretative signage
		Strong inter-relationship between park spaces	Separation of eastern and western parts of the park due to functional and visual barrier caused by axial pathways, grouped vegetation and structures (playground, gazebo, amenities block) Consider removal / relocation of offending structures and planting	Spatial relationships within park enhanced through development masterplan options considering relocation of pathways and facilities part of an enhanced overall design
			The open space area to the side and rear of Dunbar House is separated from the remainder of Robertson Park by Clovelly Street and as such has limited public recreation potential	Consider provision of raised shared access paved street surface to Street between Dunbar House waterfront to improve connectivity
		Equal access to park pathways and facilities	Footpaths are of insufficient width to cater to existing high levels of usage Potential improvements including path width and surface The existence of pedestrian "desire lines" suggest that the existing path alignments fail to cater to user demands Consider reconfiguration of path system to provide improved routes catering to user demand	Long term path alignment strategy to be resolved through development masterplan options
			Improved ramp access required for Rotunda and Dunbar House	Investigate potential strategies access to heritage items with Heritage specialist
7.3	Individual park like no other	Essential qualities that provide Robertson Park with its distinctive character are conserved	Long term impact tree plantings on harbour views	Park masterplan to review potential visual impacts of existing and proposed plantings
			Impacts of excessive park usage	Park masterplan to define high areas and provide appropriate treatment
		Structures are minimised and compatible / unobtrusive to landscape character		Any architectural design proposed for park to be undertaken in consultation with Urban Design and Heritage Committee Watsons Bay
7.4	Open space connection between ocean and the harbour	Visual and functional link between the Harbour and The Gap is conserved and enhanced		Robertson Park to be conserved protected as open space

2.0 BASIS FOR MANAGEMENT

Item	Objectives		Pressures and Opportunities	Means (Strategies)
	Values	Desired Outcome		
8.0 Management / maintenance:				
VISION: Community use to be supported by a coordinated and quality park setting and a sustainable effective park maintenance regime				
8.1	Provision of passive recreational facilities	Functional unified character of furniture elements throughout the park	Range of furniture styles within the park Upgrade with consistent treatment	Rationalise location of seats ar to under shade trees adjoining boundaries with appropriate we surface Furniture to be from Councils a public domain furniture palette
8.1	Provision of passive recreational facilities (cont.)	Functional unified character of furniture element throughout the park	Tables and seats require wearing surface underneath – maintenance problem	Furniture to be provided with a wearing surface under
			Furniture provided under mature fig trees increase soil compaction and impacts tree health	Investigate potential treatments existing heritage significant trees minimise compaction and relat
			Lack of public drinking facilities (bubblers)	Vandal resistant bubblers should be provided at suitable points eg. 1 seating area / proposed Watso Square)
			The location of furniture elements (bins and seats) could be improved	Placement of furniture items in consolidated locations which m potential for park use
			Different lighting style between park and Marine Parade Potential for better lighting integration	Lighting style and position to ensure user safety and integrate with surrounding areas – to be resolved in detail development phase
			Potential for barbecues to attract excessive park usage and create maintenance problems	No barbecue provision in park
8.2	Quality of park environment	A clean and well kept park*	Bin provision / servicing fails to meet use requirements during peak times Potential for improved siting of bins	Council to pursue a consistent maintenance programme to ensure that the Park remains a safe, clean and public open space*
			Increased maintenance is needed to cope with greater amounts of rubbish during peak usage times (summer, school/public holidays and weekends)*	Review recurrent maintenance programme to respond to potential improvements and current needs
			The take away food shop located on the ferry wharf is a large contributor to excess rubbish Opportunity for shop to contribute to resolving rubbish issue	
			Potential for provision of recycling bins	
			Grass areas are in overall poor condition due lack of regular irrigation and reduced capacity to handle heavy use Potential to fine grade and reinstate turf areas incorporating irrigation system	Upgrade grass areas with improved topsoil, drainage and irrigation
8.2 (cont.)	Quality of park environment (cont.)	A clean and well kept park*	Steep landform adjoining roadways makes grass maintenance difficult	Options for embankments improved including groundcover planting regrading to be resolved through development of masterplan options
		Improved toilet facilities within the park without on park visual character, heritage sites, and park use	The amenities block receives high visitation from park users and tourist bus users Opportunity for general facilities upgrade or relocation of amenities block	Masterplan options to incorporate relocation of amenities block where facilities require major upgrade
8.3	Availability of funding	Staged implementation programme addresses community and environmental	Funding for improvement works needs to be confirmed / established	Masterplan and staged action plan provide basis for seeking of external funding

2.0 BASIS FOR MANAGEMENT

Item	Objectives		Pressures and Opportunities	Means (Strategies)
	Values	Desired Outcome		
		priorities	Potential for external funding through Stage Government programmes (eg. Metropolitan Green Space, Heritage Commission, etc.)	funding
8.4	Availability of leases, licenses, and bookings	Leasing and licensing of park facilities where there is no conflict with the community values / objectives of the park and consistent with Reserve purpose	Ground floor of Dunbar House is shared between café and library use	Continue leasing to provide cor use in accordance with appropri conditions
		Potential use of park for functions during non peak periods to supplement park improvement funding	Potential impacts of events on general park use	Continue bookings for functions; not compromise public use and of land and residential amenity
				Uses should be consistent with Council and Crown Policy regarding function use and bookings
				Size of events and booked area limited to maintain community use and use of park during temporary
		Permanent / fixed commercial uses within the park area are avoided	Council occasionally grants permission for use of the park for wedding ceremonies / photographs for a nominal fee	No permanent / fixed commercial should be allowable within the park

3.3 Detailed Management Strategies

The following management policies detail the strategies as identified in the management strategy framework as specific requirements within the open space management categories into which they will fall for day to day Council decision making and planning.

3.3.1 Heritage

General

The key policy to be pursued in ongoing park enhancement and management is the redressing of the cumulative erosion of the park's 19th century site fabric and character, to enable understanding of this highly important phase of the park's history and the site's significance to Sydney.

In general conservation of heritage elements is to be balanced with appropriate evolution and development of the park to meet contemporary use and needs of the local community and visitors. Interpretation to facilitate understanding of former site character and use is to provide emphasis on 19th century heritage.

Detailed Policies:

Design

- Existing park currently reflects overall 20th century character influenced by imposition of 'city beautiful' style in 1930s, spasmodic tree planting, linear pathways, and assorted structures. Park planning to promote awareness of 19th century site character and use.
- Park planning to identify opportunities to better interpret the historical role and use of the site and past building identity and character
- Park improvements to recognise existing and pre existing heritage elements.

Aboriginal heritage

- Undertake investigation into Aboriginal Cultural Heritage of Watsons Bay area generally.
- Review potential for appropriate interpretation in Robertson Park and adjoining National Park as part of a coordinated approach.

Interpretation

- Prepare coordinated Interpretative Strategy for Watsons Bay area, to ensure coordination with adjoining spaces such as The Gap, National Park and Commercial Centre. Starting to incorporate the key themes of Aboriginal Heritage, European Heritage and Environmental.
- Consider incorporation of Interpretative Strategy with a potential Watson Bay signage strategy integrating:
 - interpretative signage.
 - wayfinding signage; and
 - information signage.
- Interpretative Strategy to identify standards for communication mediums including:
 - design based opportunities (eg. house foundation layout)
 - information panels
 - artwork
- Prepare interpretative material for individual precincts eg. Robertson Park, The Gap, Clovelly, Zenleith etc.
- Content for interpretative display for Robertson Park to include information on early use of the site, and historic tourist visitation.

2.0 BASIS FOR MANAGEMENT

Clovelly and Zenleith

- Identify sites on plan and inventory accompanying proposed listing of Robertson Park on Woollahra LEP heritage schedule and State Heritage Register.
- Obtain archaeological permit under S. 139 of NSW Heritage Act 1977 for further sub surface investigations in the event that earthworks are proposed to occur within their vicinity.
[N.B. If the heritage listing were to occur before works took place, the application for a permit would be lodged under S.60 of that Act.]
- One archaeological historical and field study has already been undertaken of the site of Clovelly in 1991, although no excavations apparently took place. No study has been undertaken of Zenleith. Given the paucity of surface remains, excavations of both sites to locate their foundations is desirable.
- Determine appropriate curtilages for Clovelly and Zenleith, mark these on a plan and take into account during park design development.
- Interpret house sites, adjoining outhouses and curtilage through a combination of mediums (refer interpretation) that are compatible with established park values.
- Park planning to reinforce curtilage of buildings to enhance interpretation.

Dunbar House

- Dunbar House is already listed on Woollahra LEP 1995 as "Clovelly St, Watsons Bay 11 Dunbar House building. The Conservation Management Plan (2002) recommend it be listed on the State Heritage Register, but this has yet to occur. The house is also listed by the National Trust (NSW) since 1975.
- Although a relatively low priority, the sub-surface investigation of the foundations of outbuildings would require an archaeological permit under S.60 of the Heritage Act.
- The name Dunbar House has only been used since the 1980's. Consider renaming the building to Zandvliet, a former name with heritage significance.
- Interpret house site, adjoining outhouses and curtilage through a combination of mediums (refer interpretation) that are compatible with established park values.
- Park planning to respect curtilage of building to enable interpretation.
- Provide pedestrian pavement along section of Clovelly Street to communicate intended shared use of roadway and improve relationship between Dunbar House precinct and the rest of Robertson Park.

Rotunda

- Dating from the 1940s the Rotunda is of heritage interest.
- Maintain Rotunda structure in good condition
- Consider equal access for Rotunda entry. Note, in current location 1:14 ramp gradient is not feasible.

Robert Watson memorial seat

- Protect memorial seat.
- Park planning and management to respond to the seat as a heritage feature, such as potential incorporation with creation of a pedestrian square in the location of the existing Military Rd turning circle.

Milestone obelisk

- Believed to have been relocated in the past, following realignment of South Head Road.
- Current location on roadside with steep bank provides a poor setting for a heritage item.

2.0 BASIS FOR MANAGEMENT

3.3.2 Recreational use

General

Continue existing park usage providing for local and tourist, family oriented passive use, without undue impact on other park values.

Detailed Policies:

Design

- Maintain existing simple park character, with improvements aimed at addressing passive recreational emphasis such as consolidated grass areas for informal ball games.
- Enhance park shade to support summer passive usage without undue impacts of intensely focussed usage.
- Consider enhancement of surfacing treatments to high usage areas.

Dog use

- Previous Council consideration of dog management determined that due to high level of visitation and picnic usage that Robertson Park remain dog free.
- Requirements of the Companion Animals Act such as boundary fencing conflict with established values and objectives of the park.
- Existing on and off leash dog use is permitted elsewhere in the municipality.

Leases, licences, and bookings

- Current leasing and licensing arrangements are believed to be sustainable for continuation. The consultation phase did not determine that any of the current uses was incompatible or resulted in unreasonable impacts.
- Continue leasing of Dunbar House to provide community use in accordance with existing conditions.
- Continue hiring of the park for small groups for wedding ceremony / photo's and small functions for a nominal fee.
- No permanent / fixed commercial uses should be allowed within the park area.

3.3.3 Park facilities

General

Park facilities should be upgraded to meet user needs in the long term and improve overall park character. Relocation of some structures / uses to improve views, visibility and useability of eastern park section, and to facilitate interpretation of heritage elements with adequate curtilage is recommended. Improvement works should incorporate good quality, hard wearing, and vandal resistant items / materials, installed with appropriate hard wearing surface materials to reduce pressures on maintenance.

Detailed Policies:

Playground

- Selective removal of screening vegetation in short term around amenities block aimed at increasing visibility and improving views.
- Park planning to consider long term relocation of playground to a position adjoining park edges aimed improving visibility, views, heritage curtilage, and the existing cluttered relationship of structures in the eastern park.
- Potential playground improvements to consider:
 - location of seats and play equipment to view across playground to park or other views;
 - provision of play equipment for all ages use;
 - provision of play equipment for all abilities;
 - play equipment updated in compliance with Australian standards; and
 - improved softfall surface (eg. wetpour rubber).

2.0 BASIS FOR MANAGEMENT

Toilet block

- Selective removal of screening vegetation in short term around toilet block aimed at increasing visibility for park users.
- Improved lighting provision around toilet block aimed at improving visibility for park users.
- Park planning to consider long term relocation of amenities block to a position adjoining park edges, aimed at improving relationship with other structures and the Clovelly House site.
- Facilities improvement to recognise toilet use pressures from tourist visitation of surrounding attractions (The Gap, and Sydney Harbour National Park) and from the Watsons Bay Commercial Centre.
- Following up potential funding assistance of toilet upgrading with NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service / and tourism operators.

Picnic tables / park seats

- Upgrade picnic tables with the approved furniture from Council's suite of furniture items.
- Rationalise location of furniture items, and position in relation to park surroundings to take in views, and to distribute equitably.
- Located picnic tables under shade trees, with provision of some picnic tables positioned to receive winter sun.
- Provide platform tables at base of mature fig trees to reduce compaction and high usage pressures.
- Provide hard wearing surface treatment under park furniture elements.

Signage

- Information and way finding signage should be put at a good coordinated approach for Robertson Park and Watsons Bay Commercial Centre.
Refer also 5.2.1 Heritage - Interpretation.

Lighting

- Lighting design to enhance user safety and integrate with adjoining areas.

3.3.4 Pedestrian access

General

Pedestrian access that responds to current user needs and the simple site character should be provided in accordance with Watsons Bay DCP and other relevant planning instruments. The alignment of path access should also aim to consolidate useable park grassed areas as "green open space", and reduces past incursions on the heritage curtilage of former house sites such as *Clovelly*.

Detailed Policies:

Design

- Respond to appropriate patterns of contemporary usage to link external focal points such as The Gap, Ferry Wharf, Commercial Centre, and Marine Parade.
- Maximise and consolidate grass areas not impacted by path crossings.
- Respond to curtilage requirements of archaeological sites.
- Provide path access to park facilities such as the playground and toilet, from the main usage areas
- Comply with Australian Standard / BCA requirements for safety eg. – handrail to top of walls over 1 metre.

Design details

- Improve path width to cater to park use demands (eg. 2-2.5m).
- Path surface to be compatible with heritage elements and adjoining elements (eg. exposed aggregate concrete – with quartz / basalt aggregate).
- Provide nodal seating areas in suitable hard wearing pavement (eg. Stabilised granite gravel) at path intersections.
- Stepped access / seating edge to Marine Parade.

2.0 BASIS FOR MANAGEMENT

- Edge treatment to Military Road to prevent access over unsafe / steep areas.

Equal access

- Provide disabled access throughout the park and to all structures where practical (eg. Dunbar House, playgrounds, toilets and Rotunda).
- Equal access provision should be designed to respond to existing and pre-existing heritage fabric.

3.3.5 Vehicular access and parking

General

Minimise impacts of vehicular access and parking on park values.

Detailed Policies:

Military Road

- Coordinate park improvement works with Military Road upgrade project.
- Relocate existing Military Road turning circle (at Wharf) for creation of a pedestrian focal point with improved amenity and useability.
- Provide upgraded pedestrian footpath adjoining Military Road.

Parking

- Consider introduction of pay for parking scheme in place of currently provided resident only parking scheme and unlimited free parking. (Note: to be coordinated with future Military Road management initiatives)

Ferry

- Promote ferry / other public transport as an alternative means of accessing the site.
- Liaise with Sydney Ferries for improved services.

3.3.6 Vegetation Management

General

Undertake supplementary park plantings as a priority to improve visual and recreational amenity in accordance with established park values. Maintain existing park plantings.

Detailed Policies:

Supplementary tree planting

- Select hardy species for supplementary planting that are compatible with cultural heritage character, and which maintain views through the park under tree canopy.

Park edge and internal shade planting:

- Port Jackson Fig *Ficus rubiginosa*
- Tuckeroo *Cupaniopsis anarchoioides*
- Norfolk Island Pine *Araucaria heterophylla*

Deciduous Planting to heritage precincts (Clovelly or Dunbar House):

- Holm Oak *Quercus ilex*

Native planting to Military Road edge opposite National Park:

- Sydney Red Gum *Angophora costata*

Military Road Commercial Precinct: (subject to separate design study)

- All new replacement works to incorporate quality preparation, irrigation and establishment period.
- Consolidate planting within the park adjoining park edges where shade amenity for park use will be enhanced.

2.0 BASIS FOR MANAGEMENT

- Reinforce visual buffer to built edges (eg. Watsons Bay Hotel)

Tree removal

- Selectively remove some Norfolk Island Pines (planted prior to 1980's) due to future visual impacts on views from The Gap to Harbour in accordance with the Masterplan.
- Potential retention of north and south end plantings. North plantings to enhance Clovelly Heritage interpretation.
- Selectively remove low level planting around eastern park structures (toilet and playground) due to visual obstruction.
- Remove Norfolk Island Hibiscus due to allergy / maintenance difficulties. Large trees are to be retained in the short to medium term and removed when replacement trees have sufficiently established.
- Trees for removal to be marked on site by Council Landscape Architect and Tree Preservation Officer.

Tree health

- Monitor remaining Canary Island Date Palms for signs of infestation with Fusarium virus.
- Undertake regular arborist reports to ensure trees are well maintained and reduce risk of personal injury from falling branches, etc.

Garden bed planting

- To be used minimally (due to increased maintenance requirements) as a design tool to direct pedestrian access (such as park edges eg. Military Road and adjoining Military Road turning circle) in conjunction with tree planting.
- Garden bed species to be native hardy, shade tolerant, and have low maintenance requirements.

Grass areas

- Consolidate grassed areas through long term path realignment.
- Upgrade grass areas with improved:
 - drainage;
 - irrigation;
 - topsoil; and
 - turf / grass seed oversowing.

3.3.7 Park area

General

The development of planning opportunities as identified in this plan for locations such as the Military Road termination at the Watsons Bay Ferry Wharf (potential pedestrian square) along with the outcomes of the Military Road Commercial Precinct project, raise the potential need for localised adjustments to available park area. The overall improvement of park function and amenity and enhancement of the general public domain of Watsons Bay are the benefits of these adjustments.

The potential locations are:

1 The termination of Military Road at Watsons Bay Wharf

Proposed relocation of roundabout (under this plan of management) to the east to facilitate development of pedestrian square – requires loss of approximately 115 square metres of existing park edge for relocation of roundabout. However this will enable the pedestrianisation of approximately 352 square metres of existing roadway at this busy pedestrian node and entry to the park.

2 Proposed roundabout at Military Road / Cliff Street intersection

Proposed provision of roundabout (under Military Road Commercial Precinct project) at intersection to facilitate turn around of buses. Would require roadside pedestrian footpath to be relocated to within the park boundary at the edge of the roundabout. The roundabout design is subject to ongoing liaison by Council with the State Transport Authority however the path relocation may involve between 15-20 metres of area. It is noted that this park edge area

2.0 BASIS FOR MANAGEMENT

adjoining the road is not of high recreational usage, and would be off set by area gained at item 3 (see below).

3 **Proposed roundabout on Military Road adjacent The Gap**

Proposed provision of roundabout (under Military Road Commercial Precinct project) at corner to facilitate turn around of cars, and smaller vehicles. The existing roadway at this corner encroaches on the historical park boundary by approximately 111 square metres. The proposed realignment of the road for a roundabout here facilitates a gain in park area based on the existing situation of 92.5 square metres. The additional area would facilitate enhanced curtilage and interpretation of the historic Clovelly House site, although not as significant as that afforded by a potential road realignment at the corner excluding a roundabout (identified as an option by the Military Road Commercial Precinct project).

Detailed Policies

- Pursue adjustments to park area as identified above to facilitate improved heritage curtilage, pedestrian access, and general quality of the Watsons Bay public domain .
- Pursue adjustments to park area as identified above to facilitate improved recreational amenity or at minimum – no loss to existing recreational amenity.
- All mature existing trees to be protected and retained (excluding Norfolk Island Hibiscus)

3.3.8 Management and maintenance

General

Provide a consistent level of park presentation that is sustainable with Council's maintenance resources.

Detailed Policies

Views / vistas

- Park planning to investigate options to improve spatial layout, function and visual sight lines in the park.
- Undertake removal of recent Norfolk Island Pine plantings (planted prior to 1980) to provide long term retention of view lines from The Gap (refer 5.2.6 Vegetation Management)
- Amelioration of visual impact from surrounding uses to be addressed through tree planting to the edge of the park.

Council maintenance

- Review park maintenance programme to respond to proposed park improvements and current needs.

Water

- Undertake investigation to ascertain cause of ponding and drainage problems in the north western section of the park.
- Consider construction of an underground soakage pit at this location with supporting subsoil drainage to address drainage problems.
- Liaise with NPWS regarding investigation of underground water sources and potential use for irrigation in local area / interpretation.

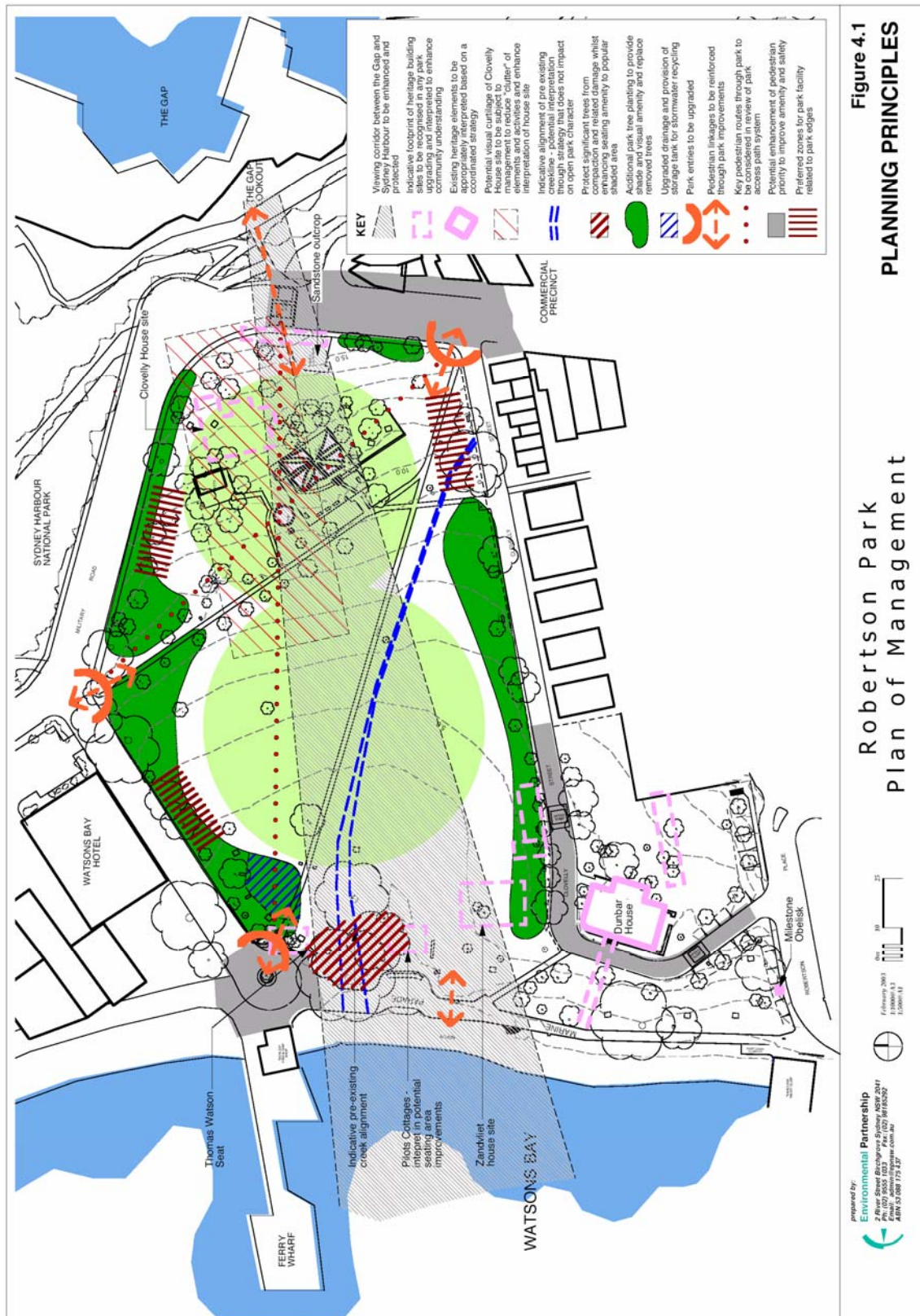
4.0 PLANNING PRINCIPLES

4.1 Planning principles for Robertson Park

Planning principles are listed in the Management Strategy and Action Framework. The principles establish a basis for achieving the identified Visions through the development of appropriate public domain design and materials solutions. The principles are identified on the Principles Plan following (Figure 4.1).

The principles plan provides a framework for development of a site masterplan and development of design solutions for the park.

Figure 4.1 – Planning Principles



Part B
BACKGROUND

5.0 IMPLEMENTATION FUNDING

5.1 Implementation funding for improvement works

In addition to funds available from Council's capital works program and maintenance budgets, there are opportunities for grants and corporate sponsorship that could contribute to the completion of development works to the Robertson Park.

The review below, outlines applicable sources of external funding that should be pursued by both Council and the park's active stakeholders, to hasten the progress of park improvements.

The most applicable sources of funding are listed below, summarising these funding bodies and relevant application criteria.

Name of grant	Purpose	Administering agency	Scope and limits of assistance
Public Reserves Management Fund Programme - Local Parks and Reserves Public Reserves Management fund Programme - Showgrounds Assistance Scheme	Improvements to Crown Reserves	NSW Department of Lands	Dollar for dollar funding but level of assistance is limited.
Job Skills	Over 21 year old trained labour for revegetation work	Dept. of Employment, Education and Training	Labour to assist in documented revegetation work. Grant covers funding for a co-ordinator and approx. 20 trainee staff for 12 months.
Heritage 2001	Funding for physical conservation works on heritage sites & structures	NSW Heritage Office	Additional funding for items being directly from State Treasury. Capital works/project specific funding only, with expectation that Council or other authority will manage and maintain.
Metropolitan Greenspace	Funding for development and enhancement of open space	Planning NSW	1 million plus total per year - average funding \$50-100,000.00 on dollar for dollar basis with council.
Australian Government Envirofund	Conserve Australia's environment and natural resources	Natural Heritage Trust	Grants of up to \$30,000.00 to carry out on ground actions to target local problems

Part B
BACKGROUND

6.0 REVIEW



View of Sydney Harbour



Sydney Harbour National Park



The Gap



Watsons Bay Commercial Area

This section provides a review of the existing and past physical and cultural character as a means of understanding its key values to the community and major issues for management.

6.1 Site context

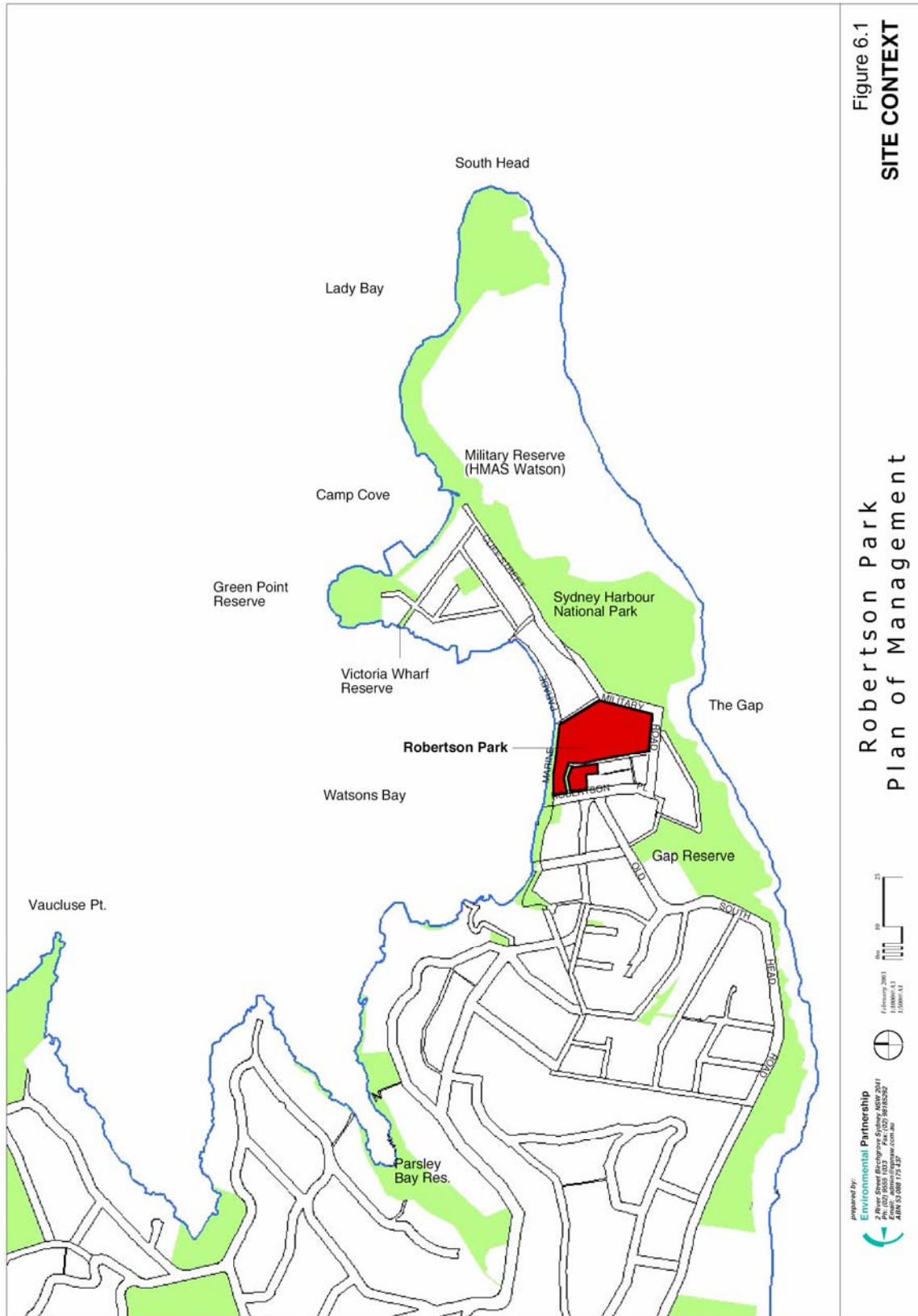
Robertson Park is located on Military Road, Watsons Bay in the Woollahra Local Government Area. Bounded by Military Road, Clovelly Street and Marine Parade, the park is approximately 7.5km from the Sydney CBD. Refer Figure 6.1: Site context.

Situated at a natural narrowing of the South Head peninsula, the park occupies the majority of land between Sydney Harbour and The Gap. Due to its strategic location and established character, Robertson Park provides the focus of the Watsons Bay public domain. Visual and to a lesser extent functional links exist with adjoining open space areas:

- Sydney Harbour;
- Sydney Harbour National Park;
- The Gap; and
- Gap Park.

Other adjacent land uses include commercial and residential development which can impact on park character due to their visibility, increased pedestrian / vehicle traffic and the spill-over of formal and informal outdoor eating usage into the park.

Figure 6.1 – Site Context



6.2 Heritage

6.2.1 Aboriginal heritage

The Watsons Bay open space lies with the lands of the Birrabirragal people. Due to the proximity to the coast their routine was dominated by the sea, in particular fishing, which was done from canoes, made of tree bark. Shellfish were also important and the women generally gathered these. Evidence of the Aboriginal occupation of Watsons Bay and South Head can be found in shell middens which are generally found within rock shelters. There are also a number of rock art sites. Many of these sites however are in a fragile or damaged condition and cannot sustain public exposure (Watsons Bay Heritage Conservation Study, 1997).

6.2.2 European heritage

European heritage related to Robertson Park has been reviewed in a number of previous studies, most notably the "Historical Archaeological Survey of Robertson Park" prepared by Jillian Comber in 1991, the "Thematic History of Watsons Bay" prepared by Megan Martin in 1997, and more recently the "Conservation Management Plan for *Dunbar House*" prepared by Colin Brady and Warwick Mayne-Wilson in 2002.

As part of this Plan of Management study a historical overview of Robertson Park was prepared, drawing upon these studies and further research. This work has provided a basis for structuring development and has been incorporated in the Appendix of this document.

The report provides a statement of significance that identifies the most important phase of the parks history (the 19th century) is least represented in the parks present form.

The fabric of the parks earlier site history has been progressively eroded by incremental "improvements" such as paths, the Rotunda, toilets, and playground.

Statement of Significance

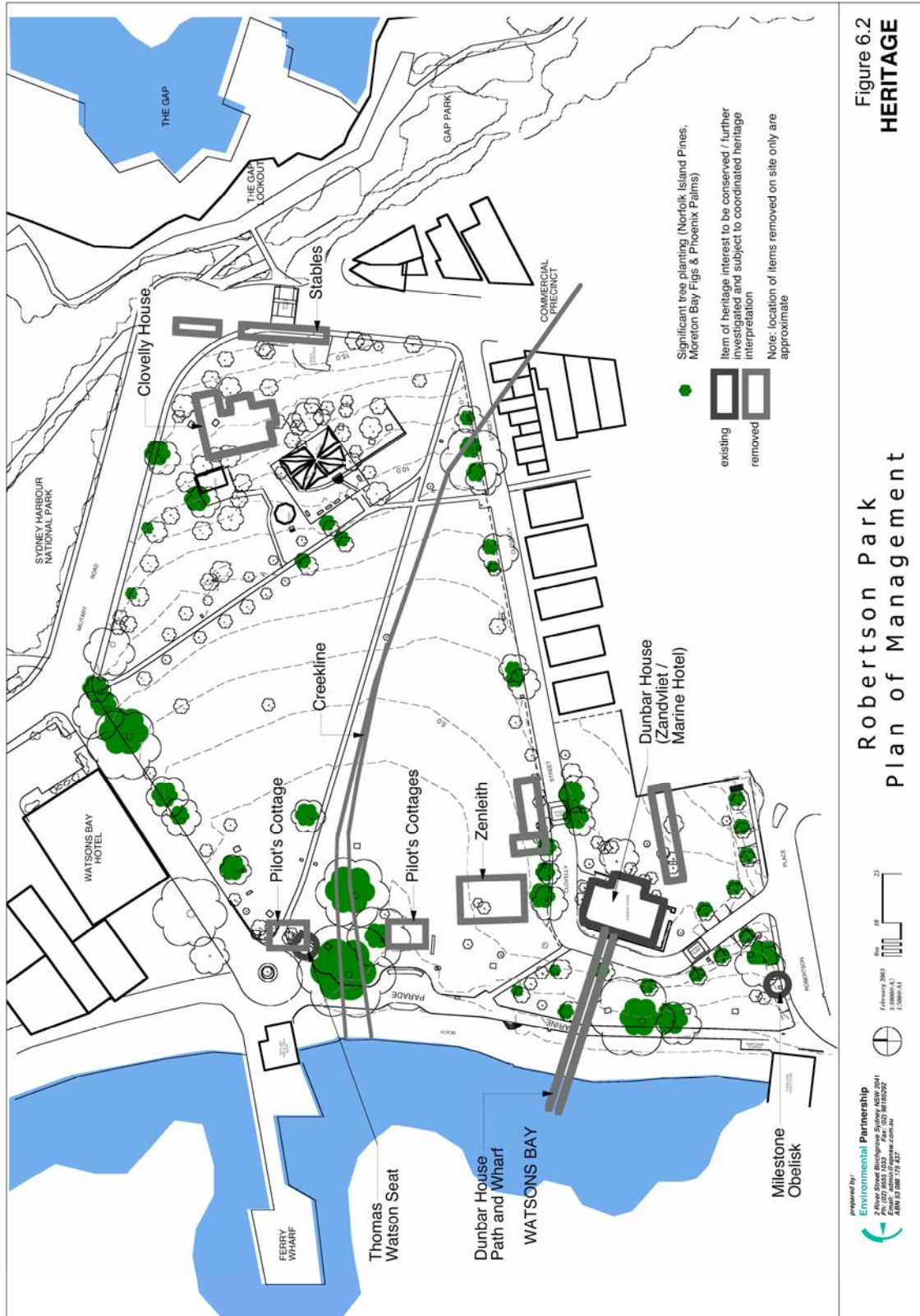
Robertson Park has high historical significance as the site of the first cottages of officials operating New South Wales first signal station (1790) and the site of subsequent pilots' houses, including those of Richard Siddins, Thomas Watson, Thomas Wealand, George Bainbridge and Robert Cork. It was also edged after 1830 by an assortment of fishermen's cottages, mostly along what is now Clovelly Street.

