

Meeting Place Precinct

Botany Bay National Park – Kurnell

Conservation Management Plan



February 2008

Prepared for
Parks and Wildlife Group
Department of Environment and Climate Change (NSW)

ISBN 978 1 74122 557 0
DECC 2007/402

by
Context Pty Ltd
in association with
Urban Initiatives Pty Ltd

ISBN 978 1 74122 557 0
DECC 2007/402

© Context Pty Ltd 2008

Project Team:

Chris Johnston

Christina Vos

Thomas Trudeau

Libby Riches

Fae Ingledew

Tim Hart, Andrew Taylor – Urban Initiatives

Specialist advice

Geoffrey Britton

Report register

This report register documents the development and issue of the report entitled *Meeting Place Precinct: Conservation Management Plan* undertaken by Context Pty Ltd in accordance with our internal quality management system.

Project No.	Issue No.	Notes/description	Issue date	Issued to
1091	1	Draft report (Sections 1-5 of 8)	1 June 07	G Eldershaw O Beasley
1091	2	Full draft report (Sections 1-8)	13 July 07	G Eldershaw O Beasley
1091	3	Draft report for public exhibition	17 August 07	G Eldershaw O Beasley
1091	4	Final report	11 February 08	G Eldershaw
1091	5	Final report with Addendum	9 July 2008	G Eldershaw

Context Pty Ltd

22 Merri Street, Brunswick 3056

Phone 03 9380 6933

Facsimile 03 9380 4066

Email context@context-pl.com.au

Web www.context-pl.com.au

CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	V
1 INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Background	1
1.2 Project objectives	1
1.3 Scope	2
1.4 Study area	2
1.5 Project methodology	3
1.6 Sources consulted	3
1.7 Acknowledgements	5
1.8 Project management and project team	5
2 NEW UNDERSTANDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE	7
2.1 Introduction	7
2.2 Symbolic meanings and connections	8
2.3 Aboriginal cultural heritage and values	13
2.4 Cultural landscape, land form and vegetation	19
2.5 Buildings and structures	29
2.6 Synthesis of significance	30
2.7 Significance of elements	42
3 CONTEXT FOR POLICY FORMULATION	59
3.1 Introduction	59
3.2 Obligations to conserve significance	59
3.3 Statutory planning frameworks	60
3.4 Other policies and guidelines	67
3.5 Australian Standards and legislation for safety and disability access	68
3.6 DECC (PWG) policy and management	69
3.7 Opportunities and constraints arising from significance	72
3.8 Use and access	78
3.9 Condition and threats	79
3.10 Logistics and resources for effective management	84
3.11 Stakeholders & associated communities	84
3.12 Other issues and opportunities	86
4 VISION AND PHILOSOPHY	89
4.1 Introduction	89
4.2 Vision	89
4.3 Philosophy	90
5 POLICY	93
5.1 Conservation policies for the Meeting Place Precinct	93
5.2 Policy structure	96

5.3 Place as a whole	98
5.4 Living connections	100
5.5 Landscape	103
5.6 Vegetation	109
5.7 Aboriginal cultural heritage	130
5.8 Archaeology	132
5.9 Built environment	133
5.10 Monuments	144
5.11 Objects, collections and records	150
5.12 Use, Access and Visitors	152
5.13 Archival recording	155
5.14 Consultation and participation	156
5.15 Research	157
5.16 Interpretation	158
5.17 Managing change	160
5.18 Management and decision-making processes	161
5.19 Monitoring	162
5.20 Adoption, implementation and review	163
6 IMPLEMENTATION	165
6.1 Introduction	165
6.2 Implementation Strategies	165
6.3 Priorities	166
6.4 Priority actions table	173
7 REFERENCES	185
APPENDIX 1: GLOSSARY	189
APPENDIX 2: STATEMENT OF CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE (2006)	190
APPENDIX 3: ASSESSING SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE	193
Criteria	193
Social significance & ethnic communities	194
Social significance of the Meeting Place Precinct for ethnic communities	199
Conclusions and recommendations	200
APPENDIX 4: ESTIMATED LIFE SPANS FOR HISTORIC PLANTINGS	203
APPENDIX 5: SIGNIFICANCE AND PRIORITIES	204
APPENDIX 6: NATIONAL HERITAGE MANAGEMENT PRINCIPLES	205
APPENDIX 7: USING THIS CMP TO ASSESS IMPACTS	206