The early pilots' houses, after conversion into elegant marine villas, had a strong or special association with persons of importance in the cultural history of NSW such as leading officials, gentry and merchants. Siddins' house, built between 1828 and 1834, had a succession of eminent owners, including Mortimer Lewis (Colonial Architect), Pieter Campbell (Colonial Treasurer), and a number of prominent Sydney merchants and hoteliers. After being named *Zandvliet* by Campbell in 1839, the house had a succession of names – *Marine Hotel*, *Greenwich Pier Hotel*, *Royal Hotel*, and the *Vaocluse Pier Hotel*, before ultimately being named *Dunbar House* in memory of the ship of that name wrecked in 1857 at The Gap. After its sale by Thomas Watson, *Clovelly* was owned and occupied by Hannibal Macarthur (a nephew of John & Elizabeth Macarthur), and subsequently by Henry Parker and Sir John Robertson, two Premiers of New South Wales in the period before 1891.

The two villas had importance in demonstrating the aesthetic characteristics of early to mid Victorian marine villas in the local area, while the cottages along Clovelly Street demonstrate the simple forms used by fishermen during the 19th century.

Robertson Park also has aesthetic significance since 1930 as 'city beautiful' inspired park with some earlier plantings, principally Pines and Figs, by owners of *Clovelly*, and as a platform to view the Bay with its highly picturesque scenery and views to the city of Sydney beyond.

Figure 6.2 - Heritage



Statement of Significance (continued)

Robertson Park's foreshores have had social significance since the mid 1850s as a venue for picnickers and day-trippers, who arrived by boat and ferry from Sydney, and after its establishment as a park in 1910, a place for public recreation and movement of sight-seers between The Gap and the Harbour edge.

The Park has potential to yield information on the location and scale of the original cottages, villas, outbuildings and gardens that will contribute to an understanding of Watson Bay cultural history. As most of the fabric was removed between 1903 and 1910, however, the research will necessarily be mainly archaeological.

Dunbar House, on the southern edge of the Park, is a rare survivor of the marine villas in Watsons Bay; and being now owned by Woollahra Council and protected by a conservation management plan, it should no longer be endangered.

Robertson Park has a low to moderate degree of importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a NSW public park developed after 1930 in accordance with the precepts of the 'city beautiful' style, as demonstrated by that laid down at Hyde Park in Sydney after 1928.

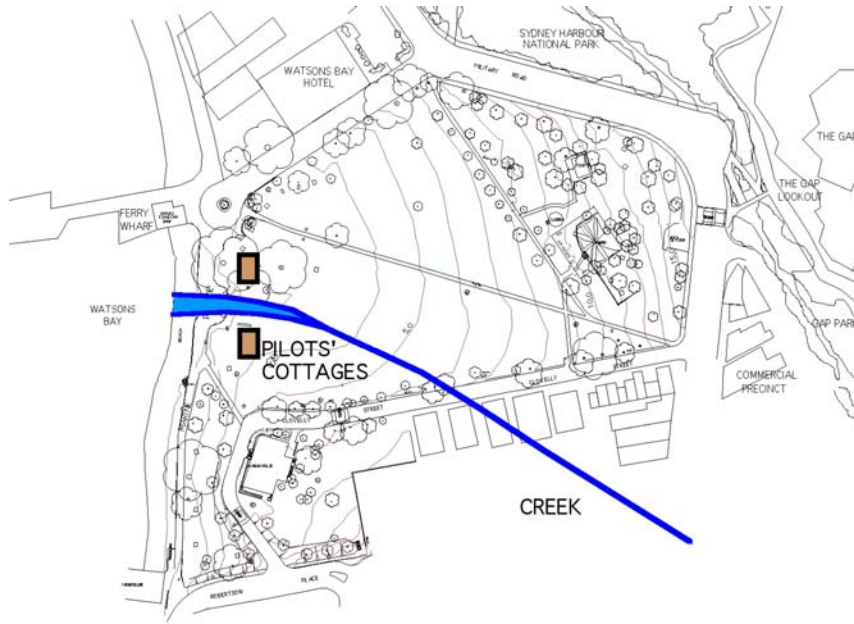
While Robertson Park retains the integrity of that style, it retains only a few remnant elements that demonstrate its once high importance in its manifold roles as a location for signalmen's, pilots' and fishermen's dwellings and their vegetable gardens; the conversion of two of those dwellings into large marine villas occupied by leading NSW politicians and gentry; and its role as a centre for pleasurable recreation (revolving around *Dunbar House's* former use as a hotel). It does, however, retain its importance as a location for public recreation and tourist visitation.

While the post-1910 fabric of Robertson Park has only a low to moderate degree of local significance, its historical role (1790-1903) as described above warrants its determination as being of State significance.

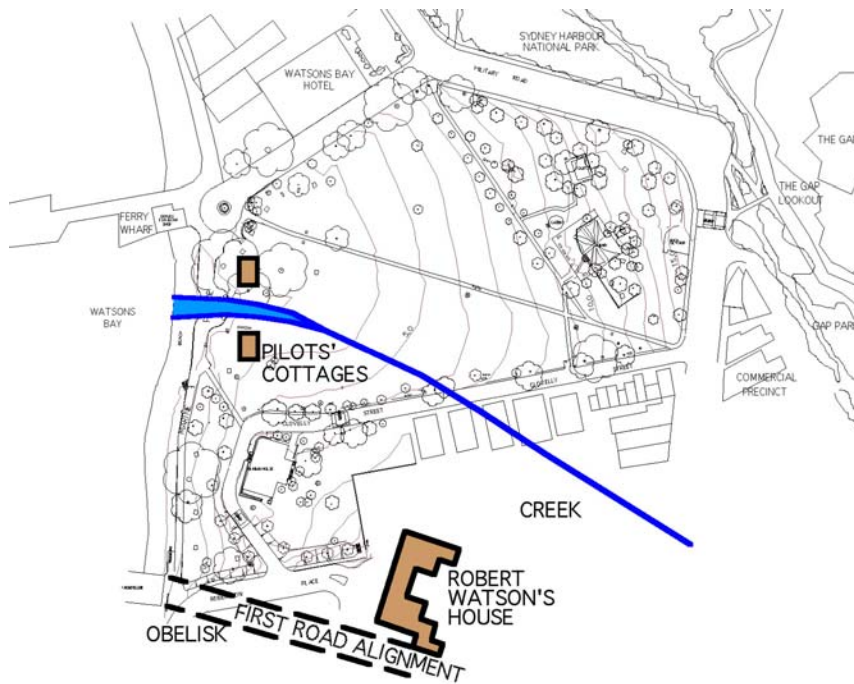
The table on the following page outlines the key elements of heritage significance in the park, their identification in relevant planning document controls and related heritage management requirements.

No.	Item / Description	Location	Identification in heritage documents / policies			Relevant heritage recommendations
			Watsons Bay Heritage Conservation Study 1997	Watsons Bay Area Strategic Plan & Heritage Conservation Study 2000	Watsons Bay Heritage Conservation Area DCP (Final Draft) 2002	
1.	Footprint of Clovelly, the c. 1832-34 marine villa This villa was built by Thomas Watson, an early pilot, and later occupied by a succession of eminent owners, two of whom were State Premiers. Others were MLCs and members of leading colonial families and Sydney gentry.	North-east corner of Robertson Park				The footprint of Clovelly has been identified in an archaeological report and needs to be provided with an adequate curtilage, and should be fully interpreted.
2	Norfolk Island Pines, Moreton Bay Figs & Phoenix Palms The pines and figs were planted in the mid nineteenth century and remain from the park's prior use as the gardens of Clovelly. The palms date from the 1930's and have some, but lesser significance. (They have since died and been removed.)	Robertson Park	✓	✓	✓	Trees should be conserved. Once original 1840s trees die, they should be replaced by identical species in the same location. Not essential to replace the Palms.
3.	Views from Robertson Park Views from the park are available across to the Harbour, to Gap Reserve and across Robertson Place.	Robertson Park	✓	✓		Views need to be protected and conserved. Also potential for existing views to be enhanced.
4.	Dunbar House Two storey Victorian house is the earliest and best surviving example of the marine villas of Watsons Bay.	Robertson Place	✓	✓	✓	This is the subject of a Conservation Management Plan which is being adopted by Woollahra Council.
5	Footprint of former marine villa, Zenleith This villa was built and occupied by Watsons Bay pilots c. 1849-1909 and was sited opposite Dunbar House, on north side of Clovelly Street.	Robertson Park				The footprint should be identified by archaeological research, following which it should be provided with an adequate curtilage and interpretation.
6.	Milestone Obelisk Sandstone obelisk which commemorates the building of the South Head Road to Watsons Bay in 1811.	Edge of Robertson Park	✓			This is listed on the National Trust Register and in the Woollahra LEP.
7.	Robertson Park as a memorial The park was named in honor of Sir John Robertson, five times Premier between 1860 and 1886.	Robertson Park	✓	✓	✓	Because Robertson was only the last of a succession of eminent owners, efforts need to be made to demonstrate and interpret the earlier owners and occupants.
8.	Robert Watson Memorial Seat Commemorates Watson after whom Watsons Bay was named.	Edge of Robertson Park	✓			While important as a commemorative device, it is confusingly located. See previous item above.
9.	Clovelly Street Significant for its ability to reveal the original subdivision of 1841.	Clovelly Street	✓			No further increase to the height or width of properties along it should occur. Maybe should be a cul-de-sac?
10.	Marine Parade Promenade Important as a serial viewing pathway towards the harbour as well as an access point to Robertson Park.	Marine Parade			✓	Should be retained in a simple form that does not unduly separate the Park from the beach.
11.	Robertson Park design A 1930s copy of the 'city beautiful' style of Hyde Park, Sydney	Robertson Park		✓	✓	An uninspired example: earlier use and history of the site more important.

Historical Overlay Maps

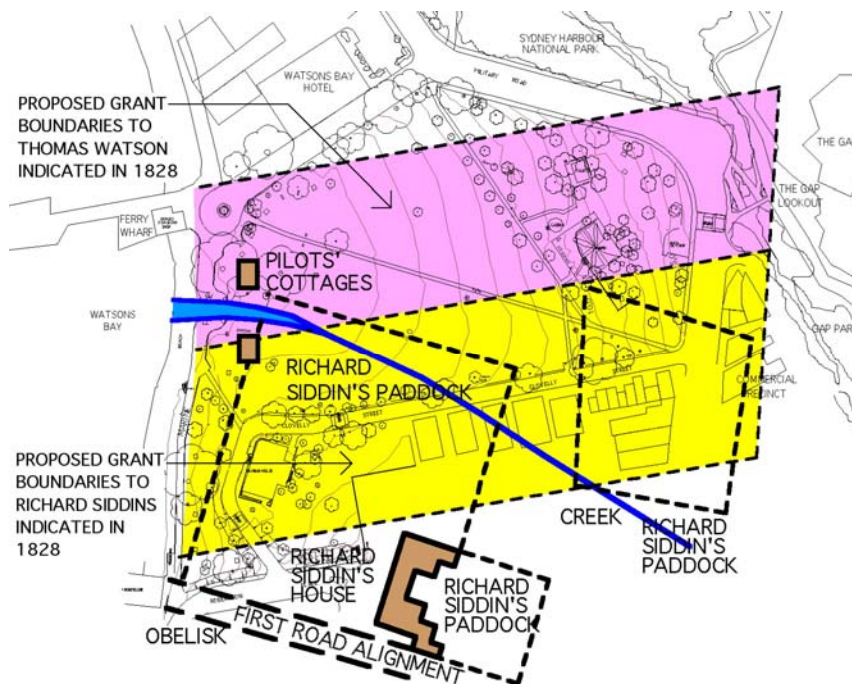


1790

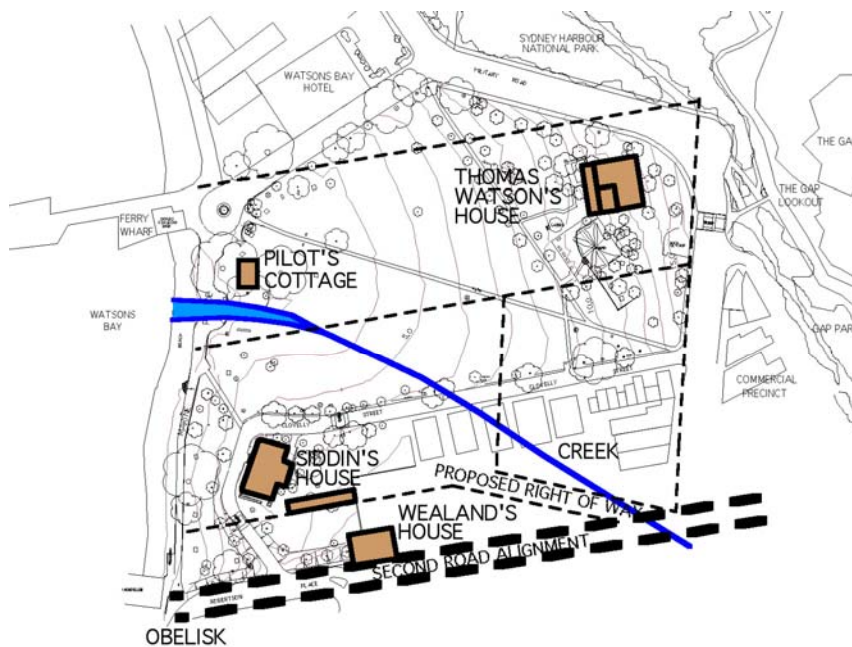


1811

Historical Overlay Maps (continued)

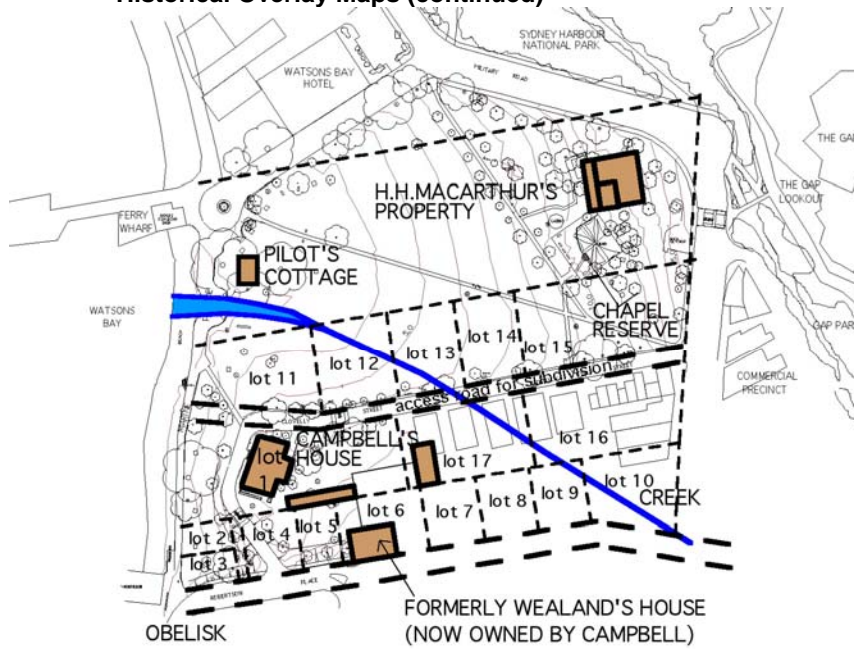


1828

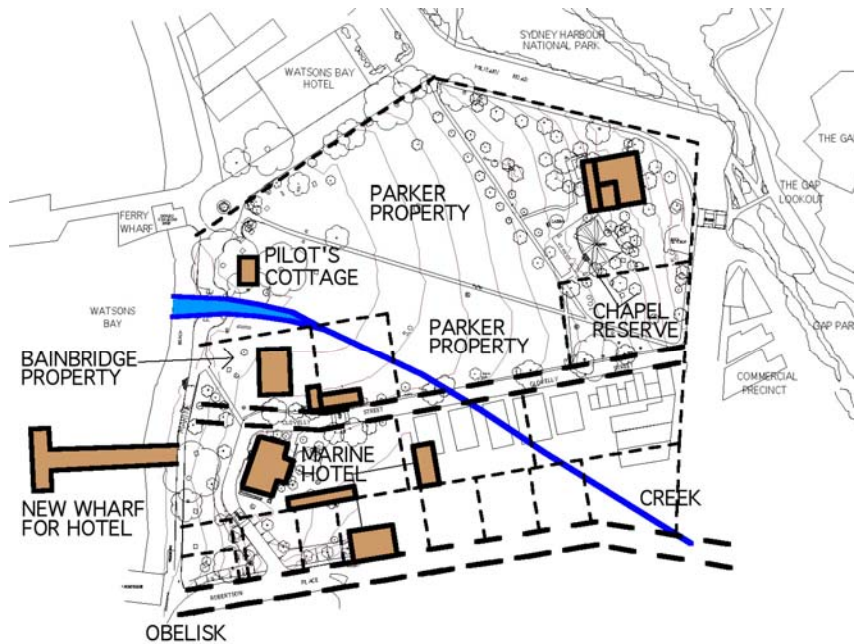


1834

Historical Overlay Maps (continued)

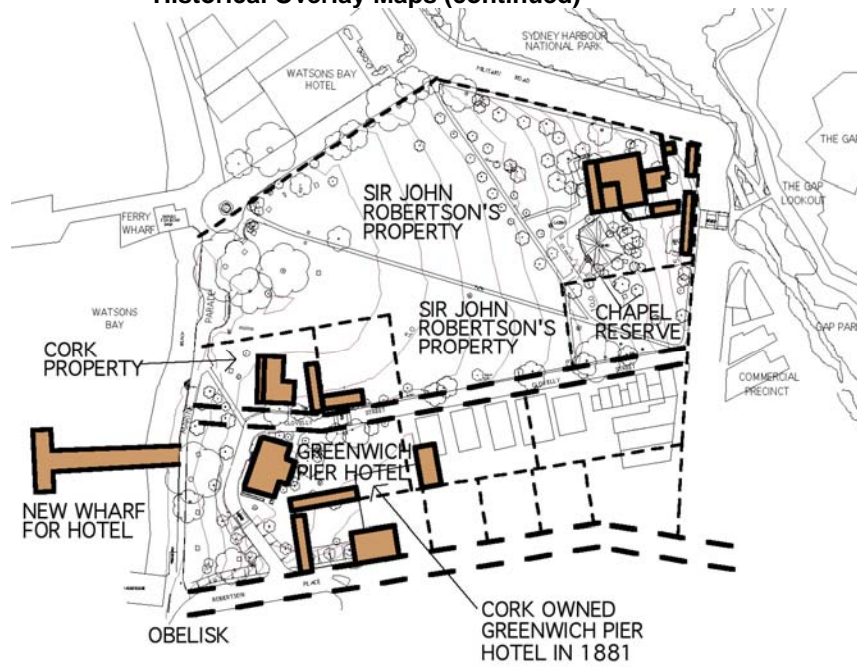


1841



1857

Historical Overlay Maps (continued)



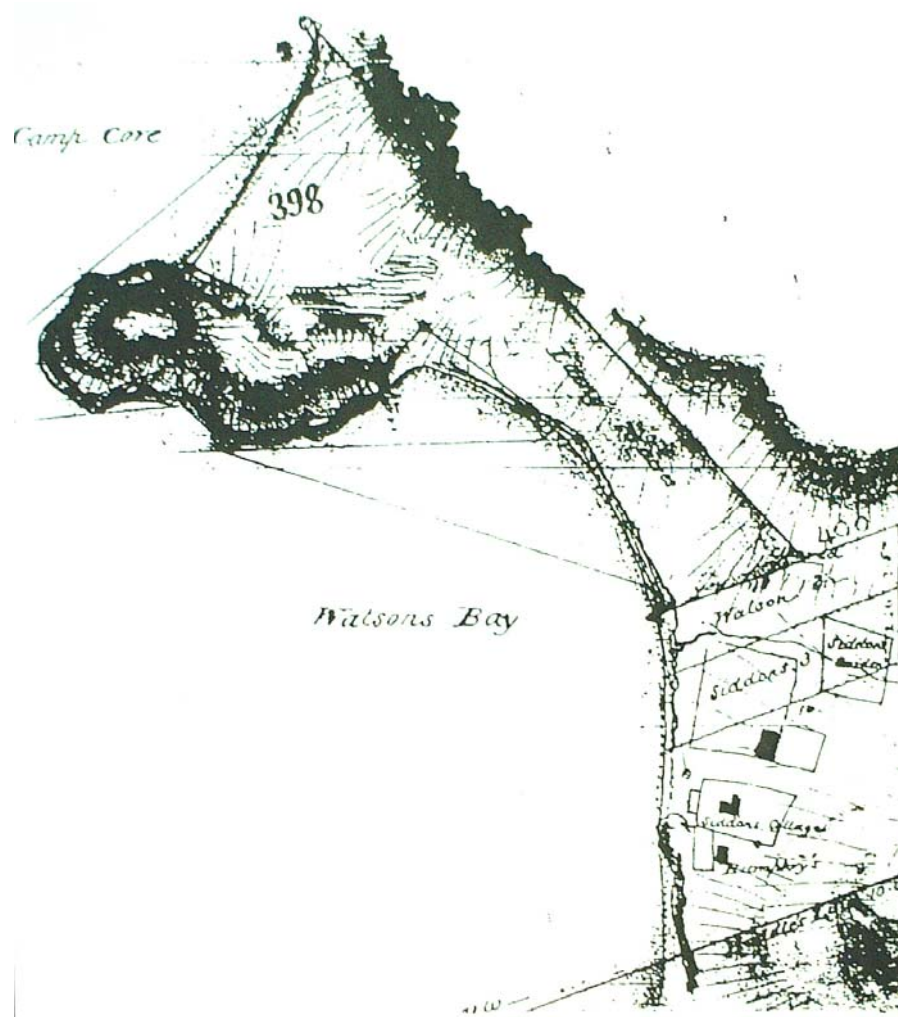
1881



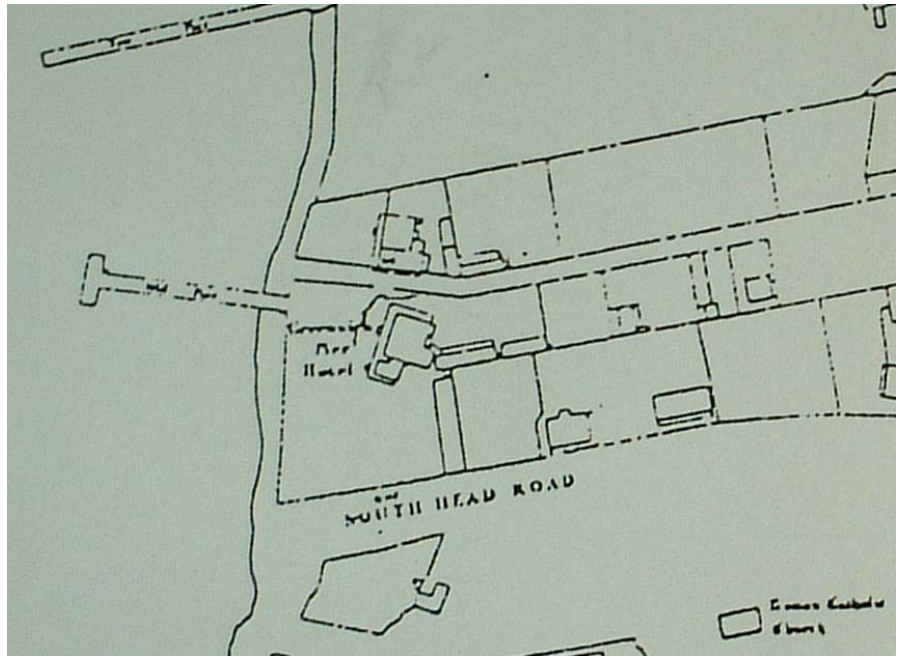
Early panoramic etching looking west down the harbour from Watsons Bay. Dunbar House is the second building from the right edge of the image, seen with its service wing coming off the back of the marine villa. The property furthest to the right of the etching was the house owned by Cork, the site now within Robertson Park.
 Source: Woollahra Local History Centre.



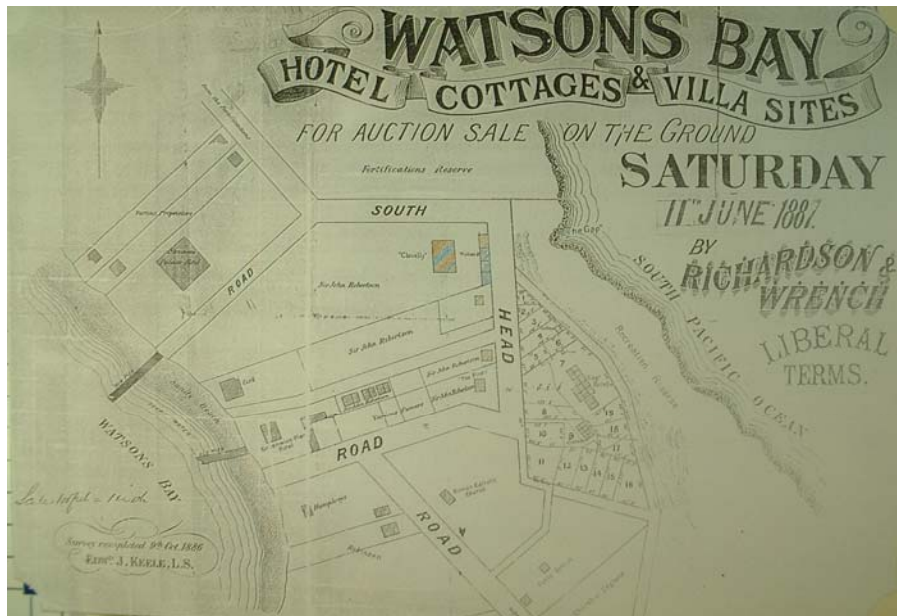
Looking past Clovelly to the harbour in 1884. Source: Woollahra Local History Centre.



1828 survey sketch by surveyor Robert Dixon indicating land holdings and buildings attributed to Siddons and Watson. Source: Woollahra Local History Centre.



Part of a trigonometrical survey of Port Jackson and the City of Sydney made in December 1881. Watsons Bay sheet. Dunbar House (during this period the Greenwich Pier Hotel) is seen at the top centre of the image, with its various service wings on its east and harbour pier that serviced the hotel. The house owned by Cork that lay abutting the south-west corner of the Clovelly Estate can be seen on the northern side of the access road to Dunbar House. Source: State Records of NSW Plan no. 1551.



The 1887 auction plan for the Watsons Bay cottages east of South Head Road. Dunbar House (the Greenwich Pier Hotel) is shown on the left of the plan, to the south of John Robertson's Clovelly Estate. Notice the location of the property owned by Cork to the immediate north of Dunbar House. Source: Woollahra Local History Centre.



East-West Pathway prior to removal of *Phoenix canariensis* (Nov 2002)



East-West Pathway following removal of *Phoenix canariensis* (Jan 2003)



Significant Fig plantings along the foreshore

6.3 Vegetation

Robertson Park is characterised by its mature (and in some cases senescent) vegetation, some of which is understood to pre-date the park from around the time that the land was associated with the 'Clovelly' residence. These trees plantings in particular, contribute to the vegetation mature character of the foreshore area. Refer Figure 6.3: Vegetation.

Whilst no remnant natural vegetation remains within the park, it is recognised that the natural vegetation of the area would have included Sandstone Heaths, Woodlands and Forests, some of which are represented in the Sydney Harbour National Park to the north west of the site (Benson & Howell 1995).

A number of landmark tree plantings were removed over recent years due to poor condition. Two Moreton Bay Figs, *Ficus macrophylla* located near Marine Parade were removed due to safety concerns prompted by one Fig shedding a large limb in January 2002. A whole avenue of Canary Island Date Palms, *Phoenix canariensis* that lined the diagonal pedestrian walkway through the centre of the park were also removed due to their infestation with *Fusarium oxysporum*, for which there is no known treatment.

Fortunately many mature plantings still remain in Robertson Park. A number of Moreton Bay Figs line the foreshore, whilst several mature Norfolk Island Pines, *Araucaria heterophylla* are located in the eastern section of the park. Mature Canary Island Date Palms in the south western corner of the park near Dunbar House have not yet been identified with *Fusarium* symptoms.

Other tree plantings in the park include low branching Banksia, and Melaleuca species that can limit views through the park. Garden bed planting to the rear of Dunbar House predominantly comprised of Melaleuca and Casuarina species have the effect of creating character that is out of continuity with other areas of the park, and the heritage significance of the building curtilage.

A number of more recent Fig and Norfolk Island Pine tree plantings have been provided adjacent to senescent specimens to replace these trees when they require removal in the future.

The existing Norfolk Island Hibiscus (*Lagunaria sp.*) plantings through the park have been identified by the community as a problem because of the fine needles produced by fruit and foliage. The removal and replacement of these plantings is required.

The provision of additional shade tree planting through the park is a key issue for the local community. This is partly related to the loss of Fig Tree and Canary Island Date Palms canopy and shade in the centre of the park. The planting of additional shade trees with existing species such as Port Jackson Figs, and complementary evergreen native species such as Tuckeroo, Banksia and Smooth-barked Apple should be investigated. The Melaleucas within the Parks are indigenous to the local area.

The Plan of Management must consider the most appropriate strategy for replacement of tree amenity in the park considering all issues including heritage interpretation and views.

Figure 6.3 – Vegetation





Robertson Park's undulating landform rising to the east

6.4 Landform, soils and drainage

Robertson Park forms a natural amphitheatre sloping from the east to the west with Marine Parade as the lowest point and Sydney Harbour as the focus of all views. The change in elevation from the highest point is the east of the park adjacent to Military Parade to the lowest point west of Marine Parade is approximately 11 metres. Due to the sloping gradient, retaining walls have been employed to create flat areas for the playground and along the edge of Marine Parade. Refer Figure 6.4: Landform, soils and drainage.

According to the Watsons Bay Area Strategic Plan and Heritage Conservation Study 2000, Watsons Bay is located on a part of the Hornsby Plateau (Physiographic region), which is generally north of Sydney (cuts across Mosman). Three different landscapes types dominate Watsons Bay: rugged; rolling; and very steep hills. The underlying soil types are:

1. Hawkesbury - is prominent in the largest area of Watsons Bay at the Gap, and South Head. It represents underlying Hawkesbury Sandstone (colluvial¹; shallow soil, <50 cm deep).
2. Woy Woy - only in Camp Cove. Level to gently undulating non-tidal beach ridges on marine sands (quaternary sands underlying - high water table at 200cm); and
3. Lambert - undulating to rolling low hills on Hawkesbury Sandstone. Contrasts with Hawkesbury landscape with broader ridges, gentler undulating slopes and poorer drainage (erosional - shallow soils/heathland, <50 cm deep)

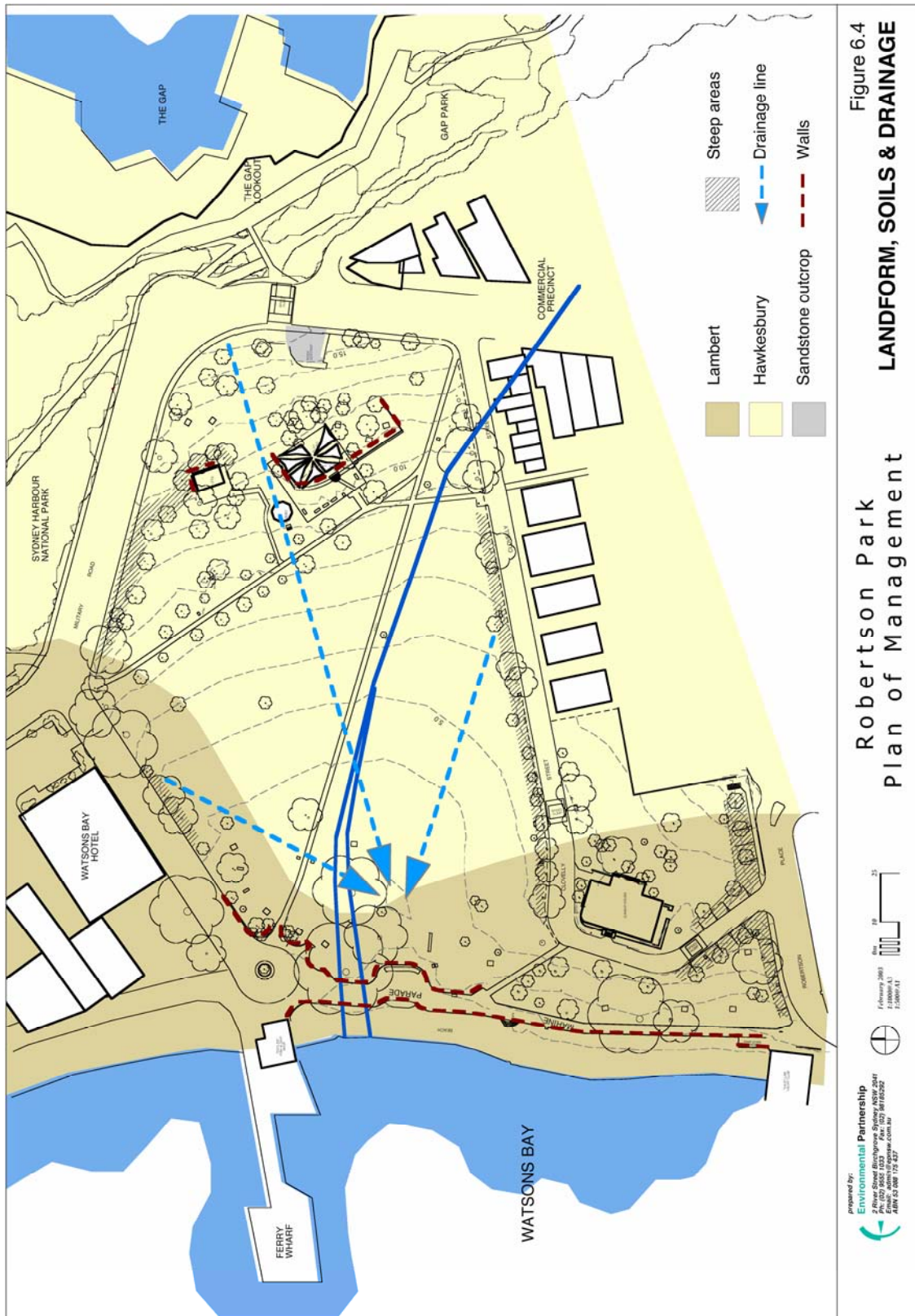
¹ [Colluvial - loose and incoherent deposits brought by gravity]

All of the soils represented in Watsons Bay have low available water capacity and low fertility creating a harsh substrate for plants. The adaptations of dry sclerophyll and heath vegetation to adjoining open space areas is apparent.

In its pre European condition the park site is believed to have been traversed by a creek running with an approximately east west alignment. The creek provided the focus for early European settlement of Pilots' Cottages, and would have logically been a similar focus for the local Aboriginal peoples before this time.

The south head peninsula also has several fresh water springs that contribute to surface and ground water flow. The existing park landform and surface conditions result in drainage problems in the park, specifically ponding and damp ground near the northwestern park entry.

Figure 6.4 – Landform, Soils and Drainage





Military Road



East-West Pathway



North-South Pathway



Worn grass areas created by pedestrian "desire lines"



STA bus stop

6.5 Access

Access into the park is generally via corner entry points which are utilised by visitors from surrounding streets along with visitors to Watsons Bay arriving by ferry, bus, and private motor vehicle. Formalisation of appropriate park access routes compatible with heritage and natural park values and access to parking should be a priority for park improvement. Through pedestrian access is a key role of Robertson Park due to its location between the Watsons Bay foreshore and commercial area. Key aspects of access to and within Robertson Park are outlined on Figure 6.5 and listed below:

6.5.1 Traffic

Primary vehicle access for both private vehicles and buses to the site is via Military Road. Vehicular traffic also adjoins the site on Clovelly Street (primarily residential traffic) and Robertson Place. The Military Road streetscape proposals (2003) are investigating potential strategies to ameliorate car and bus traffic impacts on the functional and visual qualities of the park.

Bus and coach standing / parking currently occurs on Military Road adjoining the eastern side of Robertson Park and to a lesser extent the northern edge. Streetscape proposals for Military Road are currently reviewing these arrangements with a view to reducing the visual and traffic impacts of this use to the eastern edge of the park, and the views from The Gap across Robertson Park to the harbour.

6.5.2 Parking

On-street parking is available in adjacent streets in Watsons Bay. Two off-street car parks exist to the north of the site at the intersection of Military Road and Cliff Street.

Watsons Bay operates under a resident parking scheme that utilises restricted parking zones for residents that are signposted "No parking, authorised residents vehicles excepted". This parking restriction is implemented along a section of Clovelly Street and protects resident parking amenity whilst reducing parking availability for visitors.

Generally parking availability is known to be a problem throughout the whole Watsons Bay area, especially on weekends and public holidays. Bus and coach parking currently occurs on Military Road.

6.5.3 Pedestrian circulation

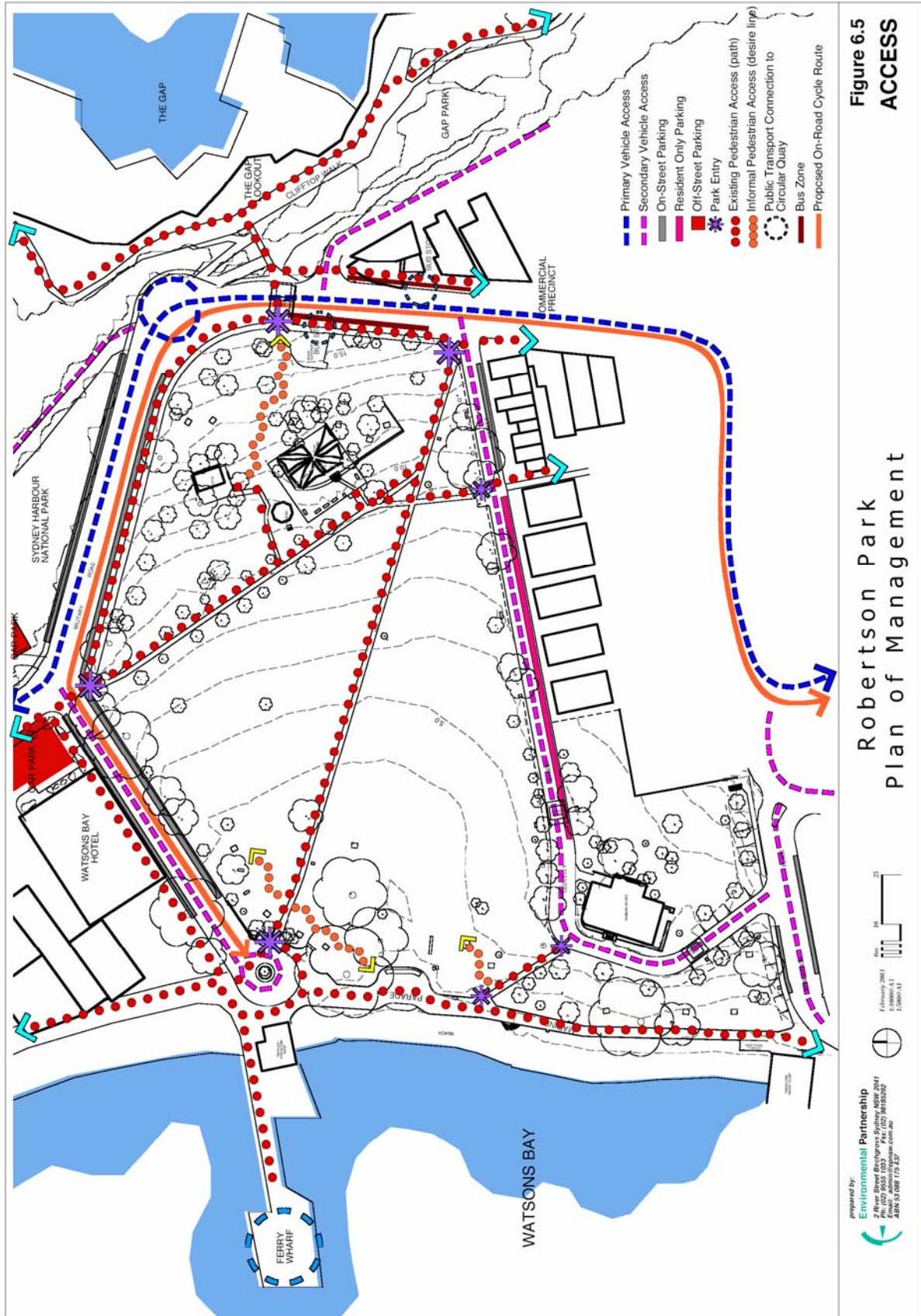
Robertson Park facilitates through-site pedestrian access along two prominent pedestrian pathways. One of the pathways has an east west alignment and provides a direct connection between the ferry wharf and commercial area. The second pathway has a north south alignment and connects local pedestrian traffic between the Cliff Street / Military Road intersection and the commercial centre.

These paths and related Canary Island Date Palm planting were constructed in the mid 1930s inspired by the 'City Beautiful' style of the Hyde Park design in Sydney. Unfortunately the paths did not consider the earlier phase of the park's history and provided a poor relationship to the heritage of the site of *Clovelly* and the pre existing informal character of the site.

Pedestrian access to the harbour foreshore is facilitated along Marine Parade, which originally formed part of the local road alignment, but is now dedicated for the majority of its length to pedestrian access. A roadside footpath is provided along the north eastern edges of the park to Military Road.

Informal pedestrian access also occurs along "desire lines" between focal points where no path is provided. Where high volumes of pedestrian traffic occur (such as the link between the toilets and Military Road east) this creates problems for grass surface maintenance and related erosion.

Figure 6.5 - Access





Ferry Service

6.5.4 Cycle access

Although no dedicated cycle paths currently exists in Watsons Bay, an on road provision is to be formalised by the Watsons Bay Cycle Plan, currently under implementation.

6.5.5 Public transport

Watsons Bay is currently serviced by a public bus and ferry service. Both services run from Circular Quay to Watsons Bay.

Bus Services

A bus stop is located on Military Road along the northern boundary of Robertson Park. The Watsons Bay Bus Service (324 and 325) runs seven days a week.

Ferry Services

A public ferry wharf is located at the end of Military Road to the south east of Robertson Park. Four services per day on weekdays, and six per day on Saturday's, Sunday's and public holidays are provided.

Doyles Restaurant runs a specialised ferry service from Circular Quay to Watsons Bay for patrons of their restaurant. The ferry service runs on weekdays only, as the Watsons Bay Ferry Service caters adequately for visitors on weekends and public holidays.

Water Taxi

Water Taxi services disembark passengers at the public wharf and are popular with visitors to the local restaurants or local residents travelling to the central business district.

Private Charter

Private charter ferries may also disembark passengers at the public wharf for day tours to Watsons Bay (The Gap / Watsons Bay Hotel) and private events.



Beach



Marine Promenade



Dunbar House



Robertson Park East



Robertson Park West



View from The Gap over Robertson Park

6.6 Landscape and visual character

6.6.1 Landscape Units

The existing physical character of Robertson Park determines a series of landscape units (refer Figure 2.6 Landscape and Visual Character). These units display an identifiable balance of vegetation character, facilities and usage, and provide a reference for examining pressures and opportunities within the park.

Beach

Extending between the Vaucluse Yacht Club and Watsons Bay Ferry Wharf, the beach is popular attraction for sunbakers. The beach area is managed by The Department of Lands and is outside the scope of this Plan of Management.

Marine Parade

Formerly a roadway, Marine Parade provides harbour front pedestrian access between the beach and Robertson Park. The pedestrian promenade has recently been upgraded with improved pavement and furniture provision.

Dunbar House

Comprises open grassed areas to the east and west of Dunbar House. The harbour side (front) area is popular for picnic use whilst the west side is isolated from the main park by Clovelly Street, predominantly screened from harbour views by Dunbar House, and suffers as a result from relatively low levels of usage.

Robertson Park West

Open grassed area with good views Watsons Bay, Sydney Harbour and Sydney Harbour National Park. This area is bisected by the main diagonal path link.

Robertson Park East

Upper slopes of Robertson Park with limited functional and visual relationship to the west park, and limited views to the harbour due to facilities and buildings (toilets, gazebo, and playground) and related low level plantings.

Clovelly Street

A one way (east) asphalt road that provides local residential access and parking along with limited visitor parking. The street separates the land surrounding Dunbar House from the remainder of Robertson Park.

6.6.2 Views

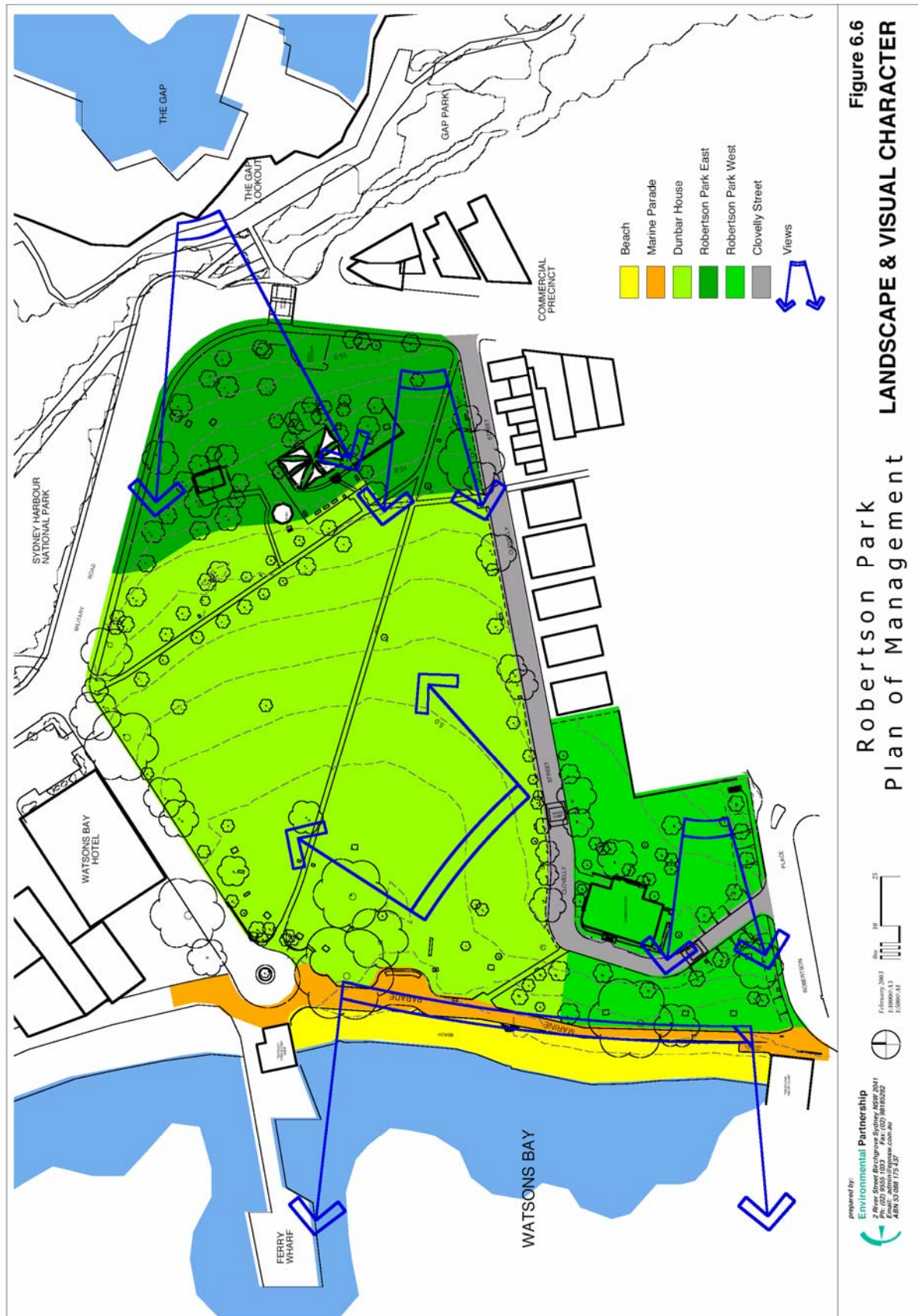
City and harbour views are an intrinsic feature of Robertson Park appreciated by local residents and a key factor in drawing large numbers of visitors to the area. Views from The Gap (located to the east) are influenced by Robertson Park which is located in the foreground of this iconic lookout and visitor landmark.

A summary of visual features is indicated on Figure 6.6.



View of Sydney Harbour National Park

Figure 6.6 – Landscape and Visual Character





Playground



Rotunda



Dunbar House



Amenities Block

6.7 Park use and recreation

Robertson Park has a history of recreational use having by the late 1800s emerged as a popular waterfront picnic spot. In 1902 a narrow strip of foreshore land was resumed for public access, and in September 1912 the State Government reserved the *Clovelly Estate* for public park. This was consolidated in 1910-1912 with further resumptions. In the 1911 tourists guide to Watsons Bay and Vaucluse, Robertson Park was described as “a fine recreation ground with numerous seats under shady pines and Moreton Bay Figs”.

Contemporary Robertson Park is still used for a range of passive recreational activities by both the local community and visitors. In particular areas adjoining the ferry wharf and hotel have a higher intensity of usage relating to takeaway food outlets, which has led to impacts such as soil compaction and root disturbance of mature trees.

The multiple attractions of the Watsons Bay area including the iconic / scenic landmark of The Gap, the panoramic harbourside outlook of the park, and the cultural factors of local restaurants, cafés and the Watsons Bay Hotel will continue to draw visitors from a wide area, and with diverse needs and expectations.

Fundamentally it is the physical attractions of the area that provide the focus for visitors whilst related food and entertainment facilities provide a supporting function.

The Community Workshop forum identified a need to conserve and enhance the park's role for family passive recreation. This role is both logical and effective as it supports the range of users from local to visitor, and complements the existing parkland character of the site.

Current facilities to support passive recreation need to be upgraded and coordinated, and most importantly the physical characteristics of large evergreen shade trees, open grassed areas, and views to Sydney Harbour must be sustainably managed and enhanced.

6.7.1 Structures

The following structures are located within Robertson Park:

Playground

The playground offers play facilities in a reasonable condition. Elements of the playground have been identified in Councils Playground Strategy as requiring upgrading to meet Australian Standards. The playground is centrally located to the eastern area of the park limiting continuity of views and access. The playground has a weak physical relationship with adjoining areas influenced by the walling and fence types in addition to the location of seating (and their failure to relate to surrounding views) within the playground enclosure.

Rotunda

This structure is in fair condition and often used by small groups as a shaded meeting and seating place. Its relationship with nearby structures (eg. amenities block and playground) is somewhat haphazard, and the structure potentially impacts on the interpretation of the *Clovelly House* site to the north east.

Dunbar House

A two storey Victorian House in good condition that provides an example of the marine villas which were typically constructed in the area. This prominent park feature is an important heritage element within the park. Refer Appendix B: Historical Overview of Robertson Park Watsons Bay.

Amenities Block

This concrete block structure located within the eastern section of Robertson Park is significantly screened by the surrounding vegetation and landform. The facility is in fair to poor condition and an upgrade of internal facilities will be required in the near future. The toilet is used by park users in addition to visitors and drivers of public and tourist buses stopping on Military Road. The location also potentially compromises interpretation of the *Clovelly House* site.

6.7.2 Leases and Licences

This Plan of Management authorises the lease, licence or grant of any other estate over Robertson Park for recreational purposes, and of any buildings in the Park for recreational or community purposes. This authorisation includes, but is not limited to:

the current and proposed leases and licences described below,
short term, casual purposes prescribed in Cl.24, Local Government (General) Regulation.”

Existing leases and licences

Dunbar House, located in the South Western sector of the park adjacent to Clovelly Street, for use as a restaurant / function house. The current lease was extended by a five years option in July 2001 to July 2006. Rent is payable monthly in advance with the yearly amount increasing annually with CPI.

The community workshops for the plan of management identified that the continuation of the existing restaurant lease was appropriate in its current form, subject to all lease conditions being met. The workshop also resolved that the continued operation of the Council library in Dunbar House was an important community asset.

Short term, casual booking arrangements, setting out procedures, including:

Council's adopted Fees and Charges for use of Robertson Park facilities exhibited as part of the Council's Management Plan.

Assessing the requirements of applicants for short term, casual bookings against the facilities available, the carrying capacity of the sportsfields and the availability of alternative facilities where applicants' requirements cannot be met.

Council also currently accepts applications for Robertson Park to be hired by small groups for wedding ceremonies, photographic shoots (filming and photo stills), parties and corporate events that are public in nature for a commercial return. Arrangements are made with Council's Public Open Space Department. No significant conflicts were identified with the present granting of such licenses at the community workshops.

7.0 RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION

7.1 Previous studies

7.1.1 Register of Significant Trees, July 1991

The study and assessment of significant trees within Robertson Park confirmed that the majority of tree plantings within the park in 1991 were considered highly significant both visually and culturally.

The main avenue of Canary Island Date Palms (*Phoenix canariensis*) was noted as a significant visual element within the layout of the park. This avenue was removed in 2002 (as outlined earlier) due to Fusarium infestation. Mature Norfolk Island Pines (*Araucaria heterophylla*) were noted to provide visual and cultural character. These trees were identified to have been possibly associated with the original Clovelly residence and thought to have been used as navigational aids. The Moreton Bay Figs (*Ficus macrophylla*) adjoining the foreshore that are noted in the register as some of the oldest and most significant plantings in Watsons Bay.

7.1.2 Robertson Park Plan of Management 1996

This specific Plan of Management approved by Council in 1996 was prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government Act 1993. Under the plan Robertson Park is classified as community land and categorised as Park and General Community Use. Marine Parade and foreshore is categorised as Natural Area (Foreshore), however this area is not included in this Plan of Management.

The 1996 Plan of Management developed the following overall management objectives to guide decision making for the park:

- *"maintain and preserve the visual and physical character of the park so as to maximise use without affecting the amenity of nearby residents."*
- *"that Robertson Park continue to function as a major venue for the local community and visiting tourists seeking passive recreation in a waterfront atmosphere."*

These key principles remain fundamental to this current Plan of Management study.

7.1.3 Watsons Bay Heritage Conservation Study 1997

This study outlined by Architectural Projects, Warwick Mayne-Wilson, Megan Martin and Ian Kirk was commissioned by Woollahra Council in August 1996 to examine and assess the Watsons Bay Heritage Conservation Area as identified in the Woollahra Council Local Environmental Plan 1995.

The study provides a comprehensive history of the area in establishing a detailed background to the planning in the area by identifying patterns of historical development. Through examination of the area's history the study has identified three key themes that reflect the formative factors that have shaped the character of Watsons Bay. These themes are:

- Navigation
- Defence
- Tourism

The study identified 13 different zones within Watsons Bay based on landscape variation. Two of these zones: Robertson Park and Robertson Place (the area surrounding Dunbar House) are located within the study area of this Plan of Management.

7.1.4 Tree Wise Men Report – Tree Hazard Assessment and Maintenance Recommendations, March 2002

This study was prompted by the collapse of a Moreton Bay Fig (*Ficus macrophylla*) limb in January, 2002. The study assessed the condition of seven Moreton Bay Figs and twenty-one Canary Island Date Palms (*Phoenix canariensis*). All seven figs are listed on the Significant Tree Register for the Woollahra municipality. The aim of the study was to determine the hazard potential of the trees and make recommendations for their retention or removal in order to achieve an acceptable level of risk on a long term basis.

The recommendations that arose from the assessment included:

- Removal of two Moreton Bay Figs
- Removal of all twenty-one palms due to *Fusarium oxysporum*, a disease of which there is no feasible cure or control.
- Removal of all palms adjacent to infected specimens.

The report noted the palms in the south western corner of the site to be retained as they are within a separate zone and showed no observable *Fusarium* symptoms at that time.

7.2 Current projects

7.2.1 Military Road Commercial Precinct

Design and documentation for Military Road and Watsons Bay Commercial Centre has been undertaken by Bossley Howe Architects concurrent with this Plan of Management study.

The project is of major relevance to the park plan of management as it has potential to influence the presentation of the park when viewed to streetscapes along with its connectivity to surrounding areas.

Proposals in the draft masterplan (July 2003) included:

- streetscape improvements such as footpath widening, lighting, tree planting, pavements, street furniture and signage;
- upgraded bus lay-by and turning facilities located to the north east of the park; and
- improvement works for the Gap lookout including a linear connection across Military Road into Robertson Park.

Specific planning opportunities identified in the plan that will compliment the enhancement of park values include potential to redress previous encroachment of Military Road into the park at the site of former *Clovelly* residence. This will conserve this important heritage site and facilitate effective interpretation.

At the road junction adjacent to the Watsons Bay Hotel the strategy proposes provision of a major roundabout to enable bus turn around. This proposal may require some minor encroachment into the northern edge of the park area. However minor encroachment in this road edge area is believed to be significantly offset by the potential gaining of area adjoining the *Clovelly* House site.

Widening of the pedestrian footpath area of Military Road adjoining the eastern edge of the park will improve pedestrian circulation in this area, and provide (in conjunction with minimisation of bus standing) an improved visual presentation of the park edge to the street.

7.3 Planning context

7.3.1 Commonwealth Legislation

Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999

The Commonwealth legislation provides a national framework for environment protection through a focus on protecting matters of national environmental significance and on the conservation of Australia's biodiversity.

Where possible open space should be reflect environmental protection and enhancement philosophies although it is noted no existing features of environmental significance are present in Robertson Park.

Native Title Act 1993

The expression *native title* or *native title rights and interests* means the communal, group or individual rights and interests of Aboriginal peoples or Torres Strait Islanders in relation to land or waters, where:

- (a) the rights and interests are possessed under the traditional laws acknowledged, and the traditional customs observed, by the Aboriginal peoples or Torres Strait Islanders; and
- (b) the Aboriginal peoples or Torres Strait Islanders, by those laws and customs, have a connection with the land or waters; and
- (c) the rights and interests are recognised by the common law of Australia.

The main objectives of the Act are:

- (a) to provide for the recognition and protection of native title; and
- (b) to establish ways in which future dealings affecting native title may proceed and to set standards for those dealings; and
- (c) to establish a mechanism for determining claims to native title; and
- (d) to provide for, or permit, the validation of past acts, and intermediate period acts, invalidated because of the existence of native title.

The Act recognises and protects native title. It provides that native title cannot be extinguished contrary to the Act. The Act covers the following key areas:

- (a) acts affecting native title;
- (b) determining whether native title exists and compensation for acts affecting native title.

Should a Native Title claim be lodged on an open space reserve this will be assessed under the under the provisions of the Act and a ruling be made regarding ongoing use and management.

7.3.2 State Government Legislation

Crown Lands Act 1989

Succeeding with Plans of Management - A guide to the Local Government Act and Crown Lands Act, 1996) identifies that a Plan of Management may be prepared for Crown land dedicated or reserved for public purposes.

The Department of Lands land management philosophy directly relates to the principles of Crown land management which are listed in section 11 of the Crown Lands Act 1989. These principles affect all aspects of the departments activities and, specifically, the major elements of land assessment, reservation / dedication of land and preparing plans of management.

Crown Lands Act 1989 (continued)

The principles are that:

- Environmental protection principles be observed in relation to the management and administration of Crown land.

- The natural resources of Crown land (including water, soil, flora, fauna and scenic quality) be conserved wherever possible.
- Public use and enjoyment of appropriate Crown land be encouraged.
- Where appropriate, multiple use of Crown land be encouraged.
- Where appropriate, Crown land should be used and managed in such a way that both the land and its resources are sustained in perpetuity.
- Crown land be occupied, used, sold, leased, licensed or otherwise dealt with in the best interests of the State consistent with the above principles.

Additional requirements under the Crown Lands Act relating to plans of management are:

- that the Minister administering the Crown Lands Act or Minister assisting the Minister for Natural Resources (Lands), gives consent for the preparation of a plan of management and consent for a draft plan going on public exhibition;
- that the plan of management observe appropriate reserve policy applicable to the site along with relevant land management case law; and
- that the draft Plan of Management shall be placed on public display for not less than 28 days to allow for submissions to be made on the Plan of Management.

Local Government Amendment (Community Land Management) Act 1998

The Local Government Act provides the legislative framework for a council's day to day operation. The Act emphasises a council's responsibility to actively manage land and to involve the community in developing a strategy for management. Of particular relevance is the requirement for all council property classified as Community lands to be categorised in accordance with the guidelines for the categorisation of community land (cl.6B-6JA). For lands categorised as Natural Area, specific planning and management strategies are to be provided. Strategies must reinforce and reflect the core objectives for community land (s. 36E-N).

The information following outlines the key details of the Robertson Park site as required by the Local Government Act for Plans of Management. Note that the information is provided for the whole park area (including both the community land parcel bounded by Clovelly Street and Robertson Place and the main park area).

Address:	Military Road, Watsons Bay NSW 2030
Key components:	<i>Community Land</i> – Lots 1-4 DP 975647 and Lot 1 DP 921820 <i>Crown Reserve</i> – Lots 91-93 DP 752011 <i>Clovelly Street Road Reserve</i>
Ownership:	Majority of park is Crown land, except area surrounding Dunbar House defined by Clovelly Street and Marine Place which is Community land
Previous community land categorisation (from 1996 POM)	Natural Area (foreshore), Park, General Community Use
Recommended land categorisation (Draft POM 2003)	Park, General Community Use
Care, control, management:	Woollahra Council
Area:	2.34 hectares (including Crown and Council owned lands)
Zoning:	6. Open Space: general recreation
Assets:	15 park benches, 15 picnic settings (table and bench), 20 litter bins, gazebo, toilet block, playground, concrete pathways.

Local Government Amendment (Community Land Management) Act 1998 (cont.)

Condition of buildings:

Rotunda

This heritage structure (early 20th century) is in an overall good condition, but requires roof repairs.

Dunbar House

This two storey Victorian Marine Villa in good condition.

Amenities Block

Concrete block structure with a tin roof. An upgrade of internal facilities should be considered.

Existing uses:

Passive recreation uses including: picnics, walking and jogging.

Leases / licenses:

Dunbar House is currently leased for a period of five years (from 1/7/2001 to 30/6/06), for use as a restaurant / function house. Council receives bookings for Robertson Park to be hired by small groups for wedding ceremony / photographs and parties.

Caveats / easements:

N/A

Fisheries Management Act 1994

Administered by NSW Fisheries, the Fisheries Management Act addresses the conservation of threatened fish and habitats in NSW waters. The Act contains up to date information on endangered / vulnerable species, populations, ecological communities, species presumed extinct, and key threatening processes. Whilst not directly affecting Robertson Park, this Act would be relevant should impacts arising from Robertson Park affect the adjoining waterway.

Rivers and Foreshores Improvement Act 1948

The R&FI Act applies to natural and artificial water bodies, which are known as protected waters, and which include:

- all clearly defined drainage lines
- perennial (flowing) or intermittent (often dry) streams
- modified stream channels
- artificial channels diverting natural stream channels
- estuaries, coastal lakes or lagoons
- any perennial or intermittent lakes having a stream running into or from them and coastal lakes

Rivers and Foreshores Improvement Act 1948 (continued)

Part 3A of the Act is designed to control activities that have potential to cause adverse impacts to the water body and also applies to protected land which includes the bank, shore or bed of these water bodies, and adjacent land within 40 metres of the top of their banks. A Part 3A permit is generally required (apply to Department of Lands) for any works undertaken on, in or under protected land.

7.3.3 Regional Environmental Plans

Sydney Regional Environmental Plan No.23 (SREP 23) – Sydney and Middle Harbours

The document establishes the regional framework for coordinated planning, development and management of the waterways, islands and foreshores of Sydney and Middle Harbours.

General aims and objectives contained in the plan relevant to this study include:

- to establish efficient and effective development control system;
- to ensure that the harbours and are developed as a community asset with recognition of their role as a recreation and tourist focal point; and
- to recognise, protect and enhance the natural, scenic, environmental, cultural and heritage qualities of the land.

Sydney Harbour and Parramatta River DCP for SREP 22 and SREP 23

This Development Control Plan (DCP) was prepared for DUAP in 1998 to guide development of land covered under two regional environmental plans (REPs) SREP No. 22 which applies to the Parramatta River and SREP No.23 which applies to Sydney and Middle Harbours.

Land adjoining the Watsons Bay is classified by the DCP as Landscape Character type 10. The following sections are extracts from the DCP apply to the area surrounding Robertson Park.

Statement of Character and Intent

The character of the area is dominated by wide open bays, retained edges, sandy beaches and adjacent park uses. Special natural features such as rock outcrops and platforms form part of the landscape and should be considered in terms of their scarcity within the local context.

Development is suitable for these areas providing consideration is given to:

- preserving the special natural features that form an integral part of the character and vitality of the landscape including the natural shorelines, beaches, rock platforms and outcrops; and
- the role of commercial activities within these areas is recognised as providing an important recreational resource and improving public enjoyment of the harbour.

Performance Criteria

Any development within these areas is to satisfy the following criteria:

- it does not obscure, detract from or destroy special natural elements that are significant within the local context of the area;
- the open nature of the bays is not lost by overdevelopment of the foreshores; and
- it has been demonstrated that the commercial activities proposed within and adjacent to the foreshores are necessary and that their proposed use is compatible with existing and likely future uses.

Draft Catchment Blueprint – Sydney Harbour Catchment Board (2002)

The Draft Catchment Blueprint has been prepared for the Sydney Harbour Catchment Management Board to establish the strategic direction for natural resources and environmental management (NREM) over the next ten years.

The Blueprint identifies catchment scale objectives and outlines the necessary steps required to achieve them.

The Blueprint is the primary integrating mechanism for all natural resource planning and management related to the harbour. It sets the overarching natural resource priorities for the catchment as a whole, consistent with national and statewide policy.

Key outcomes are natural resource management targets and related actions. The enhancement of natural vegetation systems, and stormwater management are fundamental areas of strategy of relevance to management of Robertson Park. Following anticipated endorsement by the NSW Government, the Blueprint will have the status of Government policy and will influence all government NREM plans, strategies, programs and activities.

7.3.4 Woollahra Council Planning Policies

Woollahra LEP 1995

The Woollahra Local Environmental Plan 1995 (Woollahra LEP 1995) is the central planning document relating to Watsons Bay. It is a statutory document that provides direction for proposed development and activities that may occur on land. The Woollahra LEP 1995 has established zones of land for residential, commercial, recreational, national park and special use purposes (defence, church, school, etc.).

The Woollahra LEP 1995 prescribes maximum height limits to prevent over development of sites, and to increase the level of view sharing from within both the public and private domain. In addition, it sets floor space controls and designates conservation areas, identifies heritage items and sets out provisions for demolition, alterations, excavation and subdivision.

Watsons Bay Area Strategic Plan & Heritage Conservation Study 2000

This plan was created to guide and direct current and future developments and activities within the Watsons Bay area. Central purpose of the study is to provide a source of information to Council staff on which strategies can be based and implemented. The study includes an overview of the Watsons Bay environment. It also looks at the current planning framework under which the area operates and gives opportunities and constraints evident in the area.

An extensive community involvement program was run along side the strategic planning process and was adapted and reviewed as required to ensure it was successful in meeting the needs and requests of the Watsons Bay community. The study details this community involvement in the planning process and includes a vision for future planning which came out of the community consultation. The focus of the community program with the Watsons Bay Reference Group targeted:

- natural environment;
- heritage conservation;
- traffic, transport and movement;
- socio-economic environment;
- streetscape; and
- commercial centre.