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

The Meeting Place Precinct is located within Botany Bay National Park (Kurnell). Botany Bay National Park is one of Sydney's key national parks that has received special State government funding to assist in park revitalisation. This funding is contributing to a four year program (2005-2009) - called the Meeting Place Project - managed by the Parks and Wildlife Group (PWG) of the Department of Environment and Climate Change (DECC). This funding has supported the development of planning documents including this Conservation Management Plan.

The *Meeting Place Precinct Conservation Management Plan* is the result of two projects, the first to document the significance of the Meeting Place Precinct and the second to develop a policy framework to conserve its significance.

The first resulted in the *Heritage Assessment* report (Design 5 2006) and the second, in this *Conservation Management Plan*.

The *Heritage Assessment* project started in 2005, with the final report presented in 2006. The report, in two volumes, provides a history of the development of the Meeting Place Precinct, considers the physical evidence of that history that is present today, and assesses that cultural significance of the place based on established heritage criteria. The *Heritage Assessment* report was put on display in February 2007, seeking public feedback on the assessment of significance and thereby assisting in the development of the Conservation Management Plan.

Development of the *Conservation Management Plan* started in September 2006, and a draft of this report was released for public consultation in September 2007. The final Conservation Management Plan will be prepared following consideration of the comments received, and would then be endorsed by DECC with delegation of authority from the Heritage Office, NSW Department of Planning.

Project objectives and approach

The key objective was to develop a Conservation Management Plan designed to achieve the long term conservation of the heritage values of the Meeting Place Precinct, recognising the importance of shared values, meanings and associations and the ongoing processes of 'history-making' that distinguish this place from many others.

To achieve this objective, the Conservation Management Plan (CMP) was developed through a series of defined tasks including:

- Reviewing the assessment of significance contained in the *Heritage Assessment* so as to recognise new research and additional understandings. This work benefited from a technical workshop and a new process of Aboriginal community consultation. As a result, five concepts of significance were distilled and formed the basis for the CMP. *See Section 2.*
- To assist in the development of landscape, interpretation and architectural design concepts for the Meeting Place Precinct, a preliminary heritage impact assessment was prepared, reviewing the 2003 Master Plan. *The results of this work are contained in a separate report to DECC (Context 2007).*
- Considering a range of key factors that provide the context for policy formulation including legislation, statutory requirements and organisational policies; heritage guidelines and best practice standards; the expressed aspirations of PWG and DECC for the Meeting Place Precinct, along with the known views of associated communities and other stakeholders; opportunities and constraints arising from significance; use

and access issues; condition of and threats to the heritage values of the place; and other factors. *See Section 3.*

- Establishing an overarching vision, philosophy and principles to guide the conservation, use and development of the Meeting Place Precinct. *See Section 4.*
- Establishing a framework of and detailed policies to guide management actions towards conservation of the heritage values of the Meeting Place Precinct. *See Section 5.*
- Defining a set implementation strategies and actions, with priorities. *See Section 6.*

New understandings of significance

Section 2 describes the new understandings of significance that add to the earlier *Heritage Assessment* (Design 5 2006). In summary these address:

- Symbolic meanings and connections: a reanalysis of information on community connections from the *Heritage Assessment* (Design 5 2006: Appendix F) combined with a short desk-top analysis of ethnic community connections
- Aboriginal cultural heritage and values: consideration of information arising from a new process of Aboriginal community consultation that had recently commenced and new archaeological work undertaken by Paul Irish
- Cultural landscape, land form and vegetation: integration of a reanalysis of the 1770s vegetation, consideration of the extent to which the underlying land and water forms have endured and review of the cultural plantings
- Buildings and structures: clarification of which aspects of Alpha House, the Discovery Centre and the Ferry shelter shed embody the relative significance assigned in the *Heritage Assessment* (Design 5 2006).