Issues or concerns that arose from the community consultation within this study were primarily focused upon:

- Views in and out of the Watsons Bay area
- Defining and reinstating a historic theme to the area
- Is it feasible to encourage more visitors into the area in light of constraints related to parking, transport, and volume of use
- Achievement of a coherent visual character of the commercial centre and the surrounding streetscape.

Watsons Bay Heritage Conservation Area DCP (Final Draft 2002)

This plan was part of a widespread programme undertaken by Woollahra Council to produce a range of strategies that will guide future development within the municipality. The Watsons Bay document is intended to ensure new development is sympathetic to the surrounding or existing developments and will therefore contribute to the conservation of Watsons Bays heritage assets and the quality of the environment. The Plan applies to all development within the Conservation Area that requires consent as defined by the Woollahra LEP 1995.

The Watsons Bay Heritage Conservation Area comprises of a number of precincts that are characterised by certain built forms and streetscape elements. Within the assessment of these precincts the Plan also recommends guidelines that may be appropriate to specific precincts.

Recommendations for the Robertson Park Precinct include:

- Historic plantings should be retained and any new plantings should be of a sympathetic scale and character to the existing plantings.
- Existing views between the Park and the Harbour, The Gap and Robertson Place are to be retained and new development should not obscure these views.
- Access to the waterfront from the park is to be retained.
- Any new structures within the Park including fences and walls should be of a height that retains the open character of the Park.

Woollahra Draft Management Plan 2003-2006 (draft exhibition copy)

This document informs the community of Council management strategies and objectives over a three year period and is updated annually. It contains a strategic overview of Woollahra Council's proposed activities, financial details, capital expenditure program, policies relating to staff and assets, in addition to environmental, ecological and community issues.

Key Objectives and Key Outcomes relevant to Robertson Park are listed under Council's Principal Activities below:

Key Objectives	Key Outcomes
Built Environment	
To protect and enhance the quality of the built environment.	Areas of special character and heritage significance are protected and enhanced.
	New development complements existing development and respects neighbourhood amenity.
	New development responds to the needs of existing and likely future residents.
	The design and amenity of our public spaces is significantly improved.
Natural Environment	
To protect and conserve the natural environment from adverse impacts through active sustainable management.	Water and air pollution from development is minimised.
To preserve and enhance the quality of our air, water and landscape, native and cultivated vegetation and wildlife habitat.	Trees and landscape features are protected from unnecessary damage and removal.
	Pollutants are prevented from reaching streams or the harbour.
	Bushland is cleared of weeds and regenerated.
	Weed infestations are controlled.
Roads, Traffic & Transport	
To provide for safe, convenient and efficient travel within Woollahra.	The Woollahra Traffic and Transport Strategy is progressively implemented.
To minimise adverse impacts of roads related activities on the local community and the environment.	Facilities are progressively enhanced for alternative means of transport to private cars (walking, bicycles, ferries, buses, etc).
	Facilities are progressively provided for mobility impaired.
	Measures are introduced to enhance parking availability.
	Traffic calming measures are introduced where appropriate.
	Action is taken to encourage the use of public transport.
Parks & Public Space	
To provide safe, convenient, attractive public open spaces that meet the recreation and leisure needs to the community.	A variety of public open spaces is provided for different recreation and leisure needs.
To enhance the visual amenity of the municipality.	Parks and public spaces are progressively upgraded.
	A high standard of maintenance is provided to public open spaces.

Key Objectives	Key Outcomes
Community Services	
To plan, facilitate and provide a range of community services and activities responsive to the needs of people who live and work in the area.	Services are provided in an efficient and cost effective manner and are well targeted to meet the needs of people who live and work in our area.
Environmental Works Program	
To implement a defined program of environmental works and initiatives to protect and enhance Woollahra's natural environment.	Improvements and protection of the quality of the natural environment.

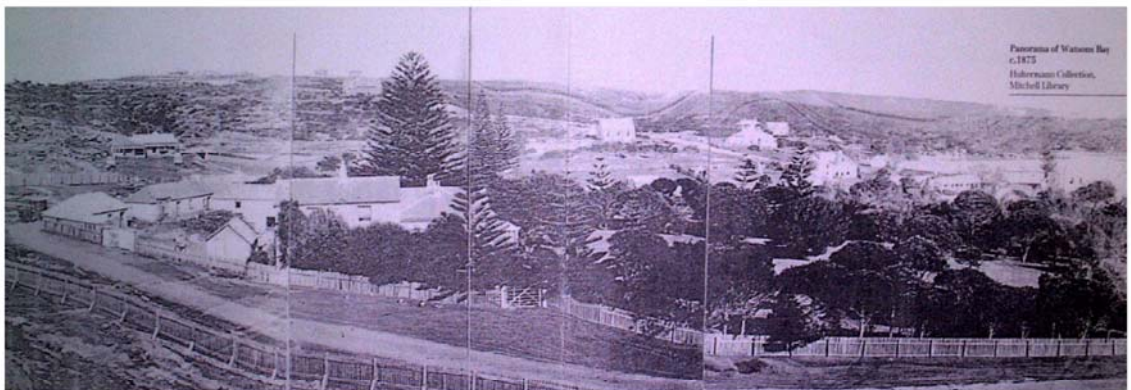
8.0 APPENDIX

A Historical Overview of Robertson Park Watson Bay

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

of

ROBERTSON PARK WATSONS BAY



Prepared by
Mayne-Wilson & Associates
Conservation Landscape Architects
Paddington NSW 2021

April 2003

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1.0 Introduction

This study of the origins and history of Robertson Park arose as a supporting document to the Plan of Management which Woollahra Municipal Council commissioned Environmental Partnership NSW to undertake, commencing in December 2002. It was immediately recognized that, as Robertson Park lay in the centre of what had been the core of Watsons Bay since 1790, and that it contained historical remnants and archaeological elements which a Plan of Management needed to treat carefully, it was important that as much as information as possible should be collected to identify items or precincts of heritage value there. Despite the fact that a historical archaeological survey of Robertson Park had been made in 1991 to locate the remains of the Clovelly Estate, and despite its identification in later heritage studies as an important place warranting a conservation management plan, no heritage or conservation study has yet been prepared on the lands that today constitute Robertson Park. Possibly for that reason, no formal proposal had been put to Woollahra Council or the Heritage Council that it be listed on a local or State heritage register.

This is not to say that little information was available on the settlement of Watsons Bay, and on the way land holdings were acquired, used, and changed over more than two centuries. A “Thematic History of Watsons Bay” was prepared by Megan Martin in 1997 as part of the Heritage Study of the Watsons Bay and Camp Cove Conservation Areas undertaken by Architectural Projects. This provided a great deal of useful information from primary sources, and added to the archaeological survey done six years earlier. More recently, a formal Conservation Management Plan on *Dunbar House* was prepared by Colin Brady Architects & Planners, in association with Mayne-Wilson & Associates (MWA), Conservation Landscape Architects, which added to the data base available. Nevertheless, no attempt had yet been made to extract from these studies and other writings on Watsons Bay the material which was germane to an understanding of how Robertson Park evolved, and what its precise heritage significance might be.

For this reason, and because he had been involved in the 1997 Heritage Study, the drafting of the DCP for Watsons Bay and the CMP for *Dunbar House* in 2002, all as a sub-consultant, Warwick Mayne-Wilson was invited to compile a history of Robertson Park itself, and to assess its heritage significance. On the basis of that information, MWA would then be able to contribute advice to the head consultants, Environmental Partnership NSW, on how a new landscape master plan should take into account the items or precincts of heritage significance, and what management practices were desirable to protect, conserve, and help interpret these heritage elements in future.

Given the time constraints, and also the existence of a good deal of valuable information in existing, albeit often broader studies, MWA have not undertaken research of primary sources and original documentation. Rather, they have extracted from those secondary sources details of relevance to Robertson Park, and constructed a history of its evolution. This has been supplemented by some additional research in the Woollahra Local History Centre and Woollahra Council’s archives, and an examination of aerial photographs, in order to complete the story.

Because of the need for an easily readable narrative, this present history has not been written as a formal academic report or the first chapters of a conservation management plan. It is therefore relatively free of footnotes, although sources of images and plans have been provided where known. Every effort has been made to ensure that the information it contains is consistent with information in previous studies cited above, which has been doubly checked where possible.

The most surprising finding is that Robertson Park, founded in 1910, almost completely conceals – or fails to demonstrate – the high importance of people and events that occurred there in the 19th century. It is perhaps the least recognised and most under-rated piece of land in the Sydney region.

2.0 The History of Robertson Park

To assist readers obtain an overall appreciation of the principal developments relating to Robertson Park, the following timeline has been prepared.

DATE TIMELINE OF EVENTS CONCERNING ROBERTSON PARK

21 January 1788	Camp Cove, adjacent to Watsons Bay, was the first landing of European settlers within Sydney Harbour.
1790	Signal station established at The Gap above Watsons Bay.
May 1790	Two huts built beside a freshwater stream in land now named Robertson Park for the signalmen stationed there.
Sept. 1792	First pilot (David Blackburn, Master of HMS Supply) brought in HMS <i>Gorgon</i> .
1792	Barton appointed to establish first fishery in the colong and to board all ships coming into the harbour and pilot them to the settlement.
1800	Robert Watson, former quartermaster on <i>HMS Sirius</i> , appointed pilot. Later became boatswain of the dockyard, then senior pilot and then harbourmaster.
1811	Robert Watson built a stone house with stone walled garden on land promised to him by Governor King. (Grant not formalised.) Watson's Bay named after him.
1811	South Head Road from Sydney constructed. Obelisk (still standing) erected to mark its completion. Governor Macquarie visited shortly afterward.
1818	South Head lighthouse erected. Robert Watson appointed first Superintendent.
1819	Robert Watson dies, without receiving promised land grant.
1822	Thomas Watson (no relation) appointed a pilot at Watsons Bay.
1824	Richard Siddins also appointed a pilot, occupied Robert Watson's house.
1828	By now Siddins occupied three land parcels, the larger two on what is now Robertson Park. Proposed land grant to him marked out.
1828	Grant also surveyed for Thomas Watson on land north of and adjacent to Siddin's proposed grant.
1828	Land between modern-day Robertson Place and Clovelly Street marked out for development of a "pilots' or fishermen's village" (which did not eventuate).
1830-34	Siddins and Thomas Watson commence building houses on their proposed land grants. (Siddins' house appears on 1831 land title sketch.)
1830-31	Thomas Wealand, pilot, acquires some of the _ acre lots of proposed 'village'.
April 1832	Siddins replaced Thomas Wealand as Superintendent of South Head Lighthouse. Vacated his cottage & moved to Lighthouse. Wealand moves to Siddins' house.
1834	Land grants formally issued to Siddins and T. Watson
1834-5	Wealand acquires two more _ acre lots (from John Foreman's estate) and builds house near Siddin's house but facing Government Rd. (now Robertson Place)
c.1834-35	Robert Watson's 1811 stone house demolished. Stone possibly recycled into Wealand's new house, being almost on same location, but changed alignment.
Mid 1830s	Government creates Reserved Road down centre of Siddins' grant to the Bay
1830s	Siddins creates a reserve on top (east) corner of his lot for proposed church. It was never built there, but land remained reserved for it over many decades.
1835	Thomas Watson puts his "beautifully chaste and neat marine villa" up for sale.
Dec. 1836	Colonial Architect Mortimer Lewis purchased Siddins' new Watsons Bay residence and grounds of 3.5 acres for £800.
1838	Hannibal Macarthur (nephew of John Macarthur) leases T. Watson's villa.

March 1839	Lewis sold Siddins' former property to Pieter Laurentz Campbell, Colonial Treasurer, for £2000. Campbell names the house <i>Zandvliet</i> (now <i>Dunbar House</i>)
1840	Macarthur buys T. Watson's villa and names it <i>Clovelly</i>
1840	Wealand sells his 4 lots and house to Campbell
1841	Campbell returns to South Africa; subdivides his estate and puts it up for sale.
1841	Some lots of <i>Zandvliet</i> estate sold. T.H. Macquoid continues to lease the villa.
1840s-50	Norfolk Island Pines and Moreton Bay Figs are planted at <i>Clovelly</i> .
1847	George Bainbridge (pilot) acquired lot 11 opposite <i>Zandvliet</i> ; builds villa on it.
1847	Thomas Woolley buys several lots of the <i>Zandvliet</i> estate, including the villa.
1847	Other pilots (Moffit, Kyle) buy small lots of <i>Zandvliet</i> estate
1847	Elizabeth Macarthur (widow of John Macarthur of Camden) spends first of three summers at <i>Clovelly</i> with her nephew (Hannibal Macarthur) and his family.
1848	H. Macarthur unable to pay his debts. <i>Clovelly</i> sequestered by Australian Trust Company. Macarthur departs to Ipswich, then to England (1853). Henry Watson Parker (Macarthur's son-in-law) buys <i>Clovelly</i> .
1850	Elizabeth Macarthur dies at <i>Clovelly</i> .
1854	Woolley sells <i>Zandvliet</i> to Robey & Weekes, who rename it the <i>Marine Hotel</i> . It is then leased to innkeeper, Charles Smith
1854	Robey sells lots 1-4 (the hotel/villa and grounds) to innkeeper, John Young
1855	Robey puts up for sale other lots from 1841 - 1847 <i>Zandvliet</i> subdivision along Reserved Road (now <i>Clovelly St.</i>), to south of Parker's <i>Clovelly</i> estate.
c.1856	Young sells hotel to Alfred Toogood, an innkeeper. Toogood builds pier at front of hotel, and renames it <i>The Greenwich Pier Hotel</i> .
c. 1855	Bainbridge sells his villa to Robert Cork, who names it <i>Zenleith</i>
1855	Parker bought three lots adjoining <i>Clovelly</i> on the south. When the <i>Roddam Farm</i> subdivision (of Edward Laing's original 1793 grant) was auctioned later that year, he bought section 7, bordering <i>Clovelly</i> on the north. This brought his estate up to the edge of the newly created Bay Street, thus completing <i>Clovelly's</i> northern boundary.
1856-57	Parker was made Premier of NSW. Knighted in 1858 and returned to England.
1859	Toogood leases hotel to Henry Billings, who builds a cast-iron ballroom pavilion on end of pier, and an animal menagerie south of it, near the waterfront.
1862	Pastoralist Edward Flood buys <i>Clovelly</i> but does not live there. John Robertson (Sir John, from 1877) leases <i>Clovelly</i> in 1864 and buys it from Flood in 1878. Robertson was Premier five times up to 1886.
1877	Toogood family sells the hotel to Robert Cork, owner of villa <i>Zenleith</i> . Hotel gains new name, <i>Royal Hotel</i> .
1870-80s	Robertson acquires much land in the area, including some lots of the 1841-47 subdivision of Siddins' original grant.
1880s	New pier constructed at end of Bay St. Billings' ballroom re-erected at end of it.
1887	A small dairy operated on western side of Military Road, on corner of <i>Clovelly St.</i> , presumed to be on land Siddins had reserved for a chapel (never built).
1891	Sir John Robertson dies at <i>Clovelly</i> . Villa untenanted, and falls into disrepair.
1896	Hotel sold to Thomas Saywell.
1903	<i>Clovelly</i> demolished
1904	Saywell sold hotel to Thomas Toohey
1906	Vaucluse Council resumed ownership of <i>Clovelly</i> estate to create public park
1909-1912	Council acquires additional land adjoining the estate on the south (i.e. some of Siddins' original grant, including villa <i>Zenleith</i>). <i>Zenleith</i> demolished c.1910-11.

1912	Toohey sold hotel to John Wilson. Now named the <i>Vaocluse Pier Hotel</i>
1923	Wilson sold hotel back to Tooheys.
1924	Toohey sold hotel to Vaocluse Council for use as Council Chambers
1926	Council traffic improvement scheme led to formal construction of road in front of the Chambers, linking up Robertson Place with former Toogood St., now renamed <i>Clovelly Street</i> .
c. 1935	The diagonal pathways across Robertson Park were installed, together with the avenue of Canary Island Palms, inspired by the 'city beautiful' style of Hyde Park in Sydney.
1949	Vaocluse Council re-unites with Woollahra Council, who becomes new owner of former Council building.
1954	Woollahra Council undertakes major alterations to the building.
c.1950s	Picnic shelters constructed in Robertson Park. Demolished in 1986.
1960s – c.80	Building leased out –refitted as 'Fisherman's Lodge' and 'Huntsman's Lodge'. By 1983 building was renamed <i>Dunbar House</i>
1973	Three dead Norfolk Island Pines removed; tops from two also removed.
1974-75	Substantial works undertaken on playground equipment & surrounds.
1974	Proposal to list Obelisk on National Trust register. Formally listed in 1981.
1979-80	Substantial landscaping works carried out in Robertson Park by Council. Toilets also refurbished.
mid 1980s	Council proposed to plant a hedge around Robertson Park (not done). Memorial trees with plaques also planted within the Park. Lagunarias favoured. Picnic shelters proposed to replace 3 existing ones; residents opposed this.
1990s - 2003	Subsequent usage of <i>Dunbar House</i> as a combination of branch library, restaurant and reception facility.
1992-3	New lighting installed in the Park (24 'Double Bay Style' posts & spheres) Refurbishment of toilet block undertaken.
1996	Plan of Management prepared for Robertson Park after public consultations.
1997-2003	Canary Island Palms die through Fusarium wilt. Replacements also fail. Palms removed January 2003.

2.1 Aboriginal Heritage

The Watson's Bay open space lies within the lands of the Birrabirragal people. Due to the proximity to the coast their routine was dominated by the sea, in particular fishing, which was done from canoes, made of tree bark. Shellfish were also important and the women generally gathered these. Evidence of the Aboriginal occupation of Watson's Bay and South Head can be found in shell middens which are generally found within rock shelters. There are also a number of rock art sites. Many of these sites however are in a fragile or damaged condition and cannot sustain public exposure. (Extract from the Watsons Bay Heritage Conservation Study, 1997).

2.2 European Heritage

Camp Cove, adjacent to Watson's Bay, was the site of the first landing of European settlers within Sydney Harbour on 19 January 1788. The area has been permanently occupied since 1790 primarily due to its strategic location at the entrance to the harbour. The area was unsuitable for farming due to the predominantly rocky terrain, and consequently the primary use of the area has been focused on a variety of marine activities, followed by defensive installations.

Sailors (midshipmen and seamen of the *Sirius*) were stationed at the South Head "Lookout" from January 1790, and at first lived in a stone hut erected near the flagstaff. In May 1790 a stonemason's gang with carpenters etc. were sent to South Head to build two huts for the *sailors*

who were stationed there. These houses – “white-washed cottages” – were situated in a valley near the beach, with a “rill of fresh water at a stone’s throw on each hand”. Most historians of Watson’s Bay agree that this description probably refers to the area that is today’s Robertson Park, which originally had a freshwater stream running through it.

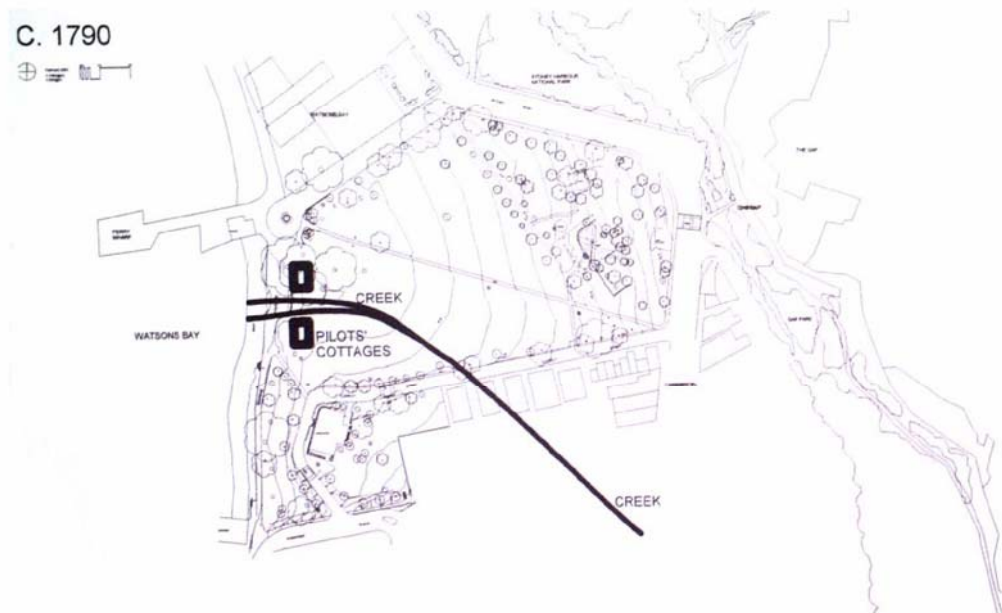


Figure 1 - This sketch plan shows the general location of the first two pilots' cottages located near the harbour edge beside a freshwater stream that once ran from the ridge to the south of The Gap in a north-westerly direction through what is now Robertson Park into Watson Bay.

The first fishery in the colony was established in 1792 at Watson’s Bay in an attempt to improve the poor diet of the colonists. It was under the direction of a man named Barton who also had instructions to board all ships coming into the harbour and pilot them to the settlement. This is the first record of the commencement of the piloting service from Watsons Bay. One of the early pilots was Robert Watson, a former quartermaster on the First Fleet flagship *HMS Sirius*. Watson later became Boatswain of the Sydney dockyard, then senior pilot, and later Harbourmaster. In 1811 Watson built a stone house at South Head on land promised to him by Governor King. It was built at the point where a track off the newly constructed South Head Road from Sydney reached the Bay (also in 1811) and made a left hand-turn to the water. The obelisk recording the completion of this work is still located there today.



Figure 2 – The obelisk recording the completion of the South Head Road in 1811. Dunbar House is in the background. Photo: MWA, February 2003.

C. 1811

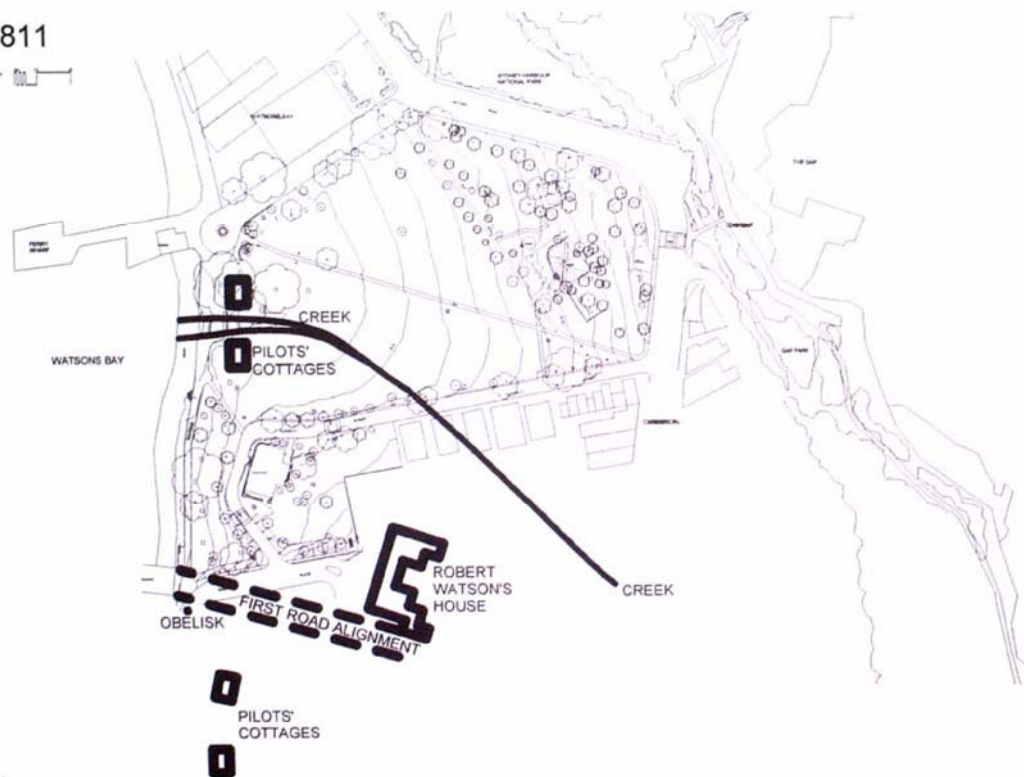


Figure 3 - This sketch plan shows the location of Robert Watson's house of 1811, at the point where the recently constructed South Head Road arrived at the Bay from Sydney that same year.

With the construction of a road to the signal station in 1811 the ability to move men and materials improved. By then, too, the frequency of ships passing through the heads to Port Jackson had increased. As part of his broad programme of public works, Governor Macquarie in July 1816 laid the foundation stone of a new lighthouse to replace the brick column and fire basket of the original signal station. The round tower and two accommodation wings were completed and the light installed in 1818. In that year, Robert Watson was appointed as the first keeper. Unfortunately, he died a year later.

Watson's "large substantial stone house" of 1811 erected at the Bay with appropriate outbuildings and a "strong stone wall" around the premises is visible in old drawings and survey sketches. After Watson's death in 1819, it was occupied by others, including Captain Richard Siddins who was appointed a pilot in 1824. (His name is spelt 'Siddons' on early maps and plans). As with his fellow pilots, Siddins occupied small holdings immediately behind the Bay. They assumed that a verbal promise of tenure from the Governor would be ratified in reward for good service. A survey sketch of 1828 shows that Siddins occupied three blocks of land. Attached to its south-eastern corner was Robert Watson's stone house and walled-in back garden. Siddins also occupied a square of land upslope, east of this larger block which was shown as 'Siddins' Garden' which the stream of water ran through. Both of these blocks lay across what is now the southern section of Robertson Park.

Siddins, with his growing family spent eight years residing in the valley below the lighthouse. His household at Watson's Bay included an indoor and an outdoor servant in 1828, as well as two

watermen to row the captain out to vessels waiting off the heads for a pilot. In April 1832 pilot Siddins, because of impaired health, exchanged situations with Mr Wealand (also spelt Wayland), Superintendent of the South Head Lighthouse. It is not clear which of Siddins' houses Wealand initially occupied in the exchange of 1832; however, it may have been Robert Watson's original house, at least initially, or it may have been a house that Siddins may have already begun on land promised to him in 1828.

The 1828 surveyor's sketch (see Figure 4) shows the proposed grants to Thomas Watson and Richard Siddins along the shores of the Bay to the south of *Roddam Farm* site¹. Due to a change of Governors, the grant was not confirmed until 1834. A condition of this grant required that a house be built upon the land within two years.

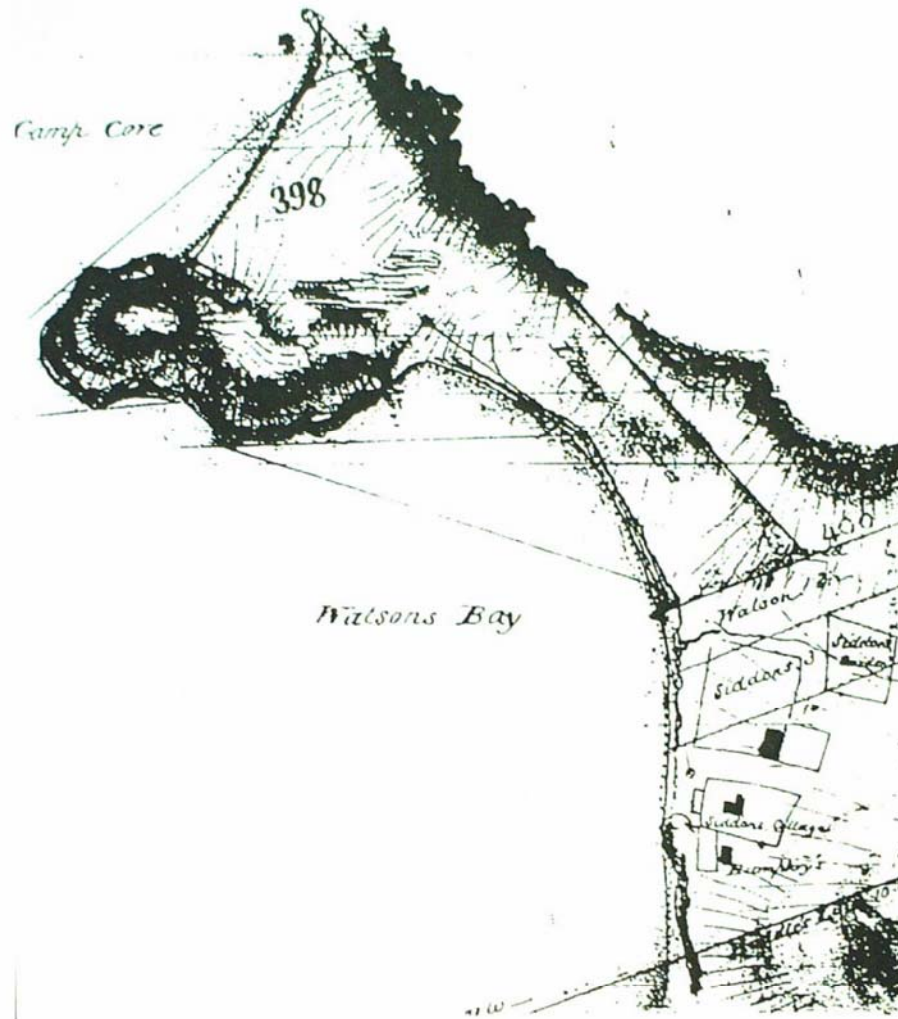


Figure 4 - 1828 survey sketch by surveyor Robert Dixon indicating land holdings and buildings attributed to Siddons (correct spelling is Siddins) and Watson. Source: Woollahra Local History Centre.

¹ *Roddam Farm* was the name given to the early (1793) grant of land to Edward Laing at Camp Cove.

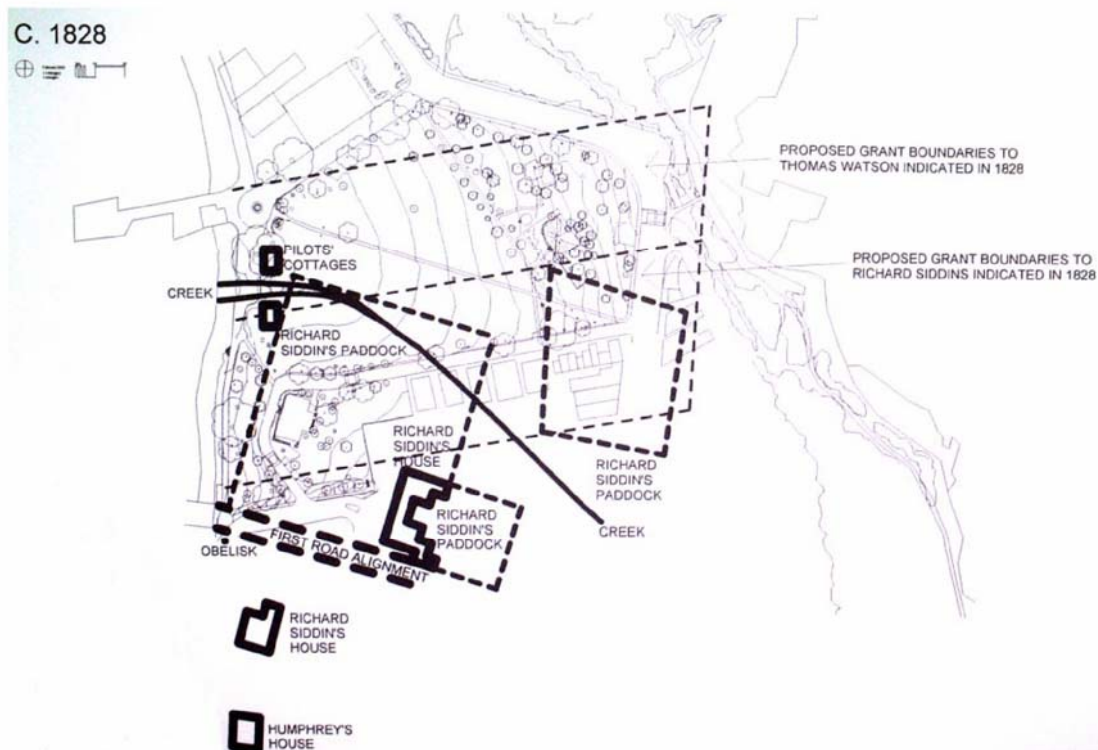


Figure 5 - This plan shows the cumulative occupation of Robertson Park and its environs by the time the grants to Siddins and Thomas Watson were first marked out in 1828.

By that time, however, Siddins had already been living in the dwelling at the lighthouse for about two years. That does not mean, though, that he had not already undertaken some work on the grant of land promised to him six or more years earlier, including the beginning of the construction of what is now called *Dunbar House*.² An interesting aside is that Siddins held church services at his residence at the lighthouse, and reserved land for a chapel on the eastern corner of his 1828 grant. In the event, the chapel was not built there but on land further to the south, but the reservation for this purpose lasted for many years.

The *Sydney Gazette* of December 6 1836 records the partial destruction of a house by fire owned by Captain Siddins at Watson's Bay. As Siddins had been in residence in the lighthouse at the top of the hill above Watsons Bay since 1832, it is not clear whether this house was one he recently built on his grant, or one of the others he had owned and occupied earlier, including Robert Watson's 1811 stone house, or a small cottage Siddins once owned further to the south.

In December 1836 (the same month as the fire) Colonial Architect Mortimer Lewis purchased Siddins' Watson's Bay residence and grounds of 3.5 acres for the sum of £800 (the size of this sum indicating that a house was present on the land). Then, on 27 October 1837 – barely one year later – Lewis advertised the property for sale or lease, the house being large enough and suitable for “a respectable family or Boarding School”. There is no record of Lewis having lived there, his duties as Colonial Architect making it unlikely that he resided so far from Sydney. (He had, in fact, received a grant of land at Nelson Bay (now Bronte) in June 1836, added to them in 1837, and commenced building a villa there soon after.) In March 1839, Lewis – possibly to finance his new villa at Bronte – sold the property to Pieter Laurentz Campbell, Colonial Treasurer, for £2000.

² A surveyor's sketch, thought to be dated 1831, shows Siddins' new house already in place.

Meanwhile, in 1828 Surveyor-General Thomas Mitchell had laid out an area of land between modern-day Robertson Place and Clovelly Street for development of a “pilots’ or fishermen’s village”. The village, however, did not eventuate on these lots, and in November 1829 John Foreman, Master of the *Danmark Hill* applied for two of these lots for the purpose of constructing a residence on his retirement (see Figure 7).

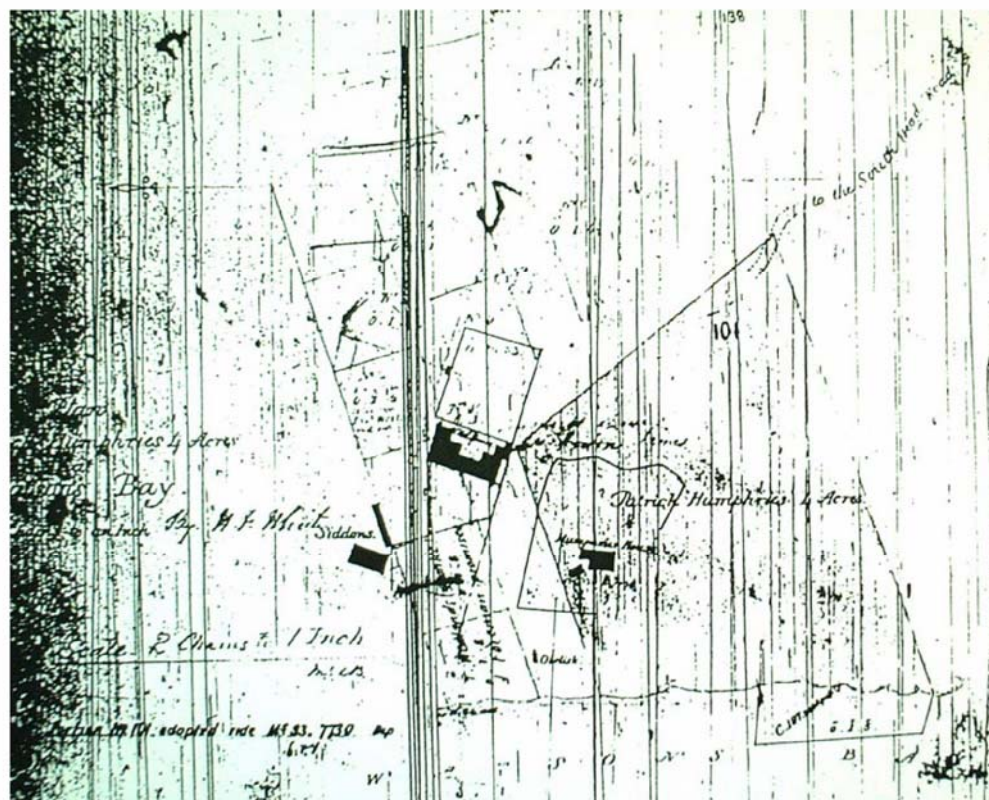


Figure 6 - 1835 sketch survey plan by surveyor White to assist preparation of a Crown grant of four acres to Patrick Humphreys. *Dunbar House*, noted as ‘Siddons’, is the rectangular block furthest to the left, with its linear service wing behind. Robert Watson’s 1811 house is the large building in the centre of the sketch, with its walled garden behind it, located astride the junction of South Head Road with (what is now) Robertson Place. Note that Siddin’s earlier cottage is now owned by Patrick Humphries. Note, too, that the two lots to the immediate right and below Siddins’ house are shown as promised to John Foreman.

Source: Woollahra Local History Centre.

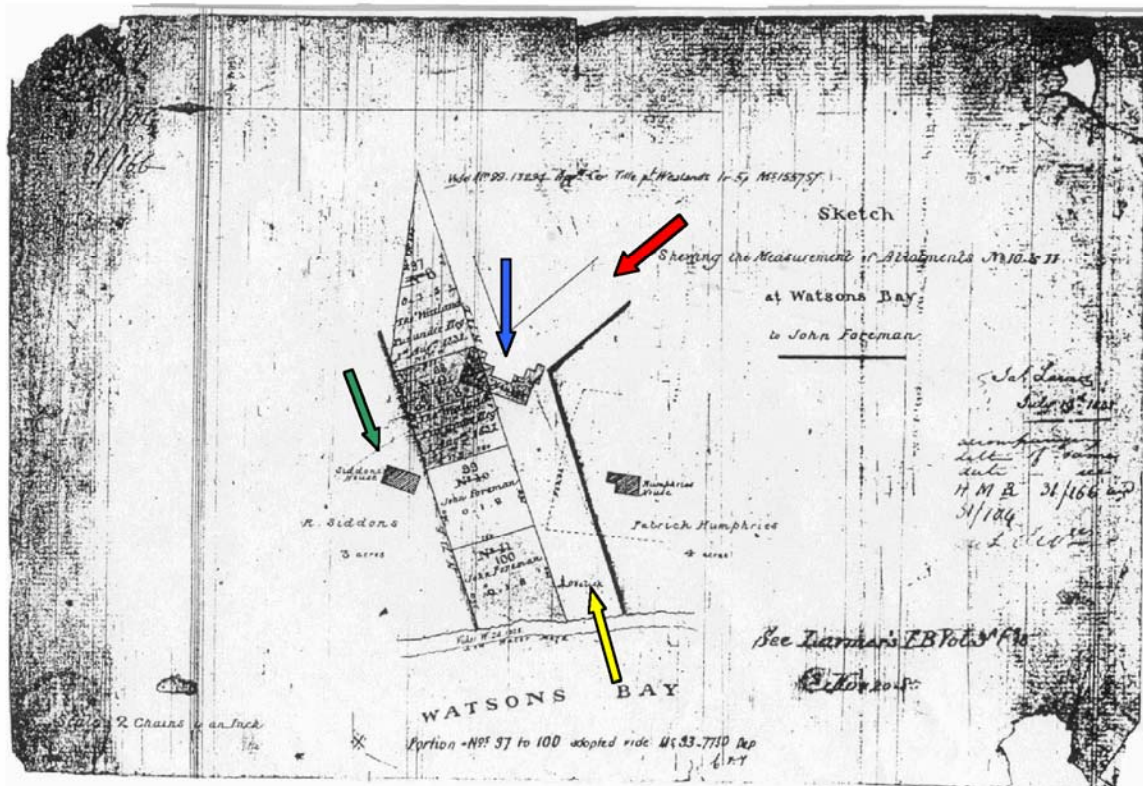


Figure 7 - This plan was prepared "shewing the measurements of the alignments of lots 10 and 11 at Watson's Bay to John Foreman". The date appears to be 1831, which is consistent with the fact that Foreman was then alive (he is said to have died in 1833). If this date is correct, it also shows that Siddons new house (green arrow) was already built by then. However, there appear to be an overlay of information on it, since the two lots above those for Foreman have been coloured in, and Wealand's name has been over-written on them. Robert Watson's old house (blue arrow) is also clearly shown at the junction of South Head Road (red arrow) and what became known as Government Road (now Robertson Place) (yellow arrow). Source: Woollahra Local History Centre.

Following Foreman's death in about 1833 his lots were acquired by former lighthouse keeper Thomas Wealand, who on purchasing a further two lots, planned to build a residence on the consolidated block. It is possible that Wealand used the stone from the demolition of that house to build his own, which faced the new alignment of what is now Robertson Place. At this time, a track was needed to provide access to the other lots for the proposed fishing village. This was made through the block formerly occupied by Robert Watson, the pilot after whom Watson's Bay was named. It is not known exactly when Watson's house was demolished, but (so far as this author can ascertain) it no longer appears on plans prepared after 1835.

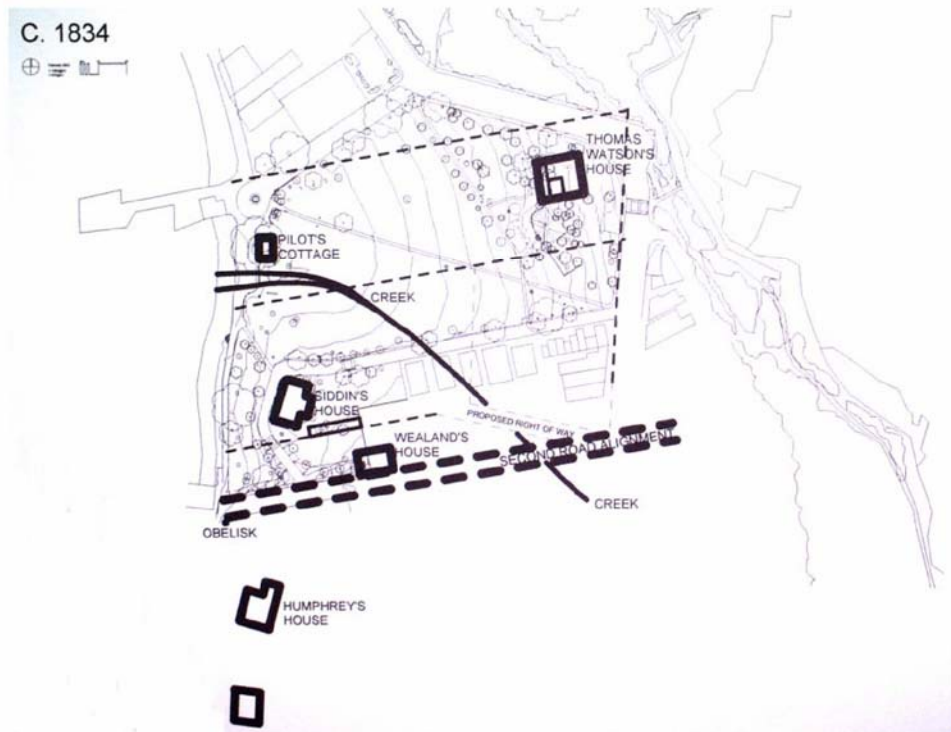


Figure 8 - This plan shows the consolidation of Siddins house (present day Dunbar House), the appearance of Thomas Watson's house (top right), and of Wealand's new house, close to the location of Robert Watson's original stone house, but on a different alignment because of the new Government Road (now Robertson Place) built to provide access to the other small lots to the east.



Figure 9 - Early panoramic etching c.1835 looking west down the harbour from Watson's Bay. Siddins' house (now *Dunbar House*) is the second building from the right edge of the image, seen with its service wing coming off the back of it. What appears to be Robert Watson's 1811 house with its stone garden wall lies in the centre foreground, with Wealand's house beyond it, and Humphrey's house to the left. The building on the far right may be a cottage built by one of the first pilots.

Source: Woollahra Local History Centre.

However, Wealand did not hold onto his new house and land very long, selling it in 1840 to his next door neighbour, Pieter Campbell. Campbell had purchased Siddins' original property from Lewis in 1839, and was seeking to expand his holdings at Watsons Bay. Meanwhile, the colonial administration had bisected the original Siddin's grant down the middle by a track identified as 'Reserved Road' (later known as Toogood Street and finally Clovelly Street.)

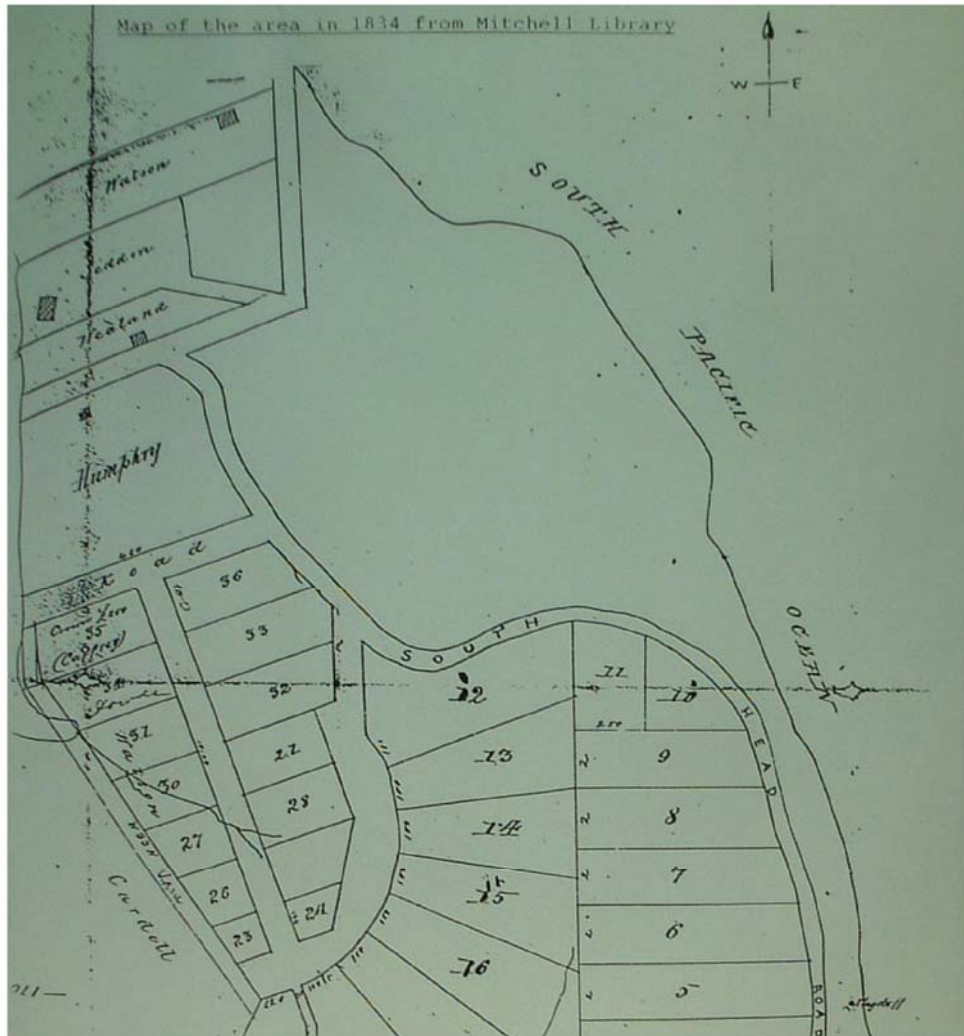


Figure 10 - Boto fogo survey, 1834, showing *Clovelly* in the north-east corner of the Watson block, Siddin's house (now Dunbar House) in the far left, Wealand's house to the lower right of it, sitting at the junction of South Head Road and the Government Road that was built around the perimeter of these three holdings. Humphrey's 4 acres block is also clearly shown. Source: Woollahra Local History Centre.

Campbell, however, returned to South Africa in 1841, putting his property, which he had named *Zandvliet* ('sandy meadow') up for sale by subdivision (see Figures 11, 12 & 13). Wealand's house and land were included in that subdivision. Although Wealand's house was demolished only in the year 2000, and a new one built on its site, the northern and western boundaries of its lot does today form part of the boundary of the curtilage to adjacent *Dunbar House*.

C. 1841

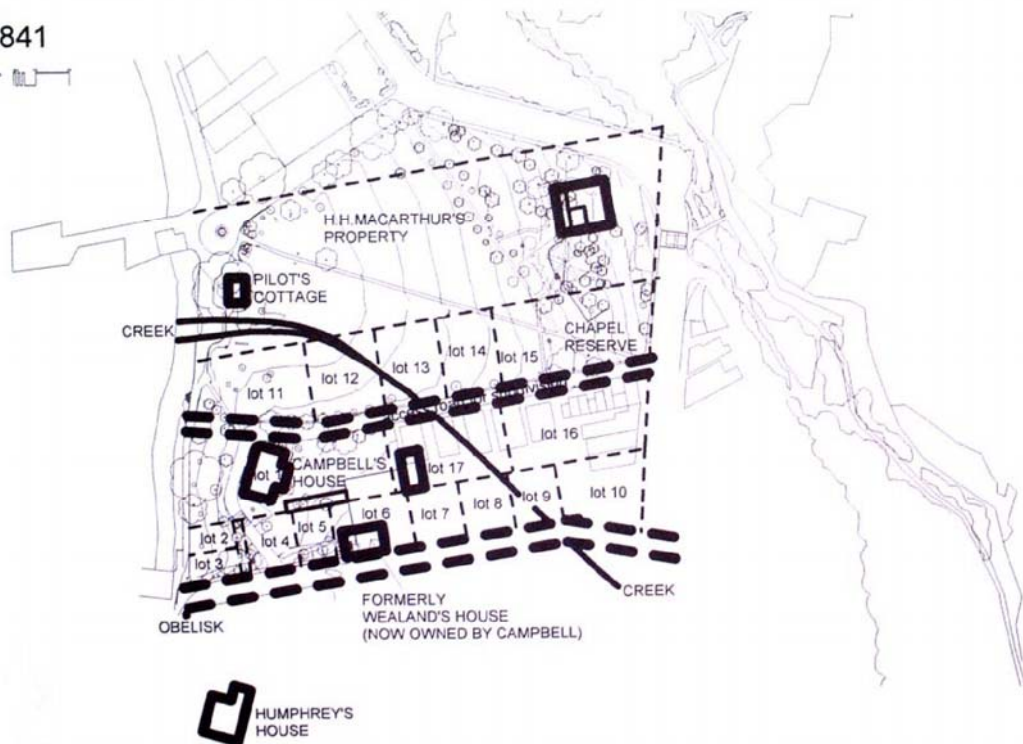


Figure 11 - This plan shows the Reserved Road down the centre of Siddin's original grant, the location of his c. 1830s house (now owned by Campbell), the 17 new lots created by the 1841 subdivision, and the change in ownership of T. Watson's house, now owned by Hannibal Macarthur and named *Clovelly*.

Meanwhile, Campbell's *Zandvliet* was leased to former squatter, now Sydney gentleman, Thomas Macquoid, even after it was purchased by Sydney merchant Thomas Woolley in 1847 - when a further effort was made to sell the unsold (or default payment) lots of the 1841 subdivision.

The 1841 and 1847 subdivision plan showed land along the southern edge of what is now Robertson Park being available in small lots. Only a few of these were acquired and actually built upon, however, mostly those with a frontage near the Bay. By 1855 a small cottage (owned by persons called Woods and Silver) had been erected on lot 12 of the 1847 subdivision, directly opposite the servants' quarters of *Zandvliet* and abutting Reserved Road.

The largest dwelling, directly across Reserved Road from *Zandvliet* was erected by pilot George Bainbridge in the early 1850s. It was subsequently acquired by Robert Cork, who (confusingly) named the house *Zenleith* (perhaps to invoke the name *Zandvliet* after the latter was renamed the *Marine Hotel* - see Figure 15). This house remained until about 1909-10, when it was demolished after Vacluse Council acquired the land to establish Robertson Park.

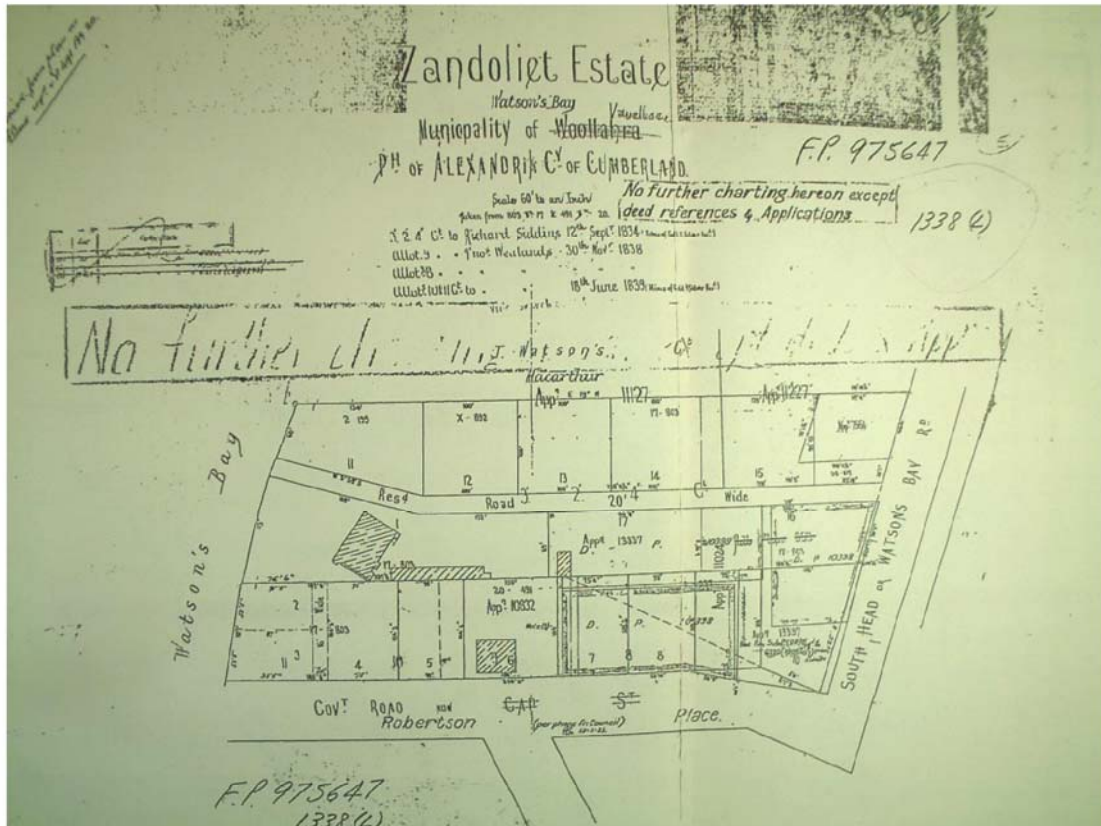


Figure 12 - A plan of the Zandvliet Estate, to the south of the grounds of Clovelly, drawn c. 1841. Dunbar House is the large building on the left of the plan, with its linear service wing extending off the building to the east (right). It also shows Wealand's house (centre), and the four lots he acquired in 1838 and 1839, numbered 8, 9 10 & 11. These were renumbered as lots 2 – 8 in the 1841 subdivision of the Zandvliet Estate. What appears to be a stone wall around Wealand's previous lot 8 is roughly in the location of the stone garden wall around Robert Watson's original 1811 house, but on a different alignment. There is also a small cottage on proposed lot 17, which appears in early drawings of this area. Source: Woollahra Local History Centre.



Figure 13 - The Campbell subdivision, c.1841, showing *Dunbar House* on Lot 1. Note the right of way that was provided for between proposed lots 2 & 3 & 4, in order to give direct access between Government Road (Robertson Place) and *Dunbar House*. At this date, the land on which *Clovelly* stood was owned by H.H. Macarthur. At bottom left is *Watson's Grant*, which was belatedly granted to Robert Watson long after his death, and over which for a complex of reasons his heirs did not obtain legal ownership.

Source: Woollahra Local History Centre.

Meanwhile, Thomas Watson (unrelated to Robert Watson), a pilot since 1822, had also been promised a grant of land in 1828 located to the north of Siddins' block, on which he built a house. Within a year of getting legal title to his grant in 1834, Watson offered his "beautifully chaste and neat marine villa for sale", which suggested that it had been commenced somewhat before 1834. Described as containing "six rooms, kitchen, three excellent cellars, together with coachhouse, stabling, all necessary out offices and a large yard,"³ it was leased to Hannibal Hawkins Macarthur, a pastoralist, politician, and businessman⁴. He was a nephew of the late John Macarthur (one of the most prominent families in the colony); his wife Anna Maria was also from a prominent family, being the daughter of former Governor King. In 1840 Macarthur purchased the residence and its fine gardens which went down to the harbour for £1000. He named it *Clovelly*, after a small village of that name on the north coast of Devon, as he had grown up near there. His aunt, Elizabeth Macarthur, widow of John Macarthur, spent three summers with Hannibal's family commencing in 1847. She died there in 1850.

John Macarthur's youngest daughter Emmeline grew up at *Clovelly*, marrying Henry Watson Parker, who bought the house from his father-in-law in 1848. Parker also acquired a small parcel of land adjoining *Clovelly* from the Crown in 1851, a further three lots adjoining his property to the south (from the 1847 *Zandvliet* subdivision) and a further piece of land (section 7) to its north, when the *Roddam Farm* estate was finally auctioned in 1855. On the expanded grounds he then established a garden of exotic trees and shrubs, of which some Moreton Bay Figs and Norfolk Island Pines still remain.⁵ He also extended the house, behind which was a kitchen and a row of servants' quarters, stables (see Figure 14) and a coach-house; however, in 1848 there was no carriageway to it. By this time Parker was a member of the NSW Legislative Council, and later became Premier.



Figure 14 - c.1875 panorama across Watson's Bay, showing *Clovelly* (arrowed red) and its extensive planted grounds in the foreground. Its stables building is arrowed yellow.

Source: Woollahra Local History Centre.

³ Sydney Gazette 29.8.1835 p.3 quoted in WBHCS p.27

⁴ Macarthur was also a member of the Legislative Council since 1830, and Chairman of the Bank of Australia from 1835.

⁵ Comber, J. 1991. "Historical archaeological survey of Robertson Park to locate the remains of the Clovelly estate" Report to Woollahra Council. Pages 4-5.

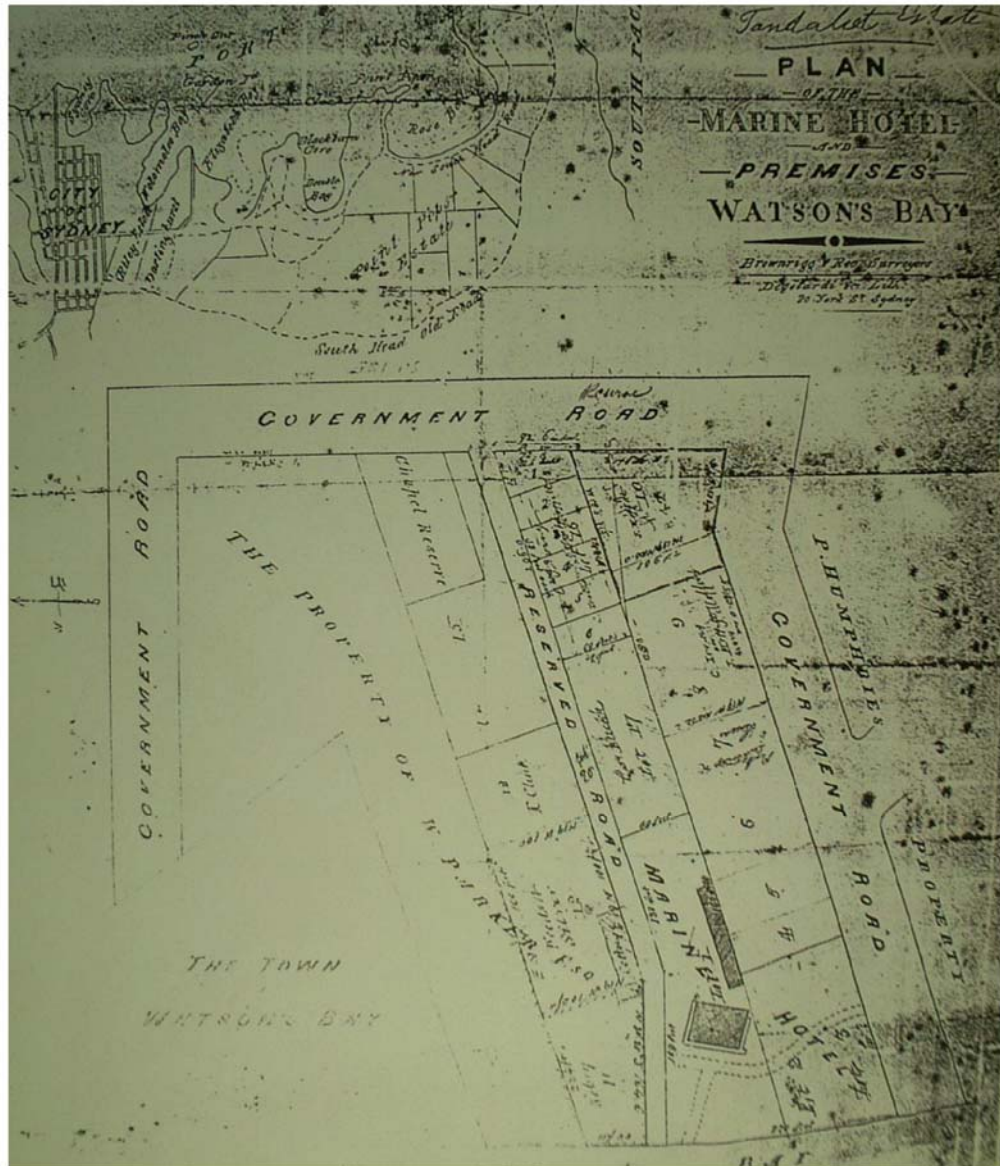


Figure 15 - Survey c. 1850 of the Marine Hotel (*Dunbar House*), its grounds and neighbouring allotments. Note the track leading off Government Road (Robertson Place) to the front of the *Marine Hotel*, with a branch off it directly to the Bay. It did not join Reserved Road (Clovelly Street) at this time. Parker had acquired some of the 1841/47 subdivision lots of Campbell's estate by 1850.
Source: Woollahra Local History Centre.

C. 1857

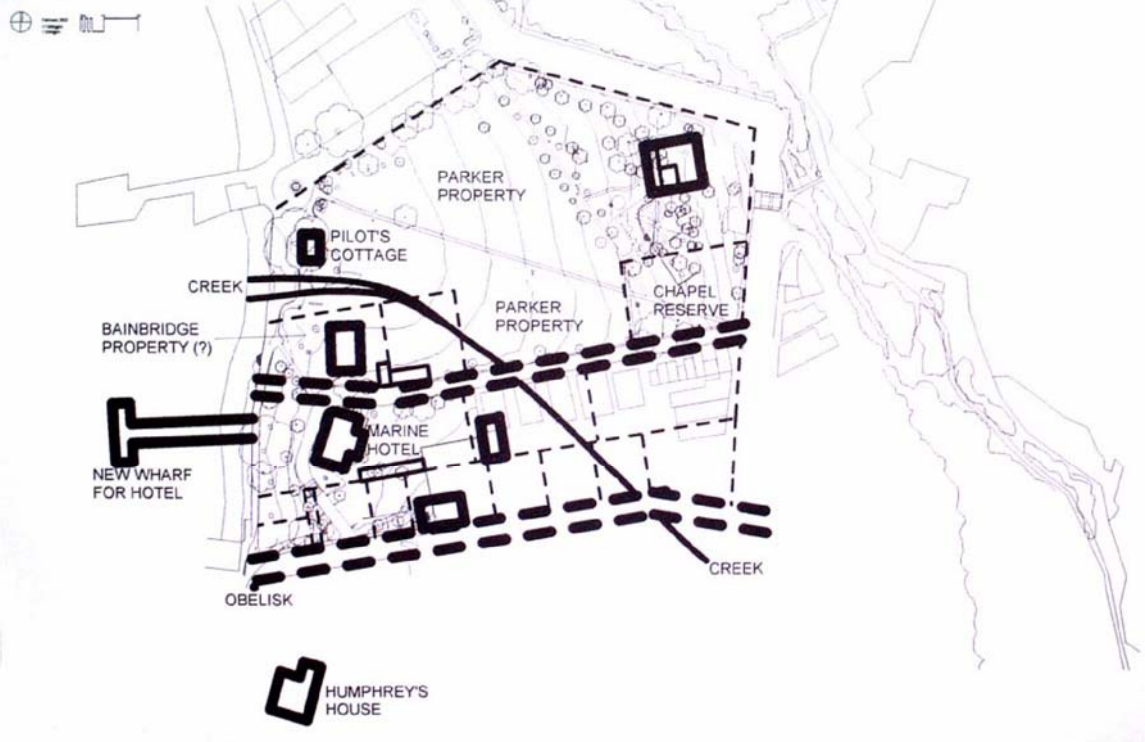


Figure 16 -This plan shows the changes in ownership that occurred in the 1850s, including the construction of a villa by George Bainbridge, pilot, just across Reserved Road from *Zandvliet*, newly renamed the *Marine Hotel*. Note the new pier in front of the hotel, built by Alfred Toogood in the late 1850s, causing him to rename the building to *The Greenwich Pier Hotel*.

In 1854 Woolley in turn sold *Zandvliet* and its surrounding acreage to Sydney merchants Ralph Robey and Elias Weekes, who had plans to promote Watsons Bay as an excursion destination for day-trippers by boat and holiday makers from the city. They built a wharf (at the end of what became Victoria Street) near Laing's Point (after they acquired *Roddam Farm*), and renamed *Zandvliet* the *Marine Hotel*. They then established a ferry service to the Bay based on the steamer *Victoria*. After leasing the newly established *Marine Hotel* to Charles Smith in 1854, Robey sold lots 1-4 (the hotel/villa and grounds) to John Young, innkeeper. Young only held the property for a few years before on-selling it to Alfred Toogood, also an innkeeper. Toogood built a pier at the front of the hotel, and renamed it *The Greenwich Pier Hotel*. (The street that is now called Clovelly Street was initially named Toogood Street from its proximity to Toogood's hotel.)

Toogood in turn leased the hotel to Henry Billings in 1859. Billings made some bold, entrepreneurial gestures, constructing a ballroom on part of the pier, and a menagerie of animals (including lions, tigers and zebras) in a building near the waterfront, to the south-west of the hotel. Billings died in 1861, and his wife managed the business for some years after that.

The property appears to have remained in the hands of the Toogood family until 1877, when lots 1-4 were bought by Robert Cork, pilot, who had already acquired lot 11 opposite, on which stood a substantial house (see Figure 17), almost rivaling in size that of former *Zandvliet*.

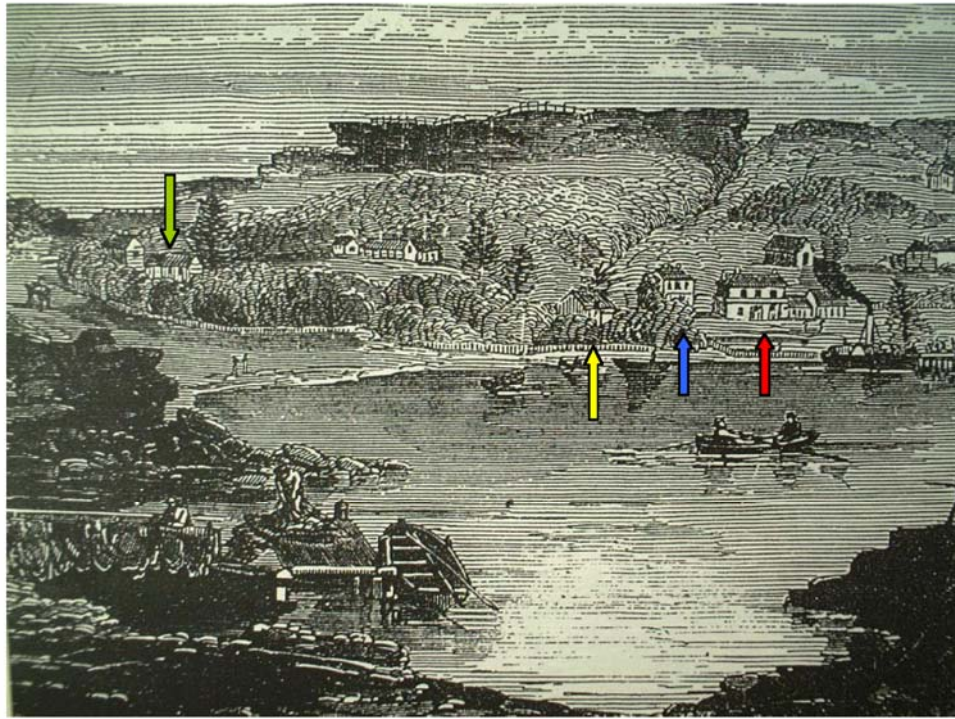


Figure 17 - 1872 etching of the Watson's Bay foreshore showing the original pier (Victoria Wharf) at the Bay in the left foreground, *Dunbar House* (red arrow) with ferries at the pier in front of it, *Zenleith* (blue arrow), and an early pilot's cottage (yellow arrow). *Clovelly* with its grounds is at the far left (green arrow). Note the 'valley' of the stream that entered the Bay to the left of the pilot's cottage, on today's Robertson Park.

Source: Woollahra Local History Centre.



Figure 18 - 1870s photograph of Watson's Bay, showing an almost identical scene.

Source: Woollahra Local History Centre.

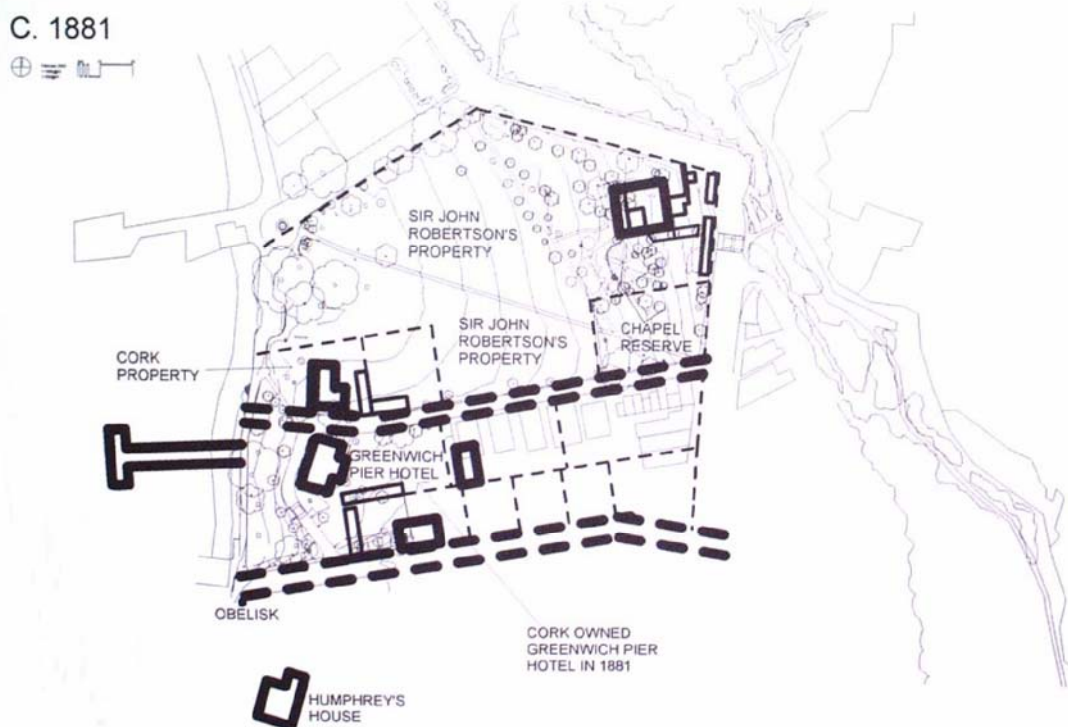


Figure 19 - This plan shows the land ownership and buildings present in c. 1881, following Sir John Robertson's acquisition of *Clovelly* in 1878 and also some of the surrounding land.

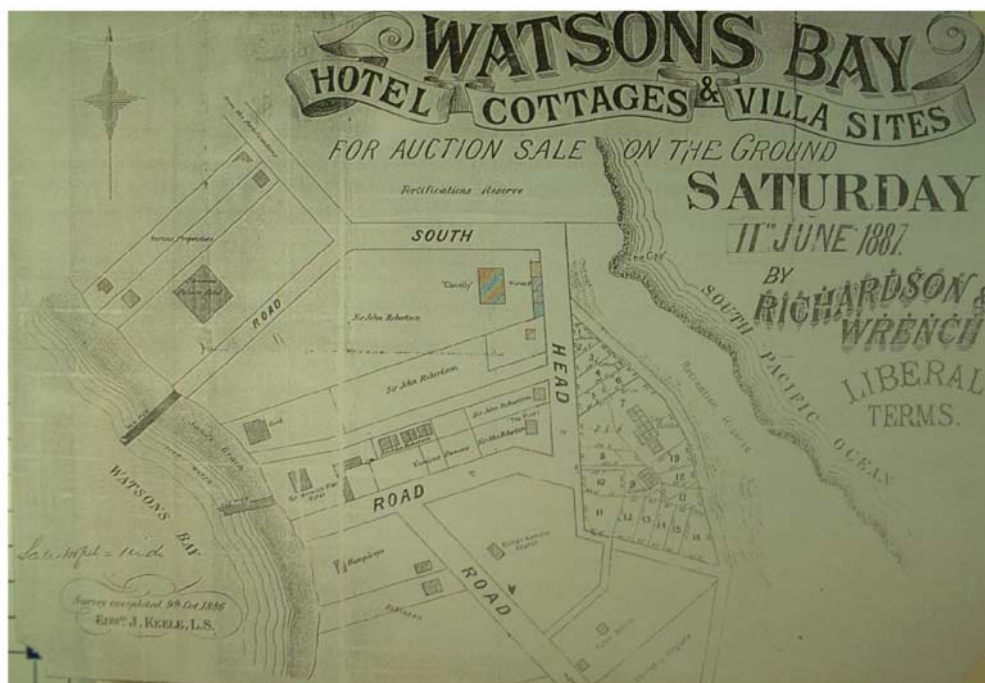


Figure 20 - The 1887 auction plan for the Watson's Bay cottages east of South Head Road. *Dunbar House* (the Greenwich Pier Hotel) is shown on the left of the plan, to the south of John Robertson's *Clovelly* Estate. Source: Woollahra Local History Centre.

With former *Zandvliet's* use as a hotel continuing, Cork's executors sold the property to Thomas Saywell in March 1896, who on-sold it to Thomas Toohey in December 1904. At this time the hotel was referred to in tourist guides as *The Vacluse Pier Hotel*. Toohey sold it to John Wilson in 1912 (see Figure 22 - 25). A pavilion was built between the hotel and the beachfront after 1914 and lasted into the 1930s. Wilson sold the hotel back to Tooheys Ltd. in 1923. The following year, Tooheys sold the property to Vacluse Council for use as a Council Chambers (see Figure 27), a function it performed until 1949 when Vacluse Council was disbanded and reunited with Woollahra Council. It has since been used as a boutique hotel, restaurant and currently houses a branch of the Woollahra Library Service.

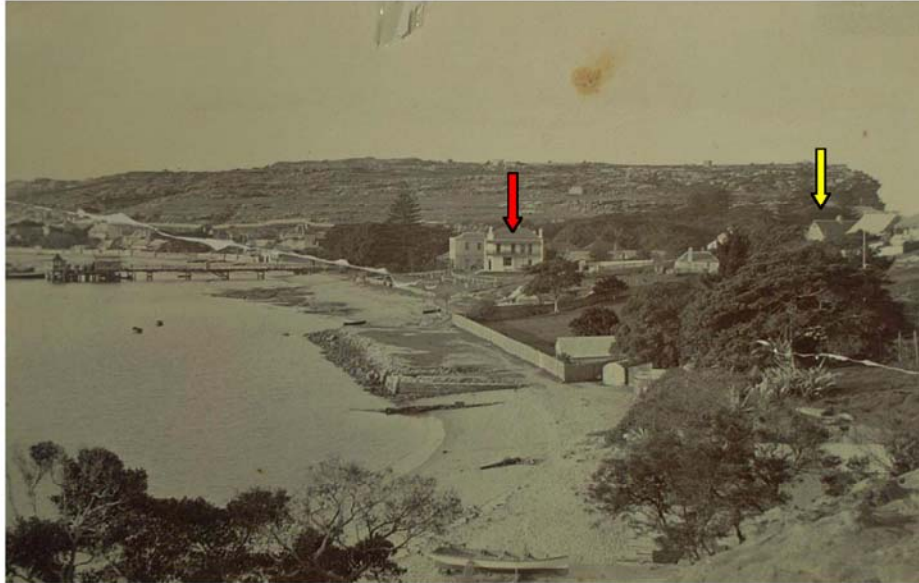


Figure 21 - Taken c. 1895, this photograph looks to the north along Watson's Bay, with *Dunbar House* in the centre of the view (arrowed red), showing its recently completed new southern wing. The building immediately behind *Dunbar House* was *Zenleith*, the residence of Robert Cork which lay to the far south-west corner of the *Clovelly Estate*. The *Clovelly villa* is camouflaged (at extreme right – arrowed yellow) by the former estate plantings. Source: Woollahra Local History Centre.



Figure 22 - *Wilson's Royal Hotel (Dunbar House)* seen circa 1905 with completion of the southern wing including a bar to the western frontage. Source: Woollahra Local History Centre.



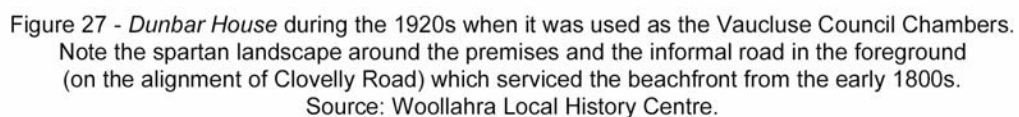
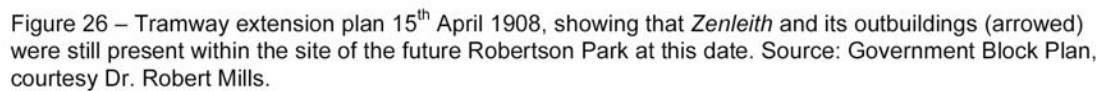
Figure 23 - The northern façade of *Dunbar House* c.1910, showing the paling fence along the northern side of the property, the service wing for the premises at far left and what appear to be new municipal plantings within the former grounds of *Zenleith* in the foreground, now part of Robertson Park.
Source: Woollahra Local History Centre.



Figure 24 - *Dunbar House* c.1905, showing a remnant of the paling fence which bordered the *Clovelly Estate* to the north (centre foreground). Source: Woollahra Local History Centre.



Figure 25 - The rear yard of *Dunbar House* c.1910, during the period when it was the *Royal Hotel*, showing the service wing for the hotel at left and the lean-to structures which were added onto the original eastern wall of the marine villa. Source: Woollahra Local History Centre.



In the meantime, *Clovelly* had been put up for sale in 1862. It was purchased by Edward Flood, a local businessman who progressively became a building contractor, ship-owner and politician, being appointed to the Legislative Council in 1843. After his purchase of *Clovelly*, Flood obtained a small crown grant in December 1862, effectively extending the estate westward to the highwater mark of the Bay. This increased the total area of the estate to its final extent of 4_ acres (1.83 ha). Flood did not live at the estate, and in 1878 sold it to Sir John Robertson⁶ and his wife, who had lived there since 1864. Robertson was subsequently five times Premier, and the estate was held by him until his death in 1891. By that time he had also become owner of a substantial amount of land in the neighbourhood. After his death, *Clovelly* was allowed to decay, and was demolished in 1903.



Figure 28 - Looking past *Clovelly* to the harbour in 1884. Source: Woollahra Local History Centre.

⁶ He was knighted in 1877.



Figure 29 - The western façade of *Clovelly*, seen here in 1884. Source: Woollahra Local History Centre.

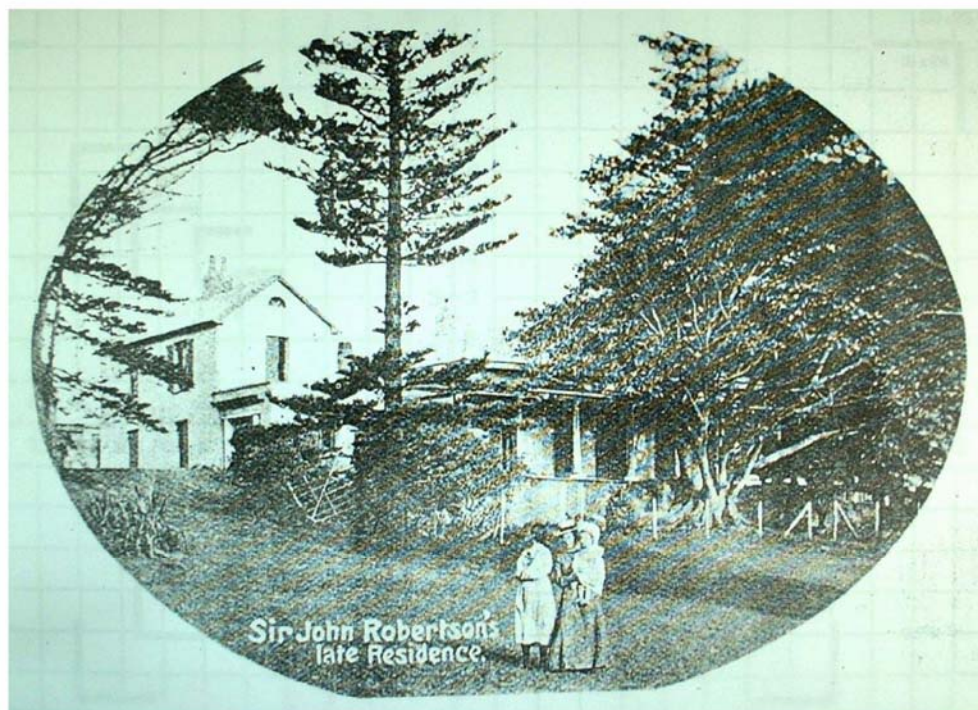


Figure 30 - *Clovelly* and its grounds, c. early 1890s.
Source: Woollahra Local History Centre.



Figure 31 - Clovelly under demolition c. 1903. Source: Woollahra Local History Centre.

The grounds had already emerged as a popular picnic spot and there had been various calls from the community to resume the area as public domain. In 1902 a strip 10 feet wide in places was resumed along the waterfront for public access, and in 1906 Council resumed ownership of the Clovelly estate in order to provide a public recreation space. The park was originally named Clovelly Park but was later renamed Robertson Park in honour of Sir John Robertson following the resumption in 1909-1912 of additional land adjoining the estate on the south (i.e. some of Siddins' original land, which included also the villa *Zenleith*). In the 1911 *Tourists' Guide to Watson's Bay and Vacluse*, Robertson Park was described as *a fine recreation ground with numerous seats under shady pines and Moreton Bay figs*.

In 1926 Vacluse Council undertook some traffic improvements, which included the construction of a kerbed and guttered road link between Robertson Place around Dunbar House to Toogood Street, then renamed Clovelly Street. It is interesting that although the diagonal pathways across Robertson park were shown in dashed lines in 1926, they do not appear on the 1930 aerial photograph (see Figure 33); nor do the rounded garden features.

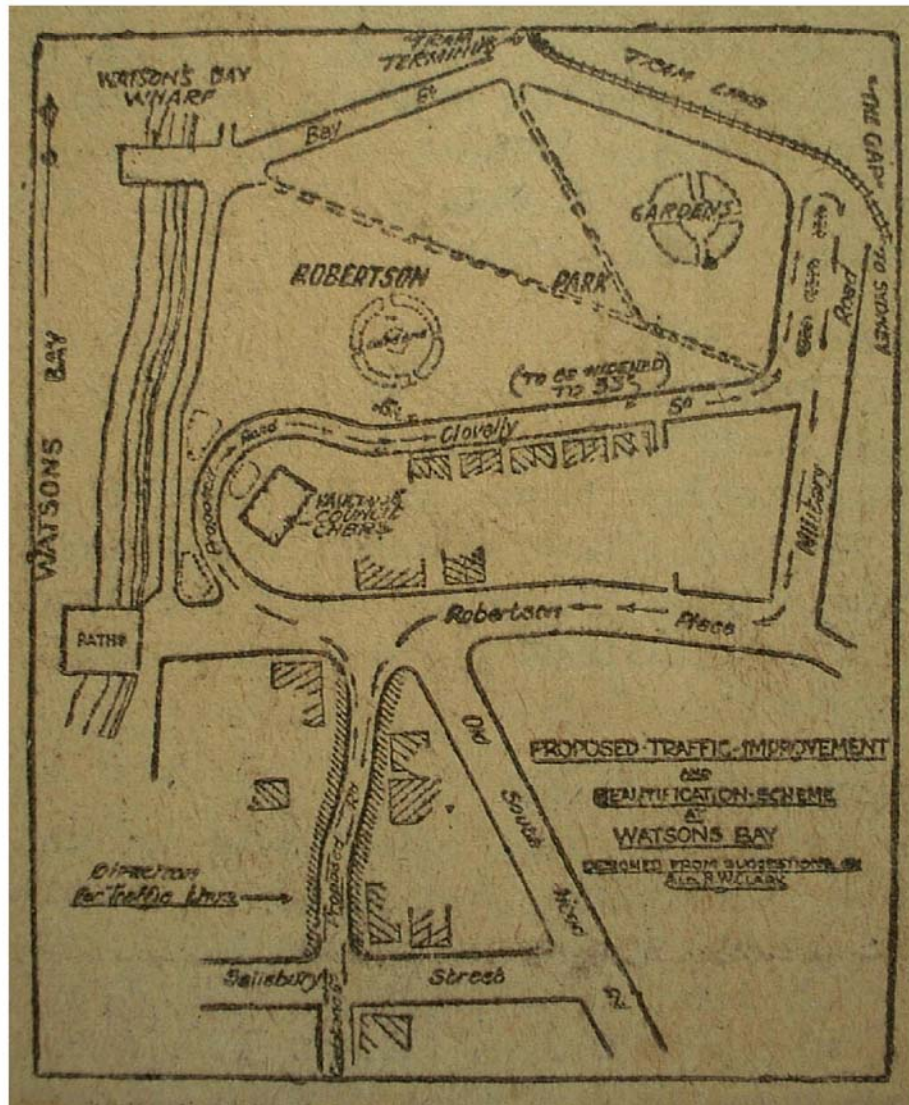


Figure 32 - A 1926 traffic improvement and beautification scheme around *Dunbar House*, the first plan to propose a formalisation of the accessway in front of the marine villa. The present link road across the front of the building between Robertson Place and Clovelly Road was built based on this plan.

Source: Woollahra Local History Centre.

It was only in the mid 1930s that the diagonal pathway system and associated Canary Island Palms were put in through the Park, inspired by the 'city beautiful' style of Norman Weekes' winning design for Hyde Park in Sydney (see Figure 34). It is likely that the bandstand was also erected during this period.

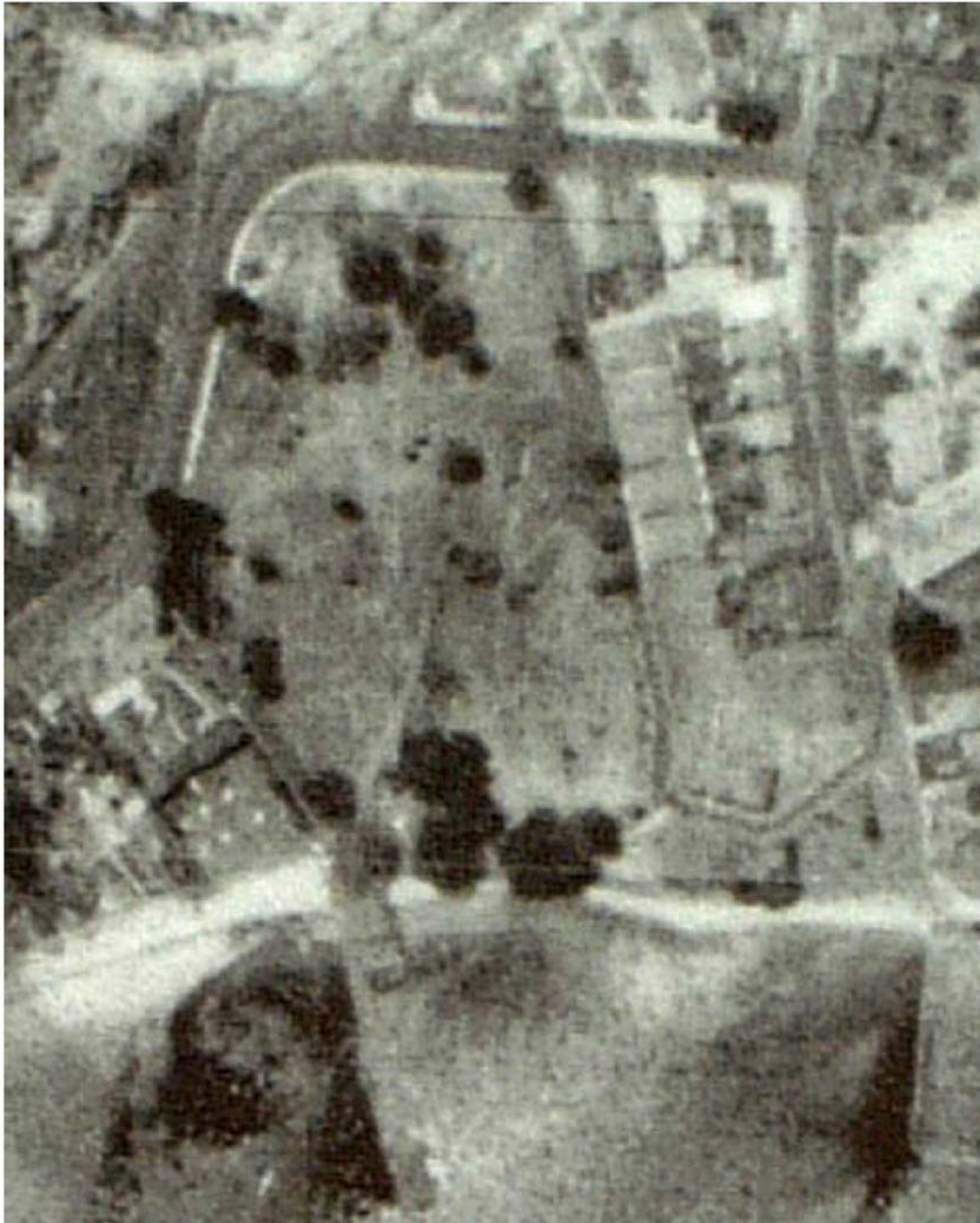
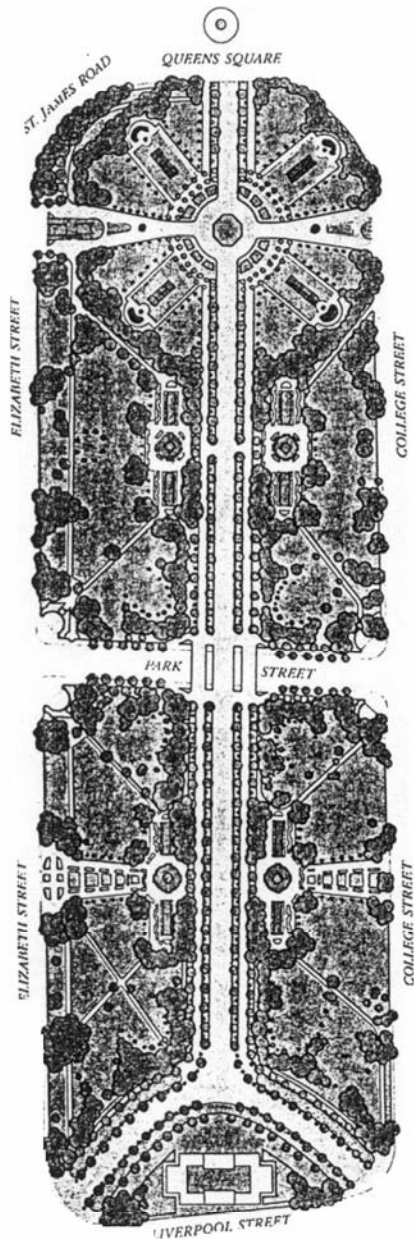


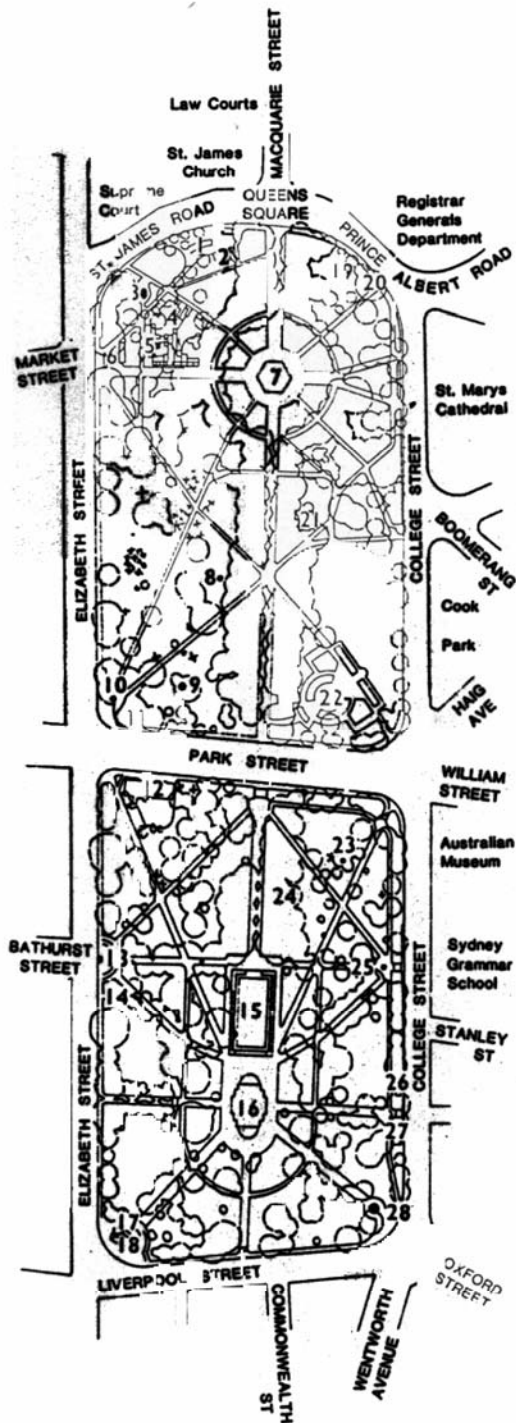
Figure 33 - This aerial photograph, taken in 1930, does not yet contain the formal axial paths indicated in the 1926 plan above, although there are pedestrian desire lines present, which peter out in the centre. The pathways do, however, appear in subsequent aerial photographs. Source: Land and Property Information.

**Norman Weekes' winning re-design
for Hyde Park, Sydney, 1928.**



Note the strong central axis, diagonal and cross axes, with avenue tree plantings along the axes, and bold focal points.

Figure 34



The simplified version that was finally built 1928-34.



Figure 35 - Picnic shelters, one of which is depicted above, were constructed in the Park during the 1950s, but were finally removed in 1986. Source: Woollahra Council archives.



Figure 36 - The rotunda or bandstand in Robertson Park, its date of installation not yet available, but possibly the mid 1930s. Source: Woollahra Council archives.

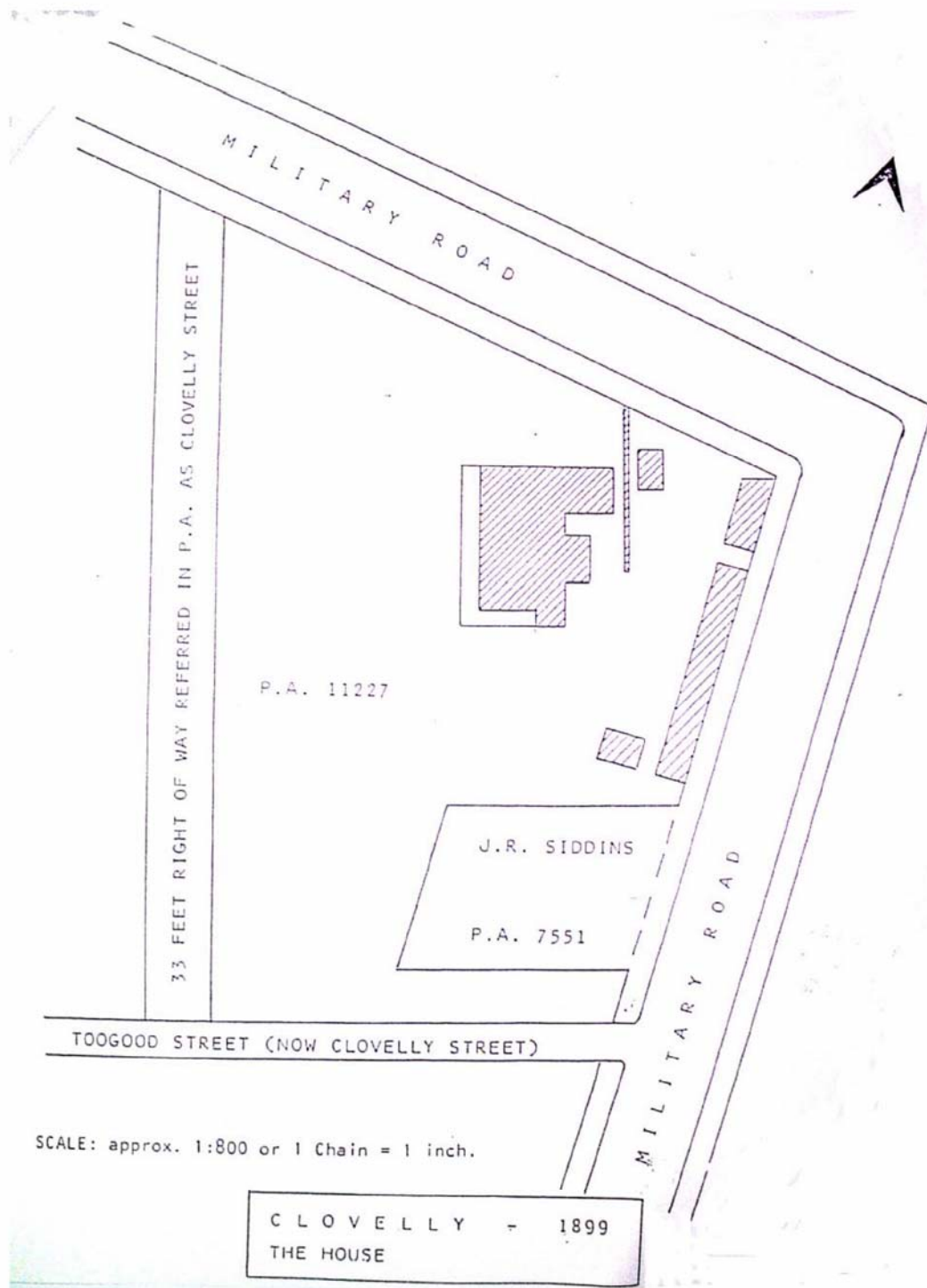


Figure 37 - This plan shows the location of *Clovelly* and its outbuildings in relation to the surrounding streets. It appears on p. 19 of Comber's Historical Archaeological Survey of 1991.

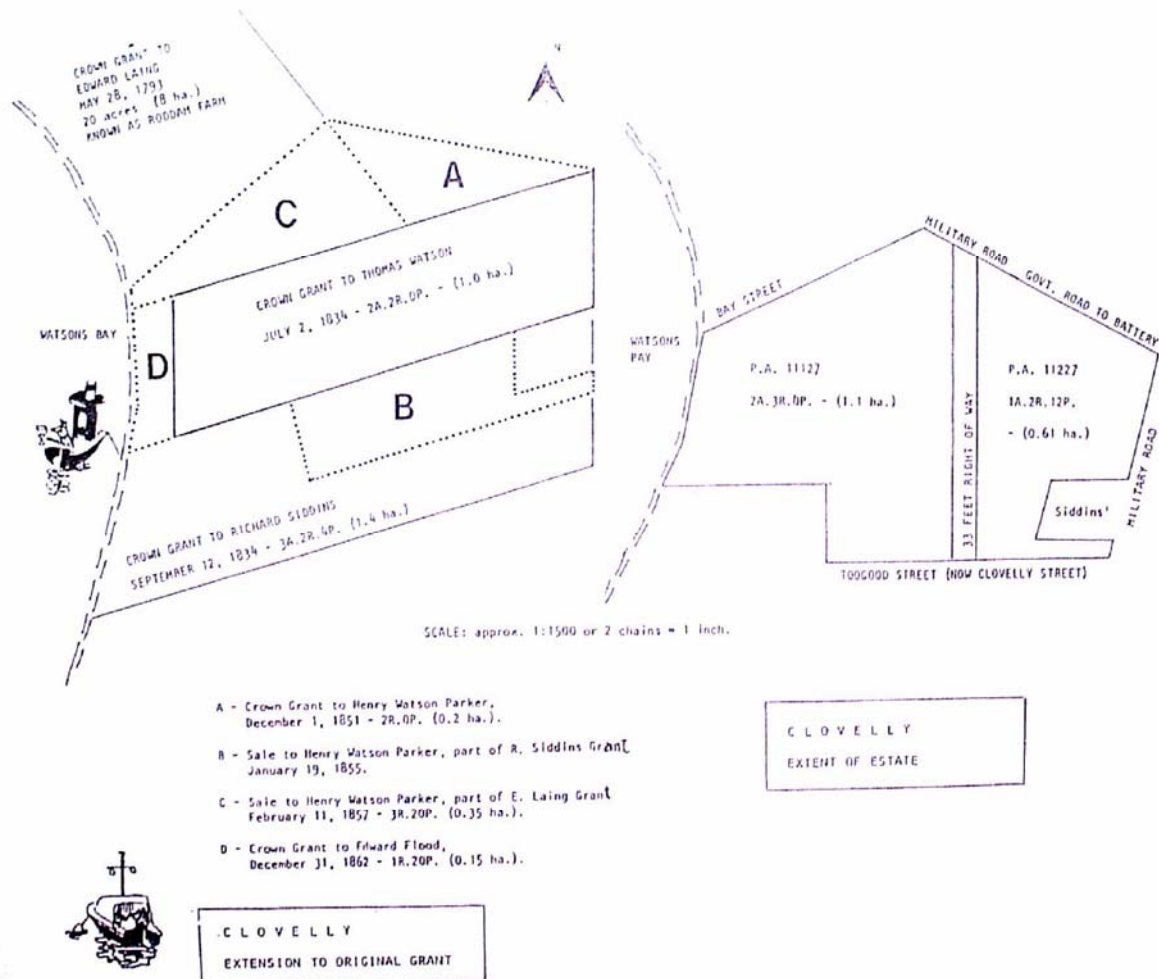


Figure 38 - These plans show the various lots of land which comprised the Clovelly Estate. They were made available courtesy of Bruce Crosson, obtained from the Woollahra Local History Centre out of J. Comber's Historical Archaeological Survey of 1991.

Three dead Norfolk Island Pines from the 1840s were removed in 1973, and the tops of two others removed. In the following years (1974-75) substantial works were undertaken on the playground and surrounds, including the installation of new equipment to the immediate south-west of the footprint of former *Clovelly*. Throughout the century toilets were installed and upgraded, the latest ones being located close to the north-west corner of *Clovelly*.

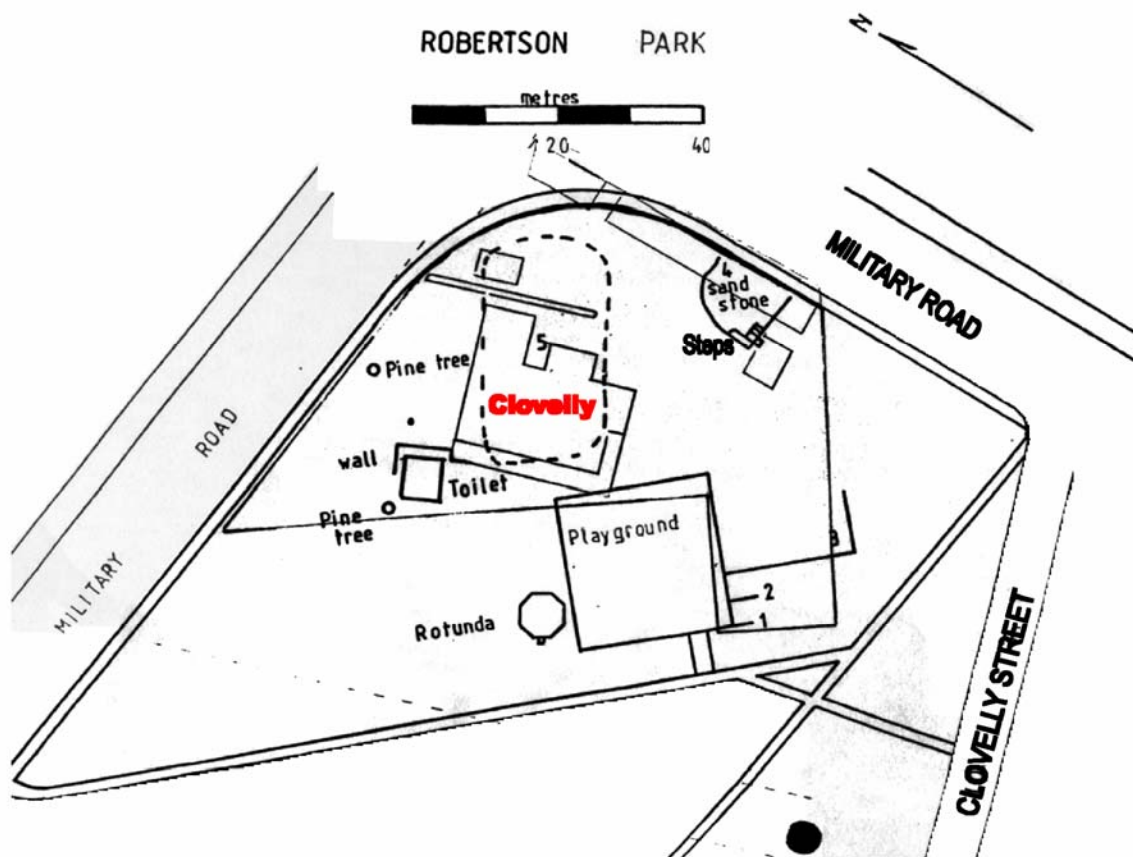


Figure 39 - This drawing shows the footprint of *Clovelly* with the 20th century toilet, rotunda and playground crowded around and virtually abutting it. The item marked '4 sandstone' is the site of an outbuilding which used the existing sandstone rockbench as its floor, with steps cut into its side. Source: J. Comber's 1991 Historical Archaeological Survey of Robertson Park to Locate the Remains of the Clovelly Estate.

While care was taken not to actually build *over* the footprint of that former villa, no consideration was given to provide it with an adequate curtilage. All the structures – toilets, playground, bandstand, and some of the paths and new plantings – intrude both physically and visually into the curtilage of that former very important building, as well as into the major view corridor between The Gap and the Bay, as indicated in the following photographs.



Figure 40 – View from The Gap over the north-east corner of Robertson Park, showing the native plantings which were made within and around the footprint of former *Clovelly* and the rotunda (at centre) which was built to the immediate west of the former villa site. Photo: MWA, March 2003.



Figure 41 – Looking north along the eastern most section of the park, land on which *Clovelly* and its outbuildings stood. The native plantings located within this zone and behind the adjoining playground and toilet block interrupt an appreciation of the former use of this portion of the park and block views towards the harbour. Photo: MWA, March 2003.



Figure 42 – The heavily pedestrianised zone between the toilet block and the playground. The sandstone riser in the foreground may have been an original step at the front of the *Clovelly* villa. Photo: MWA, March 2003.



Figure 43 – The playground and toilet block (back left), both situated to the immediate west of the site upon which *Clovelly* and its outbuilding once stood. Photo: MWA, March 2003.

During the 1980s further landscaping works were undertaken within Robertson Park, including the planting of Fig Trees along Clovelly Street, and additional Banksia and Norfolk Island Pines and Hibiscus in the northern, western and eastern sectors of the Park. Some of these random plantings were undertaken as memorials to various eminent persons in the municipality, complete with explanatory plaques. Most of these have since disappeared and/or the inscriptions lost.

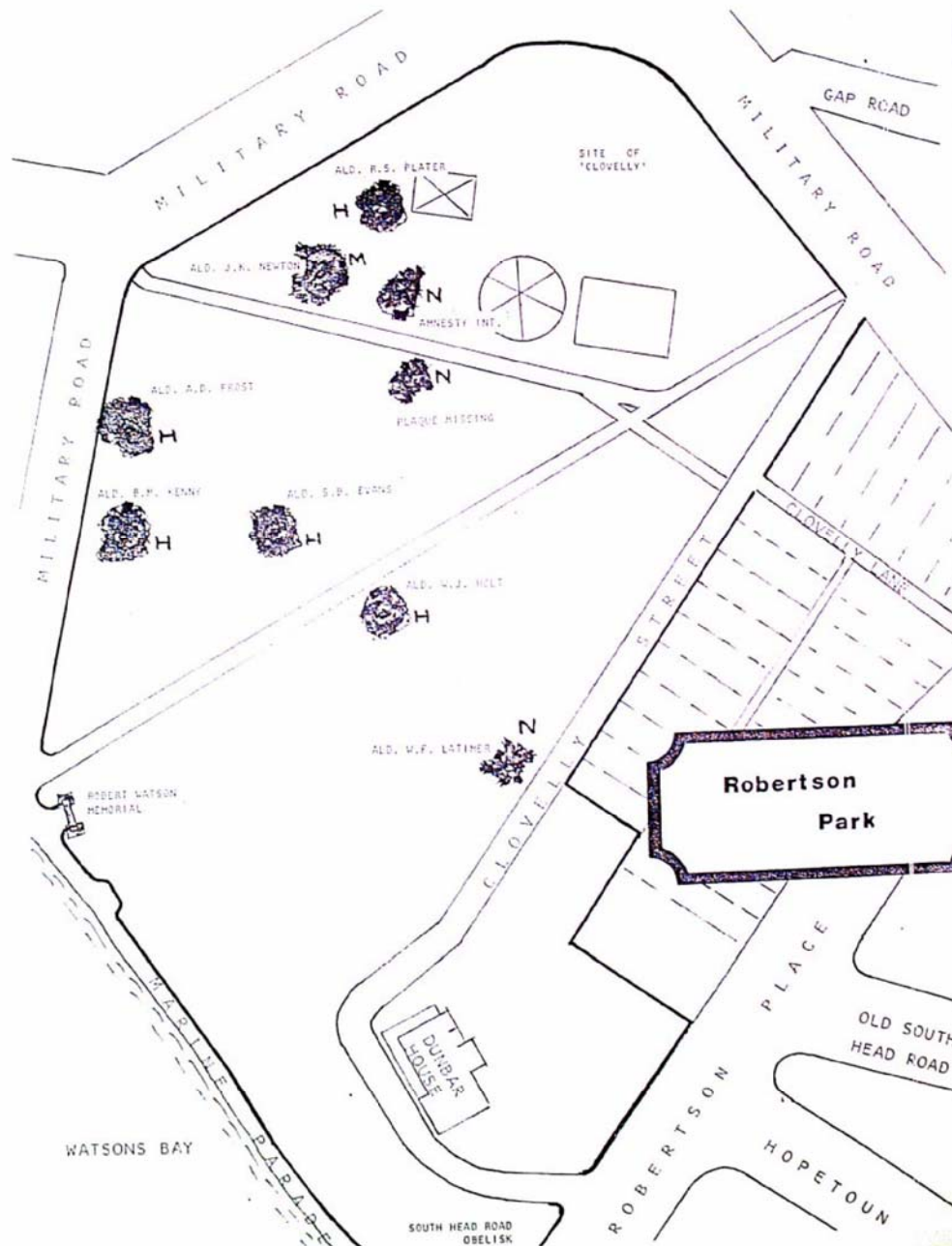
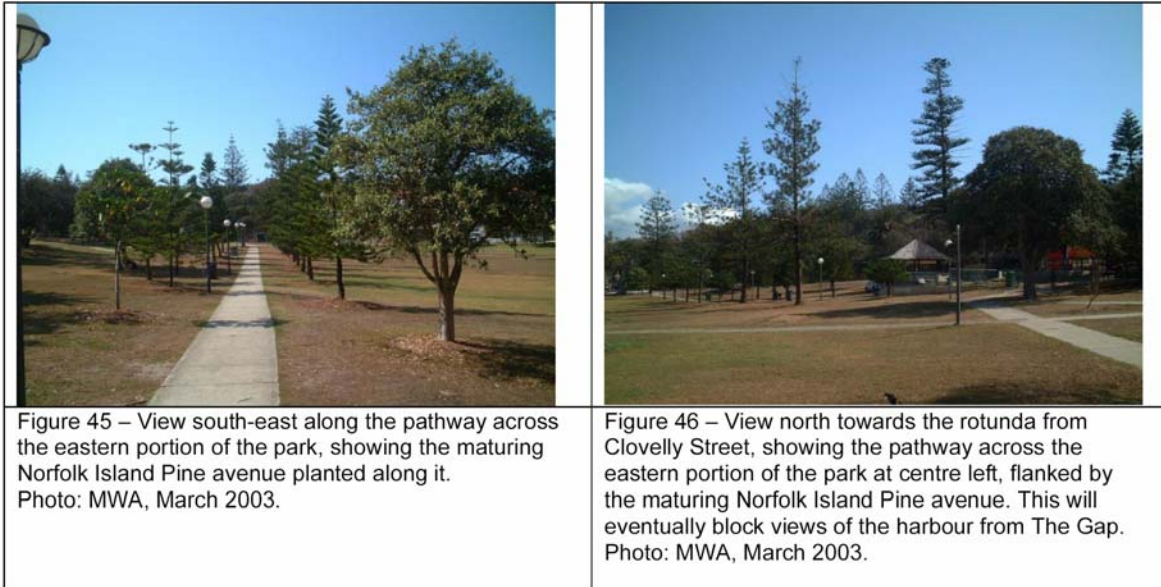


Figure 44 - Locations of plaques to former aldermen of Woollahra in Robertson Park, placed in 1960, as part of the centenary of Woollahra commemorations. None of these plaques appear to remain.

More recently, an avenue of Norfolk Island Pines (see Figure 45 & 46) has been planted along the pathway linking Clovelly Street with Military Road (former Bay Street), without regard to the certainty that they would block the important view corridor between The Gap and the Bay, or confuse and intrude upon the western sector of the curtilage for *Clovelly*.



For some years the Canary Island Palms along the main diagonal pathway had been dying as a result of Fusarium wilt, and replacement palms also failed. In early 2003 all the palms were removed, and discussions have begun about possible replacements.

A Plan of Management for Robertson Park was prepared in 1996, which included public consultations. No heritage study, however, was undertaken in association with it, and the important 19th century history and fabric of the Park was not identified, and hence not addressed in proposed future planning. That is the purpose of this present study.

3.0 The Site

As the above outline history shows, Robertson Park is made up of a number of lots which were owned by a diversity of people in the 19th and very early 20th centuries.

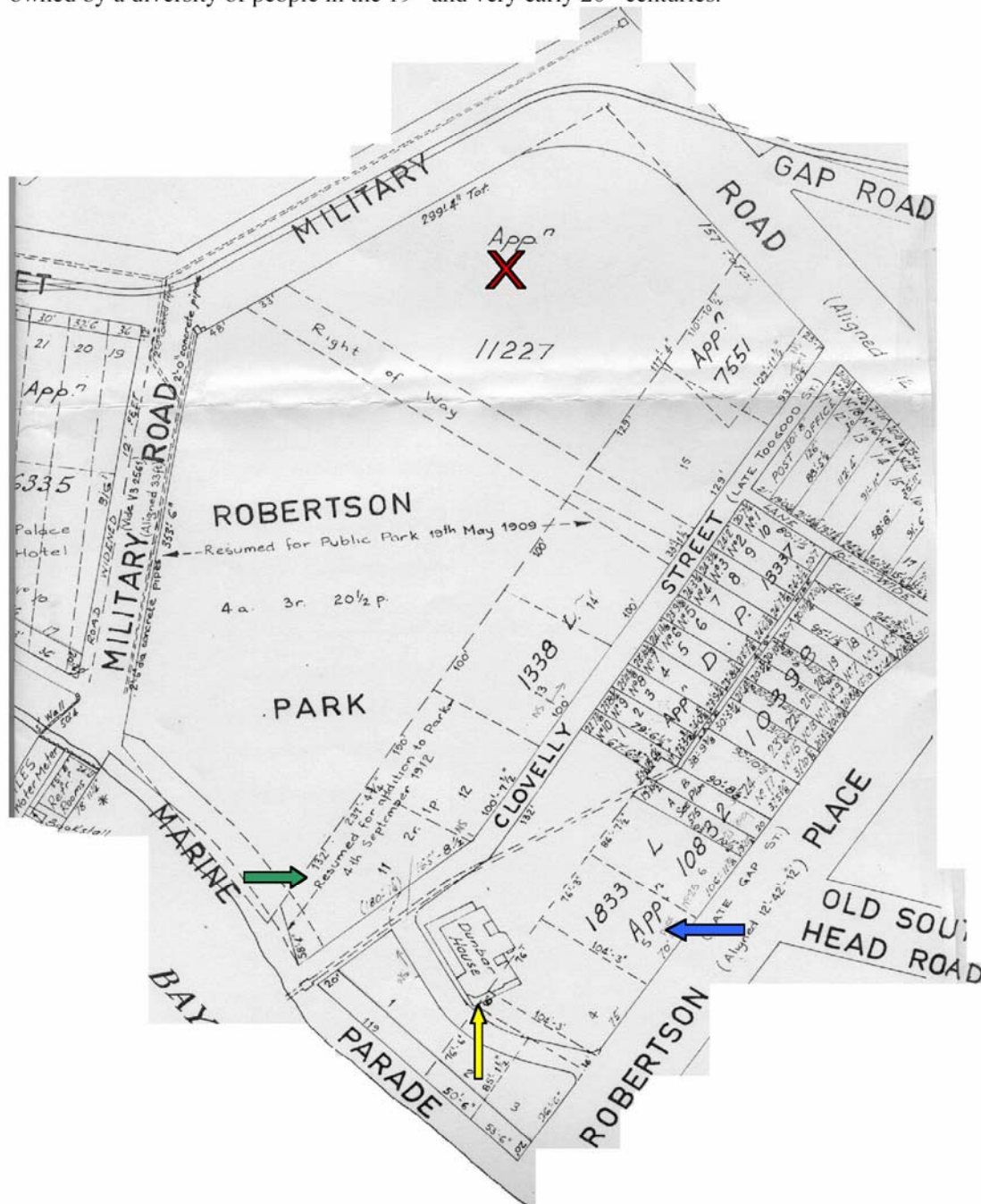


Figure 47 - This undated cadastral map shows the various portions of land acquired to form Robertson Park. Note that the site of former Zenleith (Lot 11 – green arrow) and its neighbouring Lot 12 were not acquired until 1912. Wealand's house was built on the Lot marked '1833' (blue arrow). The site of Clovelly is marked with the red cross. Dunbar House, Siddins' original marine villa, is indicated by the yellow arrow.
Source: Woollahra Local History Centre

3.1 Physical Attributes

The topography of Robertson Park is determined by its underlying Hawkesbury Sandstone rock formation, which tilts down gently westward from the high cliffs and ridge of The Gap towards the Harbour. It was once bisected by a small freshwater stream that flowed down from the direction of present-day Dunbar Street north-westward down to the edge of the Bay (see Figure 17 above). The surface is covered with a thin layer of poor sandy soil on its upper slopes, and somewhat deeper colluvial soil on its lower, western end. The area behind where the stream once entered the Bay is moisture retentive, indicative that the watertable is close to the surface at this low point. Sheets of sandstone rock are exposed at its eastern end, some part of which was used as the floor and steps for the outbuildings of Clovelly. Captain Siddins, however, managed to develop a garden in the south-eastern corner, just below present-day Military Road, more or less between Clovelly Street and Robertson Place. Robert Watson also had his garden just to the south of that – possibly on the southern side of the stream. None of this is evident today.

Likewise, none of the original bushland vegetation survives, but a handful of the plantings of Norfolk Island Pines and Moreton Bay Figs put in in the 1840s –50s are still present. These have been supplemented by additional plantings of Pines, Canary Island Palms, Norfolk Island Hibiscus, Port Jackson Figs, and coastal Banksia (*B .integrifolia*). Only the last two plants are endemic to the area. It would seem that the greater part of Robertson Park may have had a fair covering of grass as well as local trees, as is suggested by the name *Zandvliet* (which means ‘sandy meadow’) given to Siddins villa by its third owner, Pieter Campbell of South Africa.



Figure 48 – View west towards the harbour from Military Road, showing the density of vegetation within the eastern portion of the Robertson Park, which blocks views to the foreshore zone.
Photo: MWA, March 2003.

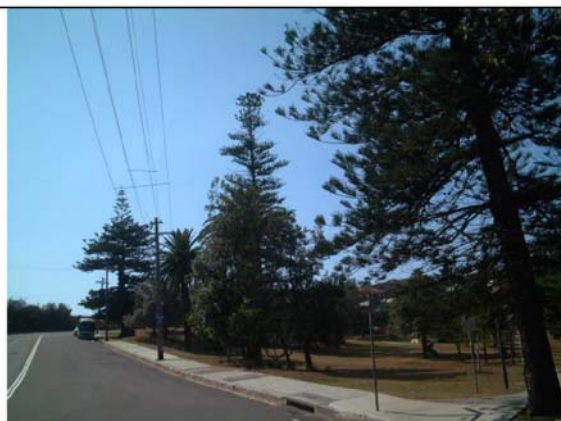


Figure 49 – The mature Norfolk Island Pine plantings along the north-eastern perimeter of the park.
Photo: MWA, March 2003.



Figure 50 – The mature plantings of figs and Norfolk Island Hibiscus along the park edge opposite the Watson's Bay Hotel. Photo: MWA, March 2003.



Figure 51 – The original *Clovelly* estate fig plantings along the foreshore of the park have been supplemented in recent years by out-of-place paper barks (seen at left). Photo: MWA, March 2003.



Figure 52 – The line of rather mangled Port Jackson Figs (arrowed) along Clovelly Road on the northern side of *Dunbar House*. Photo: MWA, March 2003.



Figure 53 – The gentle sloping basin of Robertson Park, looking west towards the harbour. Photo: MWA, March 2003.

Although the historical images show that the grounds of *Clovelly* contained a fairly rich cover of trees, with Pines and Figs as the most commanding of the species present, many of these appear to have been removed between the demolition of the villa in 1903 and the time when Robertson Park was formed. The 1930 aerial photograph shows a much denuded landscape. The planting of the Canary Island Palms in the mid 1930s and the later plantings of Pines and Figs have helped to restore some of the earlier parklike feel, although there are still large areas without trees.

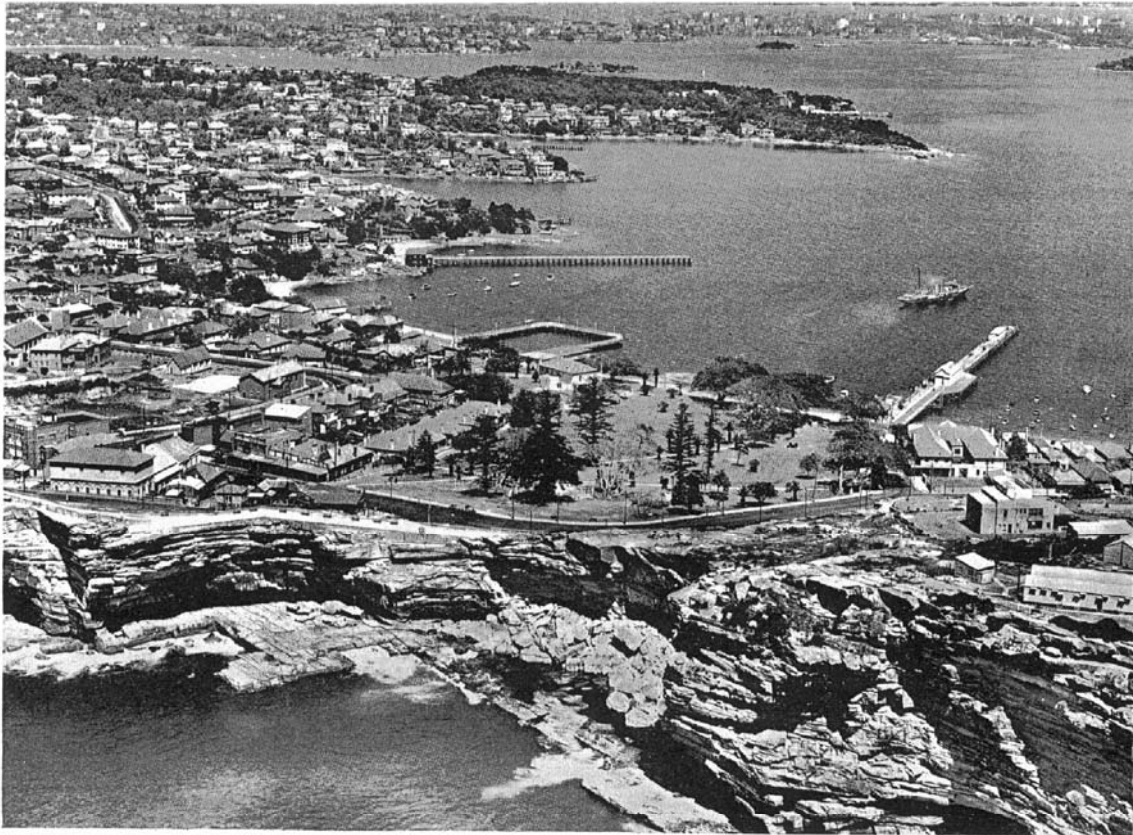


Figure 54 - This aerial photograph, taken by Frank Hurley in 1952, shows Robertson Park (centre) with The Gap (foreground) and Watsons Bay and the Harbour in the middle and background. Source: Woollahra Local History Centre - From: *Sydney From The Sky A Camera Study* by Frank Hurley – published by Angus & Robertson.

Some of the Figs on the southern boundary have been wind-blasted, and not all others are in good condition. Some short-sighted plantings of Pines, Figs and Banksias has occurred since the 1970s, and these have done little to enhance the Park or contribute to an understanding of its rich 19th century fabric.

Of the landscape elements which currently remain within the Park, only a few have historical significance. These are shown in the following table:

Figure 55 - Table of elements within Robertson Park of historical importance

No.	Item / Description	Location
1.	<i>Footprint of Clovelly, the c. 1832-34 marine villa</i> This villa was built by Thomas Watson, an early pilot, and later occupied by a succession of eminent owners, two of whom were State Premiers. Others were MLCs and members of leading colonial families and Sydney gentry.	North-east corner of Robertson Park
2.	<i>Norfolk Island Pines, Moreton Bay Figs & Phoenix Palms</i> The pines and figs were planted in the mid nineteenth century and remain from the park's prior use as the gardens of <i>Clovelly</i> . The palms date from the 1930's and have some, but lesser significance. (They have since died and been removed.)	Robertson Park
3.	<i>Views from Robertson Park</i> Views from the park are available across to the Harbour, to Gap Reserve and across Robertson Place.	Robertson Park
4.	<i>Dunbar House</i> Two storey Victorian house is the earliest and best surviving example of the marine villas of Watsons Bay.	Robertson Place
5.	<i>Footprint of former marine villa, Zenleith</i> This villa was built and occupied by Watsons Bay pilots c. 1849-1909 and was sited opposite <i>Dunbar House</i> , on north side of Clovelly Street.	Robertson Park
6.	<i>Milestone Obelisk</i> Sandstone obelisk which commemorates the building of the South Head Road to Watsons Bay in 1811.	Edge of Robertson Park
7.	<i>Robertson Park as a memorial</i> The park was named in honor of Sir John Robertson, five times Premier between 1860 and 1886.	Robertson Park
8.	<i>Robert Watson Memorial Seat</i> Commemorates Watson after whom Watson's Bay was named.	Edge of Robertson Park
9.	<i>Clovelly Street</i> Significant for its ability to reveal the original subdivision of 1841 and location of the proposed 'fishermen's & pilots village.	Clovelly Street
10.	<i>Marine Parade Promenade</i> Important as a serial viewing pathway towards the harbour as well as an access point to Robertson Park.	Marine Parade
11.	<i>Robertson Park design</i> A 1930s copy of the 'city beautiful' style of Hyde Park, Sydney	Robertson Park

4.0 Heritage Significance

4.1 Basis of Assessment of Heritage Significance

To determine the heritage significance of the site it is necessary to identify, discuss and assess the significance of the main components present and then the contribution which they make collectively to it. The criteria listed below are derived from the system of assessment which is based on the *Burra Charter* of Australia ICOMOS. The Burra Charter principles are important to the assessment, conservation and management of sites and relics. The assessment of heritage significance is enshrined through legislation in the *NSW Heritage Act 1977* (as amended in 1999) and implemented through the *NSW Heritage Manual* and the *Archaeological Assessment Guidelines*. The revised guidelines, *Assessing Heritage Significance*, issued in 2001, have been used in the following assessment.

4.1.1 Nature of Significance Criteria

The various categories of heritage values and the degree of such values are appraised according to the following criteria:⁷

- Criterion (a):** importance in the course, or pattern, of NSW's or the local area's cultural or natural history;
- Criterion (b):** strong or special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in the cultural or natural history of NSW or the local area;
- Criterion (c):** importance in demonstrating aesthetic characteristics and/or a high degree of creative or technical achievement in NSW or the local area;
- Criterion (d):** strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group in NSW or the local area for social, cultural or spiritual reasons;
- Criterion (e):** potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of NSW's or the local area's cultural or natural history;
- Criterion (f):** possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of the cultural or natural history of NSW or the local area;
- Criterion (g):** importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of NSW's or the local area's cultural or natural places or environments.

To be assessed as having heritage significance, an item or place must:

- meet at least one or more of the nature of significance criteria; and
- retain the integrity of its key attributes.

Items may also be ranked according to their heritage significance as having:

- Local Significance
- State Significance

It should be noted that different components of a place may make a different relative contribution to its heritage value. Loss of integrity or condition may diminish significance, although continuing maintenance and repair does not usually diminish significance: rather, it may maintain or enhance it.

4.2 Statement of Significance

Historical Themes:

S.H.I. Themes

(a) Land tenure/closer settlement

Local Themes

Subdivisions of original grants

⁷ NSW Heritage Assessment Criteria, as adopted from April 1999.

(b) Environment – natural & modified	Land clearing, gardens and plantings.
(c) Fishing	Fishermen's housing
(d) Transport	Shipping, piloting, signalling, ferry services
(c) Leisure	Picnics, recreation, boating, swimming
(d) Persons	State Premiers, leading citizens in residence

4.2.1 Nature of Significance

Criterion (a): importance in the course, or pattern, of NSW's or the local area's cultural or natural history;

Robertson Park has high historical significance as the site of the first cottages of officials operating New South Wales' first signal station (1790) and the site of subsequent pilots' houses, including those of Richard Siddins, Thomas Watson, Thomas Wealand, George Bainbridge and Robert Cork. It was also edged after 1830 by an assortment of fishermen's cottages, mostly along what is now Clovelly Street.

Criterion (b): strong or special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in the cultural or natural history of NSW or the local area;

Two early pilots' houses, after conversion into elegant marine villas, had a strong or special association with persons of importance in the cultural history of NSW such as leading politicians, officials, gentry and merchants.

Richard Siddins' house, built between 1828 and 1834, had a succession of eminent owners, including Mortimer Lewis (Colonial Architect), Pieter Campbell (Colonial Treasurer), and a number of prominent Sydney merchants and hoteliers. After being named *Zandvliet* by Campbell in 1839, the house had a succession of names – *Marine Hotel*, *Greenwich Pier Hotel*, *Royal Hotel*, and the *Vaocluse Pier Hotel*, before ultimately being named *Dunbar House* in memory of the ship of that name wrecked in 1857 at The Gap. It also served as Chambers for Vaocluse Council from 1924 to 1949.

Thomas Watson's marine villa was purchased, named *Clovelly*, and occupied by Hannibal Macarthur (a nephew of John & Elizabeth Macarthur), and subsequently by Henry Parker and Sir John Robertson, two Premiers of New South Wales in the period before 1891.

Criterion (c): importance in demonstrating aesthetic characteristics and/or a high degree of creative or technical achievement in NSW or the local area;

The two villas had importance in demonstrating the aesthetic characteristics of early to mid Victorian marine villas in the local area, while the cottages along Clovelly Street demonstrate the simple forms used by fishermen during the 19th century.

Robertson Park also has aesthetic significance since c.1935 as a 'city beautiful' inspired park with some 1840s plantings, principally Pines and Figs, by earlier owners of *Clovelly*, and as a platform to view the Bay with its highly picturesque scenery and views to the City of Sydney beyond.

Criterion (d): strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group in NSW or the local area for social, cultural or spiritual reasons;

Robertson Park's foreshores have had social significance since the mid 1850s as a venue for picnickers and day-trippers, who arrived by boat and ferry from Sydney, and after its establishment as a park in 1910, a place for public recreation and movement of sight-seers between The Gap and the Harbour edge.

Criterion (e): potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of NSW's or the local area's cultural or natural history; The Park has potential to yield information on the location and scale of the original cottages, villas, outbuildings and gardens that will contribute to an understanding of Watsons Bay cultural history. As most of the fabric was removed between 1903 and 1910, however, the research will necessarily be mainly archaeological.

Criterion (f): possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of the cultural or natural history of NSW or the local area; *Dunbar House*, on the southern edge of the Park, is a rare survivor of the marine villas in Watsons Bay; and being now owned by Woollahra Council and protected by a conservation management plan, it should no longer be endangered.

Criterion (g): importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of NSW's or the local area's cultural or natural places or environments.


Robertson Park has a low to moderate degree of importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a NSW public park developed after 1930 in accordance with the precepts of the 'city beautiful' style, as demonstrated by that laid down at Hyde Park in Sydney after 1928.

Integrity

While Robertson Park retains the integrity of the (somewhat diluted) 'city beautiful' style, it retains only a few remnant elements that demonstrate its once high importance in its manifold roles as a location for signalmen's, pilots' and fishermen's dwellings, and large marine villas occupied by leading NSW politicians and gentry; and its role as a centre for pleasurable recreation (revolving around *Dunbar House's* former use as a hotel). It does, however, retain its importance as a location for public recreation and tourist visitation.

While the post-1910 fabric of Robertson Park has only a low to moderate degree of local significance, its historical role (1790-1903) as described above warrants its determination as being of State significance.

4.2.2 Heritage Significance of Component Elements

A table indicating the heritage significance of the components of Robertson Park is contained on the following page. 

No.	Item / Description	Location	Watsons Bay Heritage Conservation Study 1997	Watsons Bay Area Strategic Plan & Heritage Conservation Study 2000	Watsons Bay Heritage Conservation Area DCP (Final Draft) 2002	Relevant heritage recommendations
1.	Footprint of Clovelly, the c. 1832-34 marine villa This villa was built by Thomas Watson, an early pilot, and later occupied by a succession of eminent owners, two of whom were State Premiers. Others were MLCs and members of leading colonial families and Sydney gentry.	North-east corner of Robertson Park				The footprint of Clovelly has been identified in an archaeological report and needs to be provided with an adequate curtilage, and should be fully interpreted.
2	Norfolk Island Pines, Moreton Bay Figs & Phoenix Palms The pines and figs were planted in the mid nineteenth century and remain from the park's prior use as the gardens of Clovelly. The palms date from the 1930's and have some, but lesser significance. (They have since died and been removed.)	Robertson Park	✓	✓	✓	Trees should be conserved. Once original 1840s trees die, they should be replaced by identical species in the same location. Not essential to replace the Palms.
3.	Views from Robertson Park Views from the park are available across to the Harbour, to Gap Reserve and across Robertson Place.	Robertson Park	✓	✓		Views need to be protected and conserved. Also potential for existing views to be enhanced.
4.	Dunbar House Two storey Victorian house is the earliest and best surviving example of the marine villas of Watsons Bay.	Robertson Place	✓	✓	✓	This is the subject of a Conservation Management Plan which is being adopted by Woollahra Council.
5	Footprint of former marine villa, Zenleith This villa was built and occupied by Watsons Bay pilots c. 1849-1909 and was sited opposite Dunbar House, on north side of Clovelly Street.	Robertson Park				The footprint should be identified by archaeological research, following which it should be provided with an adequate curtilage and interpretation.
6.	Milestone Obelisk Sandstone obelisk which commemorates the building of the South Head Road to Watsons Bay in 1811.	Edge of Robertson Park	✓			This is listed on the National Trust Register and in the Woollahra LEP.
7.	Robertson Park as a memorial The park was named in honor of Sir John Robertson, five times Premier between 1850 and 1886.	Robertson Park	✓	✓	✓	Because Robertson was only the last of a succession of eminent owners, efforts need to be made to demonstrate and interpret the earlier owners and occupants.
8.	Robert Watson Memorial Seat Commemorates Watson after whom Watson's Bay was named.	Edge of Robertson Park	✓			While important as a commemorative device, it is confusingly located. See previous item above.
9.	Clovelly Street Significant for its ability to reveal the original subdivision of 1841.	Clovelly Street	✓			No further increase to the height or width of properties along it should occur. Maybe should be a cul-de-sac?
10.	Marine Parade Promenade Important as a serial viewing pathway towards the harbour as well as an access point to Robertson Park.	Marine Parade			✓	Should be retained in a simple form that does not unduly separate the Park from the beach.
11.	Robertson Park design A 1930s copy of the 'city beautiful' style of Hyde Park, Sydney	Robertson Park		✓	✓	An uninspired example; earlier use and history of the site more important.

4.3 Listing

Robertson Park should be listed as a place of State significance on the State Heritage Register and on the heritage schedule to Woollahra LEP.

4.4 Statutory Controls

4.4.1 Australian Heritage Commission Act

As Robertson Park is not listed on the Register of the National Estate, it is not affected by the provisions of the Australian Heritage Commission Act. Even if it were, it would not be subject to federal statutory controls because it is not Commonwealth-owned.

4.4.2 NSW Heritage Act 1977

Robertson Park is not listed yet on the LEP for Woollahra, let alone on the NSW State Heritage Register. While Woollahra Council may submit a proposal to list it, this is likely to be – at least initially – on the heritage schedule to the Woollahra Local Environmental Plan. As such, it would be controlled by the provisions within that LEP, a number of which are derived from the model provisions provided by the Heritage Council. Because it is not an item under an interim heritage order, and is not [yet] an item on the State Heritage Register, it is not subject to all the provisions of the NSW Heritage Act 1977.

4.4.2.1 Archaeological Excavation Permits

Sections 139 –141 and 146 of the NSW Heritage Act 1977 apply to persons or organizations who may intend to undertake earthworks or excavations on land which is considered likely to contain items of heritage significance. Since certain new landscape works may be proposed in accordance with a new landscape masterplan and Plan of Management, Council should ensure that the appropriate applications are made in accordance with the Act.

4.5 Non-Statutory Instruments

Robertson Park is not listed on the register of the National Trust (NSW), although the Obelisk on the edge of Robertson Place is.

As a place of demonstrated heritage significance, the Park's conservation and future management should be undertaken in accordance with the articles of the Burra Charter of Australia ICOMOS.

B Community workshop notes

Community Workshop No.1 Workshop Notes

Wednesday 12th February 2003, Vaucluse Yacht Club, Watsons Bay

Attendees:

31 Community Members, 2 Councilors, 3 Council Officers, 4 Study Team

Apologies:

7 Community Members

No.	Item
1.0	PROJECT INTRODUCTION
1.1	Carolyn Stone (CS) of PPM consulting welcomed all present.
1.2	Councilor Berry provided a general introduction, noting that the Robertson Park Plan of Management (POM) was the final component of a comprehensive planning framework for Watsons Bay.
1.3	CS introduced Adam Hunter (AH) of Environmental Partnership, lead consultants for the POM. CS invited all present to introduce themselves to the Community Working Group.
2.0	STUDY TEAM PRESENTATION
2.1	AH gave a short presentation which covered the following topics:
2.2	Workshop aim The aim of Workshop No.1 is to identify and discuss the following: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Community values (or important qualities) of Robertson Park that we wish to protect and enhance Desired outcomes (or objectives) for management of Robertson Park Pressures (problems / conflicts) and opportunities that will affect management of Robertson Park
2.3	Background to the Plan of Management Process A Plan of Management (POM) is a document that provides a basis upon which local or state government authorities will manage an open space area. Types of POM include generic, geographic, significant, systems.
2.4	Crown Lands Act A plan of management prepared for Crown Land should observe the following principles which are listed in section 11 of the Crown Lands Act 1989: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental protection principles observed in relation to the management and administration of Crown land. The natural resources of Crown land (including water, soil, flora, fauna and scenic quality) be conserved wherever possible. Public use and enjoyment of appropriate Crown land be encouraged. Where appropriate, multiple use of Crown land be encouraged. Where appropriate, Crown land should be used and managed in such a way that both the land and its resources are sustained in perpetuity. Crown land be managed in the best interests of the State consistent with the above principles.
2.5	Local Government Act The Local Government Act requires all community land to be covered by a Plan of Management which must identify: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the category of land; (eg. natural area, sportsground, park, cultural site, community use) objectives and outcomes; the means by which Council proposes to achieve objectives and outcomes; and the way by which council proposes to assess its performance. The nature and use of community land may not change without an adopted Plan of Management
2.6	Why do we need a plan for Robertson Park Council has identified that a plan of management is required to address: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A range of pressures from local and regional visitation and usage; and

- Coordination of responses to masterplanning and management issues including tree management, general park improvements, and heritage interpretation.
- 2.7 **Key Steps**
The key steps in preparing a POM can be broken into the following tasks:
- Identify Values
 - Identify Outcomes
 - Identify Issues
 - Identify Strategies
 - Masterplan
 - Action plan
- 2.8 **Study programme**
The study programme for the POM contains the following project milestones:
- Community Workshop 1 – Wednesday 12th February 2003
 - Community Workshop 2 – Wednesday 12th March 2003
 - Target for Public Exhibition – April/May 2003
- 2.9 **Previous studies**
The following list of previous studies related to Robertson Park have been reviewed by the study team for incorporation into the POM:
- Register of Significant Trees 1991
 - Robertson Park POM 1996
 - Watsons Bay Heritage Conservation Study 1996
 - Watsons Bay Area Strategic Plan & Heritage Conservation Study 2000
 - Tree Wise Men Report 2002
 - Watsons Bay Heritage Conservation Area DCP (in progress)
 - Military Road Commercial Precinct (in progress)
- 2.10 **Previous community consultation**
Extensive community consultation was undertaken in conjunction with the Watsons Bay Area Strategic Plan and Heritage Conservation Study. A Watsons Bay Reference Group was formed to address key issues raised and review work components as the study progressed. The group focused on the following subjects:
1. Natural Environment
 2. Heritage Conservation
 3. Traffic, Transport and Movement
 4. Socio-Economic Environment
 5. Streetscape; and
 6. Commercial Centre
- The Reference Group also developed a Strategic Planning Vision for Watsons Bay.
- 2.11 **General discussion**
Following the introduction, CS invited any general queries, which are listed following:
- 1 If a POM for Robertson Park was prepared in 1996 – why do we need a new one?
- Responses were provided by Council, the study team, and the floor.
- The 1996 POM provided a range of principles and broad actions. These however were not developed into a Masterplan, or a detailed (costed) Works Action Plan. The 2003 POM and Masterplan will incorporate and build upon the 1996 document, and provide the detail to enable important actions to commence.
 - It was noted that the usual lifespan for an open space POM was in the vicinity of 5-10 years – as such the 1996 plan is due for a review and upgrade.
- Since 1996 a number of issues have arisen that were not foreseen such as the demise of the avenue of Palms. The development of contemporary planning instruments such as the Military Road Commercial Precinct Masterplan and the Watsons Bay Heritage Conservation Area DCP (both in progress) have also raised issues that require to be addressed in Robertson Park.

routine maintenance issues such as cleaning litter from the park, ensure regular mowing and the like. In this regard the Plan has been acted upon.

3.0	WORKSHOP DISCUSSIONS
3.1	<p>AH explained that for consistency with other Council Plans and to provide Council with a basis for the Robertson Park's management, the workshop outcomes would be incorporated into the Management Framework (a document in the POM) and grouped under the following headings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural Environment • Heritage • Visual • Social / Cultural • Recreation • Education • Intrinsic • Management / Maintenance
3.2	<p>It was proposed that the working group divide into smaller groups to discuss the Values, Desired Outcomes and Pressures / Opportunities for Robertson Park and then to present these to the rest of the working group. The following dot points represent the views of the Community Working Group sourced through presentations at Community Workshop 1, along with letters, emails, and phone calls received from other community members by the study team.</p>
3.3	<p>Values (<i>Important qualities of Robertson Park to the local and regional community that we want to protect and enhance</i>)</p> <p>Natural Environment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The park is an open, air green link between the Tasman Sea and Sydney Harbour • Potential native vegetation habitat • Native wildlife and habitat (especially birds) • Natural beauty of the location <p>Heritage</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site of first white settlement in Watsons Bay 1790 • A number of heritage features are located within the park (including the park itself) • The park provides curtilage to a number of heritage features • Robertson Park has a long history of being a destination for picnics / gatherings <p>Visual</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Views of the harbour • Open grassland – relief from surrounding urban development • Relationship to The Gap <p>Social / Cultural</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public consultation – a valued means for determining future park use and improvement • Community use of Dunbar House as a public library • The park is an integral part of the Watsons Bay experience for the Sydney region community as a whole <p>Recreational</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open space for passive recreation (picnics, childrens play area) • Play opportunities (informal – surrounding open space, formal – structured playground, keep in current location) <p>Intrinsic</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Green "Open Heart" to Watsons Bay commercial area • Calm, quiet atmosphere • Simplicity of existing park layout • Individual park like no other • Linking land connection between ocean and harbour <p>Desired Outcomes (<i>our objectives for management of Robertson Park</i>)</p>

this process:

- 1 "This overall objective is to maintain and preserve the visual and physical character of the park so as to maximise use without affecting the amenity of nearby residents" (Visual)
- 2 "It is intended that Robertson Park continue to function as a major venue for the local community and visiting tourists seeking passive recreation in a waterfront atmosphere." (Recreation)

Natural Environment

- The park has and should retain a very different character from the bushland character of Gap Park and Gap Bluff. While pedestrian transition between them should be facilitated, the linkage should not modify either the simplicity of Robertson Park or the complexity of its neighboring parklands, nor should it involve further modification of the natural rock face or landform.
- Tree planting to retrieve the green character lost in recent tree removals should be a matter of urgency
- New plantings to include species that are native to the site
- Provide wildlife habitat and movement corridors
- Drainage improvements to reduce ponding

Heritage

- Protect and enhance heritage features
- Improve heritage curtilage (roads, gardens, etc) around Dunbar House
- Recognise Aboriginal heritage of the park and Watsons Bay area and interpret appropriately
- Interpret the former creek alignment through the park and Marine Parade (currently marked by sandstone flagging to Marine Parade)

Visual

- Issue of trees and views must be considered simultaneously – keep trees away from waterfront, consider additional tree planting to sides of the park
- Park character to have an individual identity and be welcoming to local and regional users
- Park improvements to retain all grassed areas and avoid new structures and large areas of concrete pavement
- The Park should present a simple, natural character. Trees and shrubs, grass and rocks should be its primary features. All other elements should be subordinate to natural features and unobtrusive.
- Park improvements should contribute to a unified character throughout the park
- Maintain and preserve the visual and physical character of the park
- Local modifications should be mainly directed to preventing conflict with residential amenity in the neighborhood of the park.
- The simple natural green park should be distinguished from but compatible with the more sophisticated Marine Parade urban promenade.
- Lighting improved with design that has low visual impact and downcast luminaire

Social / Cultural

- Maximise use without affecting the amenity of nearby residents

Recreational

- As a default principle, the whole of the park should be made available for passive open-air passive recreation in a natural setting.
- Retain passive recreation as primary park use
- Retain current picnicking use
- Protect open space areas
- Revitalise playground appearance
- Provide interpretive and directional signage
- Upgrade existing park furniture (eg. picnic tables, bins, lighting, etc)
- Rationalise seats and tables under shaded trees
- Furniture design should be consistent with the rigors of the salt-air environment and the high incidence of vandalism. Furniture should not replicate that in the commercial area but should be compatible with its character. Lights should be down cast, and light standard heights should not

- All refuse containers should be protected from access by vermin and birds.
- Vandal resistant bubblers should be provided at suitable points.

Educational

- Interpret natural and cultural heritage

Intrinsic

- The park should not be reduced to accommodate fringe uses, such as carparking, road widening, and traffic management.
- No commercialisation or commercial uses in any form should be permitted
- Recognise unique role / function of the site – only park joining Harbour and ocean
- The character and function of the park should be its own; it should not be presented or developed as an extension of the neighbouring land uses, whether commercial or residential. The distinction between the park and its commercial neighbours should be clear and compelling
- Structures should be minimal in number, and unobtrusive to the landscape

Management / Maintenance

- The intensive use of the park implies a special need for quick, frequent, and easy maintenance and housekeeping. Structures that are easily vandalised, or that are prone to rapid deterioration, should be avoided. Multiple structures multiply problems in maintenance. Simplicity in presentation and development of the park will assist in its care.
- Placement of refuse bins for improved convenience and servicing efficiency warrants attention. Consideration of issues related to littering by food packaging originating at the takeaway shops, and glass bottles from the hotel, is warranted.
- Rubbish bins to be provided with more frequent collection

3.5 **Pressures / Opportunities** *(The factors that may work against or assist us in realising our desired outcomes)*

Natural Environment – Pressures

- Feasibility of large trees in shallow sandstone soils and in areas where soil is waterlogged
- Appropriateness of Moreton Bay Figs on Clovelly Street?
- Demise of Palms
- Previous Norfolk Island Pines were effected by soap / sewer runoff – may be less prone to damage in current environment
- Recently planted Norfolk Island Pines along north south pathway will obstruct views in the future
- Additional stormwater system protection may be warranted in the areas near the takeaway food outlets

Natural Environment – Opportunities

- Trees for shade from the sun
- Site indigenous (native to the local area) tree, shrub and herbaceous (grasses) planting
- Tree species for replacement plantings is important. Consider Tuckeroo – native shade tree
- More tree and groundcover planting required at the perimeters of the park
- Tree replacement – what locations?
- Figs grow well on the site
- Character of natural topography and sandstone outcrops
- Natural springs / watercourse underneath the South Head peninsula are a potential source of water that is free from Giardia and Cryposporidium
- Access underground spring water for human consumption and utilisation in bubblers and decorative fountains

Heritage – Pressures

- Heritage tree protection (Moreton Bay Fig, Canary Island Date Palm, and Norfolk Island Pine)
- The native planting garden behind Dunbar House is out of character with the rest of the park and provides poor curtilage to Dunbar House

Heritage – Opportunities

- Existing Rotunda should be incorporated with potential park improvements

Visual – Pressures

- Coverage of the park by hard surfaces produces an urban environment not a natural one. Additional hard surfaces would not be welcomed. Fencing should be minimised.
- Impact of surrounding commercial developments

Visual – Opportunities

- Overall positive amenity of Robertson Park
- Wide open grassed spaces
- The park could potentially reinforce its role as a land access when viewed from the Gap lookout

Social / Cultural – Pressures

- Pressure for exclusion of visitors to the Watsons Bay area

Social / Cultural – Opportunities

- Family orientation of existing park use
- Surrounding community feels strongly about the park
- Retain library and community use of Dunbar House

Recreational – Pressures

- Over use – high level of visitation impact overall park condition
- Dog use – currently no dogs permitted
- Potential conflicts of desired dog use of the park with other recreational uses
- Anti social behaviour / noise (especially at night)
- Existing picnic tables require upgrading
- No gas or electric bbq's
- Existing playground appears run down
- Park playground gate needs improved childproof locking mechanism
- Existing wood chip surface to playground should be upgraded
- Lack of childrens play facilities for ages over 5 yrs old

Recreational – Opportunities

- Pedestrianisation of existing roundabout at wharf to strengthen Marine Parade Promenade – investigate potential for stronger pedestrian presence in this area
- Retain central grass area for family ball games
- Use natural springs for bubblers and ornamental fountains
- Potential provision of off leash dog area adjoining Dunbar House
- Provision of dog poo bins and bags
- Provide peripheral shade trees with picnic tables underneath
- Provide additional picnic tables
- Provide natural shade (trees) to childrens playground
- Provide way-finding signage
- Upgrade paths with improved surface

Educational – Pressures

- Lack of interpretive information in the park

Educational – Opportunities

- Potential for an outdoor classroom use of park

Intrinsic – Pressures

- Traffic and parking/issues in the Watsons Bay
- Existing carparking provision fails to meet the demands of users. Time limit and pay for parking to be considered
- Poor drainage in the section of park near the hotel
- Potential danger of falling branches from declining trees
- Parkland surrounding Dunbar House is isolated from the main park by Clovelly Street

- Subdivision of the park into specific-use precincts fragments it
- Development of the park with structures to modify weather experience diminishes the open-air experience for users, and has a long and unhappy history of vandalism and inappropriate use.
- The park section adjoining Military Road on the northern side of the park near the toilet block requires attention to better relate the footpath edge to the fairly steep southward slope of the land adjoining it.
- The popularity of the park implies a need for flexibility in use. Setting aside areas that can only be used for a single purpose reduces flexibility, excludes other uses, and leads to underutilisation when the specific use is not being made (for example, when the weather is inclement).
- Active recreational uses such as a designated bike track conflict with existing passive recreational uses. The Woollahra Bike Plan requires modification in this regard.
- There is no need for a ferry shelter within the park due to its distance from the ferry wharf.

Intrinsic – Opportunities

- Amenities block provision
- Edge planting screens surrounding uses (eg. carpark, hotel)
- The relationship of the park to the ferry and bus services is important
- Clear wayfinding signage is required
- The presentation of the park can enhance the adjoining public spaces, particularly those about Dunbar House and the Watsons Bay baths pavilion teagarden
- Potential to improve the transition between Marine Parade and the park
- The roundabout at the end of Military Road is an activity hub characterised by pedestrian and traffic movements
- Ferry service should be increased for local community and visitors
- The existing rotunda provides emergency weather shelter on a scale that is generally adequate given the scale of the park itself. It should be kept, but the timber picket railings should be more sympathetically scaled when they are replaced. The shingle roof is in bad repair, and suffers from vandalism assisted by the proximity of the playground fence. Disabled access to the rotunda may be an issue warranting attention

Management / Maintenance – Pressures

- Rubbish disposal – existing bins do not meet park demand for weekends / public holidays (impacted by takeaway traders)
- Funding for improvement works needs to be confirmed / established
- Condition of park in overall poor condition – maintenance implications
- Condition of toilets should be improved
- Community perception that the 1996 POM hasn't been implemented
- Demand for recycling bins

Management / Maintenance – Opportunities

- Potential for external funding through Stage Government programmes (eg. Metropolitan Green Space, Heritage Commission, etc.)

4.0

WHAT HAPPENS FROM HERE?

- The outcomes Community Workshop 1 used by the study team to develop the Management Framework which provides the basis for development of Concept Masterplanning ideas – these will be reviewed at Community Workshop 2
- Community Workshop 2 – 7.00-9.00pm 12th March 2003 Vaucluse Yacht Club (presentation of draft concepts)
- Public Exhibition of Draft POM (target April - May 2003)

Community Workshop No.2

Workshop Notes

Wednesday 12th March 2003, Vaucluse Yacht Club, Watsons Bay

Attendees:

15 Community Members, 3 Councilors, 2 Council Officers, 3 Study Team

Apologies:

2 Community Members

No.	Item
1.0	INTRODUCTION
1.1	Carolyn Stone (CS) of PPM consulting welcomed all present.
1.2	Mayor John Comino provided a general introduction.
1.3	CS introduced Adam Hunter (AH) of Environmental Partnership, lead consultants for the Plan of Management (POM). CS invited all present to introduce themselves to the Group.
2.0	STUDY TEAM PRESENTATION
2.1	AH gave a short presentation which covered the following areas:
2.2	Workshop aim The aim of Workshop No.2 is to review and discuss planning options for key elements within the park.
2.3	Response to queries At Community Workshop 1 the study team undertook to provide further clarification to the following questions, which were answered by David Sheils, Council's Manager of Public Open Space. <ol style="list-style-type: none">1 Status of the 1996 POM – why are we doing a new one? <i>POMs generally have a shelf life of only 5 years. The 1996 POM was a "first generation" POM, which Council prepared for all its parks to meet statutory requirements.</i>2 Why has action not occurred on site from the 1996 POM? <i>The 1996 POM wasn't very detailed. It provided recommendations on general maintenance, provision of a shade structure for the playground and installation of a permissible uses sign.</i>3 How will action from the new plan be implemented? <i>The new POM will include a masterplan and works action plan to assist Council in implementing recommendations. Council's funding allocations include \$110 000.00 to be spent on the park this year, and potentially \$350 000.00 in the next year with contributions from Section 94 funds and potentially Planning NSW's "Metropolitan Greenspace Programme".</i>
2.4	Key Steps The key steps in preparing the POM include: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify Values• Identify Outcomes (objectives)• Identify Issues• Identify Strategies• Masterplan• Action plan
2.5	Study programme The study programme for the POM incorporates the following project milestones: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Community Workshop 1 – Wednesday 12th February 2003• Community Workshop 2 – Thursday 13th March 2003• Target for Public Exhibition – May 2003
2.6	Pressures and Opportunities AH presented a composite plan showing pressures and opportunities for Robertson Park.

2.7	<p>Options for park elements</p> <p>AH explained that the study team's approach to producing a masterplan for the park was to review park issues individually under the following categories:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. the Military Road turning circle (intersection with Marine Parade) 2. Park tree planting 3. Path access 4. Relationship of park to Marine Parade 5. Toilets 6. Playground 7. Dunbar House precinct 8. Park edges to adjoining roads 9. Water use / features within park 10. Heritage interpretation <p>AH presented several options for each of the above categories by explaining the existing issues (pressures and opportunities) and potential solutions.</p>
3.0	<p>WORKSHOP DISCUSSIONS</p>
3.1	<p>The community working group resolved to remain in the overall group in preference to smaller groups to discuss the options. The issues to which options respond as presented by the study team are described in italics. Community comments (dot points) to proposals have been grouped under the headings to which they apply.</p>
3.2	<p>Military Road turning circle</p> <p><i>The turning circle adjacent to the Ferry Wharf occurs at a major pedestrian junction including Marine Parade. Options explored potential to increase pedestrian priority in this area, without significant impacts on vehicular service / access and parking.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seen by some community members as a low priority (Why bother making any changes?) • Perception that proposal wouldn't benefit local residents • Beneficial to local joggers along Marine Parade • Benefits of Option 1.2 (pedestrianisation of existing turning circle) include improved pedestrian circulation whilst generally maintaining car parking • Loss of a small portion of park area for relocated turning circle, but a large gain in overall pedestrian amenity and publicly useable space • General agreement that option 1.2 was a positive long term option when funding was available
3.3	<p>Park tree planting</p> <p><i>Additional shade tree planting is a high priority. Options for planting include replacement of avenue in addition to non-replacement of avenue (to keep centre of the park open grass) with additional tree planting in other locations.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some community members believed that the replacement of the large foreshore fig with a mature specimen was a high priority • Some objection to increasing tree planting adjoining Clovelly Street that would block views to the park • Some Clovelly Street plantings shade the road (not the park) • Additional tree planting adjoining the Clovelly Street edge should be located into the park away from the kerb line • Removal of diseased Canary Island Date Palms has reduced the quality of views into the park • Improved tree planting in the eastern section of the park could increase usage of this area • Shade trees are required for park users • Tree planting that maintains the potential for informal ball games in the park • A majority of community members thought that tree/shrub planting around the amenities block and playground caused too much visual screening (it was acknowledged that screening was originally created due to complaints that the toilet block was highly visible) • Other studies currently underway, (Watsons Bay Heritage Conservation Area DCP, and Military Road Commercial Centre improvement works) support the retention of view corridors through the park from Military Road and The Gap

3.3 cont.	<p>Park tree planting (continued)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community members wanted to know more about tree species that could potentially be used for replacement (a description of tree species to be mailed to the Community Working Group and incorporated on Council's web page) Existing Norfolk Island Hibiscus trees are problematic as they block views and cause allergic reactions – they should be removed Council Officers noted that no palm species can be considered for tree replacement as they are all susceptible to the Fusarium virus <p>Note: A document containing tree species options can be downloaded from Council's web page www.woollahra.nsw.gov.au</p>
3.4	<p>Path access</p> <p><i>It was noted that the development of paths through the 1920s was based on the formal park style of the time - not the earlier history of the site through the 19th century. In some places the existing paths and existing structures (toilet block and playground) conflict with the potential interpretation of heritage sites such as the Clovelly house. In addition existing paths may not effectively cater for current usage patterns of the park by tourist and other visitors. Options explore design solutions from minimal change to significant change.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some community members preferred option 3.6 (direct path link from Military Road crossing near The Gap to Ferry Wharf) due to the direct alignment that would be created Relationship to external uses (ie. outside the park) must be considered as the park is a metropolitan destination Some community members preferred existing path alignments to remain the same Some community members felt that the path requirements for locals and tourists are conflicting Existing path alignments have remained the same since 1924, when there used to be a very large tree in the grass triangle located near the playground
3.5	<p>Relationship to Marine Parade</p> <p><i>The existing toilet block lies in the middle of the north eastern corner of the park and limits the usability of this area. The toilet block and playground also compromise views to the harbour from the park and The Gap. Path access to the toilet block from The Gap is poor and the existing structure is dark and unattractive. Options for improvement include relocation to the Military Road edge of the park and upgrading in its current position.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> General consensus that a proposed sitting deck treatment around the base of existing Fig Trees was a good way of providing access around the trees whilst minimising impacts to their health Objection to the use of gravel underneath tree's due to perceived difficulties for maintenance Some community members agreed that the incorporation of a stepped wall to Military Parade would improve pedestrian connectivity between the park and Marine Parade Other community members thought the wall should be retained in its current form as it provides an informal separation between the two areas
3.6	<p>Toilets</p> <p><i>The existing toilet block lies in the middle of the north eastern corner of the park and limits the usability of this area. The toilet block and playground also compromise views to the harbour from the park and The Gap. Path access to the toilet block from The Gap is poor and the existing structure is dark and unattractive. Options for improvement include relocation to the Military Road edge of the park and upgrading in its current position.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It was generally agreed that existing toilet facilities fail to meet the demand from tourist use, especially coaches Screen planting that has developed is intimidating Some perception that toilet use is primarily used by tourists and bus drivers One group believed that the existing relationship between the rotunda, playground and amenities block was poor, and that the toilets and playground should be incorporated in an improved location Some people were happy to leave the toilet in its existing location, with the added provision of improved lighting and reduction of screen planting

C Community Workshop Flyers



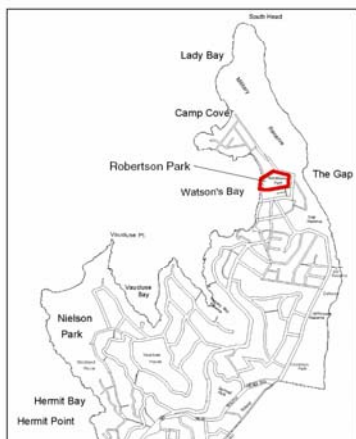
Robertson Park is predominantly used for passive recreation by local residents & tourists



Significant trees have been removed due to decline in their health & public safety concerns



A range of heritage materials & objects are presented within the park



Park location

Robertson Park provides a popular recreation location for both local residents and visitors from greater Sydney, interstate and overseas.

Woollahra Council is preparing a Plan of Management and a Concept Masterplan for Robertson Park to provide a basis for coordinated management of the open space and improvement of landscape quality.

A study team has been formed with the assistance of Environmental Partnership and is currently undertaking information and site review relevant to the development of the plan of management.

How to be involved

Community input is an important aspect of the plan of management process. If you would like to be involved, there are a number of ways that you can contribute:

Tell us what you know / think about the Park

Do you use the Robertson Park or other local parks? If so, how often and what for? What would you like to be able to do in the Park?

Let us know what you think are the important qualities of the park that need to be conserved. Phone, fax or email your comments to the study team – see contact details below.

Community Workshops

Two Community Workshops are planned to discuss key values, issues / opportunities and potential improvement works to be addressed by the plan of management. If you would like to attend the first workshop on the 12th February 2003, please register your interest – see contact details below.

Mailout list

Register on the study teams mailing list to receive information on the progress of the study and outcomes of the community workshops.

Community Workshop

to be held on Wednesday 12th February 2003
at the Vaucluse Yacht Club, Marine Pde
Watsons Bay
from 7.00 to 9.00pm
please RSVP by Monday 10/2/03
(see contact details below)

Public exhibition

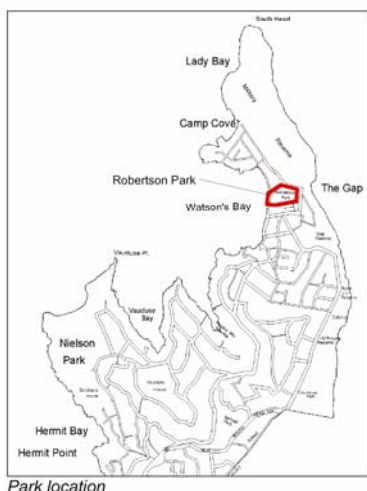
Following the Community Workshops, Council proposes to place the Draft Plan of Management and Concept Masterplan on public exhibition at a range of venues.

Contact details

John Newman
Environmental Partnership
2 River Street Birchgrove NSW 2041
ph: 02 9555 1033 fax: 02 9818 5292
email: john.n@epnsw.com.au



Robertson Park Plan of Management



Woollahra Council is preparing a Plan of Management (POM) and a Concept Masterplan for Robertson Park to provide a basis for coordinated management of the park and improvement of landscape quality.

A study team led by Landscape Architects Environmental Partnership has been commissioned by Council to prepare the study.

How to be involved

Community input is an important aspect of the plan of management process. If you would like to be involved, there are a number of ways that you can contribute:

Mailing list

Register on the study teams mailing list to receive information on the progress of the study and outcomes of the community workshops.

Community Workshops

Community Workshop 1 was held on Wednesday 12th February 2003 and attended by 31 community members. Discussion focused on Values, Desired Outcomes (Aims) and Pressures / Opportunities for the park.

It was noted that this plan will update the 1996 POM, and will incorporate a masterplan and detailed costed action plan to provide a clear basis for implementation of required improvements.

The group identified that amongst a range of issues, the highest priorities for the park were:

- tree planting for shade and amenity; and
- continuation of the family oriented passive recreation use by local residents and visitors.

Full meeting notes are being distributed to those present at the meeting – and are also available to download from Council's website: www.woollahra.nsw.gov.au

Community Workshop 2 will provide an opportunity to discuss concept planning options and potential improvement works to be addressed by the plan of management. If you would like to attend the second workshop on the 12th March 2003, please register your interest – see contact details below.

Community Workshop 2

to be held on Wednesday 12th March 2003
at the Vaucluse Yacht Club, Marine Pde
Watsons Bay
from 7.00 to 9.00pm
please RSVP by Monday 10/3/03
(see contact details below)

Public exhibition

Following the second Community Workshop and development of the POM and Concept Masterplan, Council proposes to place the Draft on public exhibition at a range of venues, which will be advertised.

Contact details

John Newman
Environmental Partnership
 2 River Street Birchgrove NSW 2041
 ph: 02 9555 1033 fax: 02 9818 5292
 email: john.n@epnsw.com.au



D Tree Opportunities

Robertson Park tree opportunities

Potential park edge / shade tree planting

Ficus Rubiginosa (Port Jackson Fig)



Height
15m

Positive features

- Evergreen tree, native to the east coast of Australia
- Historically used in the park and throughout the eastern suburbs
- Generally high branching growth habit promotes high levels of visibility and views underneath canopy

Negative features

- Fruit on ground surface can be a maintenance problem



Robertson Park tree opportunities

Potential park edge / shade tree planting

Acmena smithii (Lilly Pilly)



Height
8-15m

Positive features

- Evergreen tree, native to the east coast of Australia
- Sprays of tiny white flowers with prominent stamens appear in early summer followed by white, pink or mauve fruits in late summer

Negative features

- Naturally low branching – requires pruning in the early stages of plant growth to encourage high branching habit
- Dense foliage - becomes full screen



Robertson Park tree opportunities

Potential park edge / shade tree planting

Angophora costata (Sydney Red Gum)



Height
8-10m



Positive features

- Evergreen tree, abundant on the rocky sandstone slopes around the city
- Known for its smooth orange bark and twisted limbs
- Large clusters of white flowers are borne in late spring or early summer

Negative features

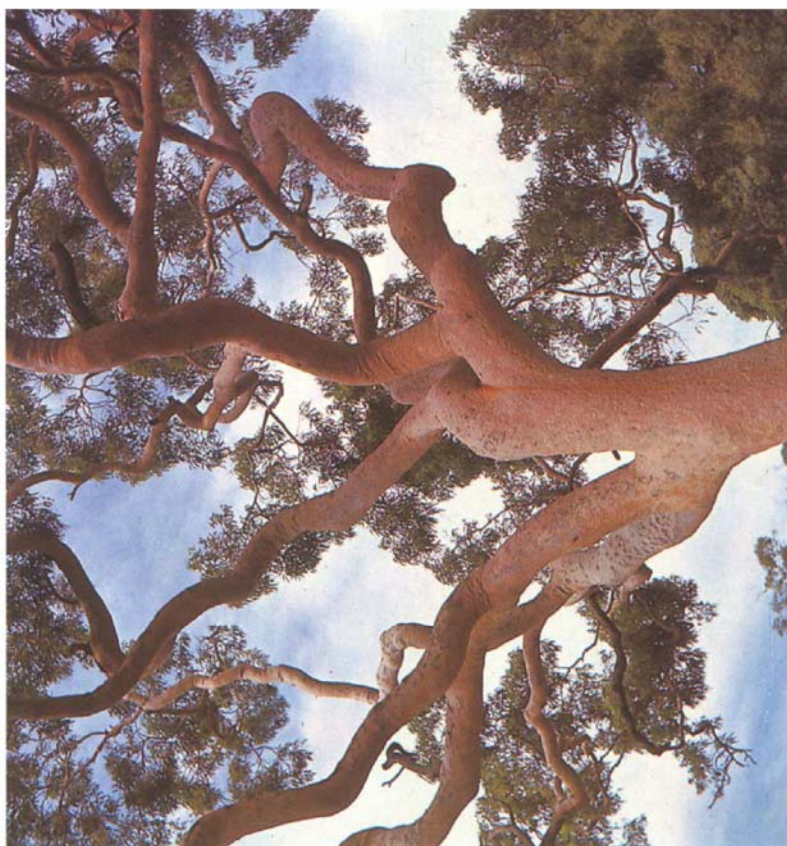
- Infrequent leaf and branch dropping



Robertson Park tree opportunities

Potential park edge / shade tree planting and/or avenue reinstatement

Eucalyptus haemastoma (Scribbly Gum)



Height
8m

Positive features

- Evergreen tree, commonly occurring in bushland around Sydney
- Pale grey bark marked by prominent irregular scribbles caused by the burrowing larvae of tiny moths
- Grows well on sandy, well drained soils

Negative features

- Tendency to produce multiple stems
- Tendency to drop small branches and leaves



Robertson Park tree opportunities

Potential park edge / shade tree planting and/or avenue reinstatement

Cupaniopsis anarchoioides (Tuckeroo)



Height
12m

Positive features

- Evergreen tree, native to the east coast of Australia
- Spreading crown – good shade tree

Negative features

- Dense foliage can limit views through/ under during early development



Robertson Park tree opportunities

Potential avenue reinstatement

Ficus hillii (Hills Weeping Fig)



Height
8m

Positive features

- Evergreen tree, native to the east coast of Australia, southern Europe and North Africa
- Open habit with sweeping limbs and drooping branches
- Smooth, pale grey limbs and dense, glossy, dark green foliage

Negative features

- Dense foliage can impact grass cover



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