Based on these new understandings, and to provide a simpler and more integrated understanding of significance, Section 2.6 introduces five integrated concepts of significance:

The enduring landscape

A place of Aboriginal connections

A European settled landscape

A place of history-making

A place for leisure.

Of these, the three in bold represent the areas of primary significance, and the other two secondary significance.

Each concept is then described and the tangible and intangible elements listed, and the indicative extent of each concept is mapped.

Section 2.7 provides a detailed table of tangible and intangible elements, drawing together the analysis of significance from the *Heritage Assessment* (Design 5 2006) and supplementing it with additional elements and understandings of significance. Some of these understandings are indicative and will require further testing over time.

Vision and principles

Section 4 introduces an overarching vision and statement of philosophy to link the understandings of significance in Section 2 and to guide the development of the detailed policy framework that is presented in Section 5.

The vision is:

The Meeting Place Precinct, as the primary historic core of the site, will be the place where the stories of the encounter between Dharawal people and the Cook expedition will be told

through experiencing and understanding the land, the peoples who have come here, their cultures and the ways in which they have understood that moment of encounter.

Within the Meeting Place Precinct, the tangible and intangible heritage values will be recognised and respected, and allowed to co-exist. Both conservation and change will seek to reveal the significance of the place in all its complexity.

Defining a conservation policy for the Meeting Place Precinct required recognition of all aspects of significance and resolution of the issues, opportunities and constraints considered in Section 3. The heritage significance of the place imposes an obligation to consider and protect the multiple and layered heritage values of the Meeting Place Precinct: the tangible and the intangible heritage.

Taking account of best practice heritage management principles, the guiding objectives of the Botany Bay National Park Plan of Management and those of the Meeting Place Precinct project as whole, the following principles were distilled to provide the fundamental philosophical basis for the conservation policy for Meeting Place Precinct.

- Recognise all aspects of significance
- Appreciation of heritage values will be an ongoing process
- Respect and support connections
- Demonstrate new possibilities for Aboriginal connections
- Recognise the process of history-making as an important component of significance
- Recognise interpretation as a core part of conservation
- Use of the place will accord with significance.

Policy framework

Section 5 sets out the policies needed to ensure values-based decision making for conserving and managing the Meeting Place Precinct into the future.

The policies cover eighteen broad policy groupings (see below). Each major policy grouping contains:

- **Objectives** – outlining the desired end point that is informing the policy direction.
- **Rationale** – explains the (values-based) reasons why a particular policy direction has been established.
- **Policy** – the policy is contained within a succinct set of numbered statements which together form the requirements for conserving the significance of the Meeting Place Precinct.

For any desired management action, a number of policies may apply. Cross-referencing between policies has been provided to assist the user.

Place as a whole – Section 5.3: contains over-arching policies designed to achieve the conservation of the Meeting Place Precinct by recognising the importance of both tangible and intangible elements, establishing appropriate conservation actions based on relative significance, and recognising the importance of associations, the processes of history –making and interpretation. Reading of this section is fundamental to an understanding of the conservation policy.

Living connections – Section 5.4: focuses on connections between people and this place, and provides policies designed to recognise, respect and strengthen significant Aboriginal and other community connections, to support the telling of all of the stories that contribute to an

understanding of this place and to acknowledge how the meanings of the Meeting Place Precinct have and will continue to change over time.

Landscape – Section 5.5: focuses on the cultural landscape of the Meeting Place Precinct, introducing policies designed to conserve significant landscape qualities, elements and meanings and protect them from adverse impacts that may arise through processes of change. It identifies the specific elements and provides appropriate conservation policies. It also provide policy responses to conserving historical circulation patterns, approaches to the place and paths; protecting views and the broader setting; conserving the enduring land and water forms; and the requirements that need to be met if new elements are to be introduced into the landscape.

Vegetation – Section 5.6: provides clear policies and a decision-making framework for the retention, maintenance, reinstatement and replacement of significant vegetation – both individual specimens and vegetation communities. It covers commemorative plantings, structural and historic plantings, other introduced plantings and local native plant communities.

Aboriginal cultural heritage – Section 5.7: provides policies for the recognition and protection of tangible and intangible Aboriginal cultural heritage as embodied in the landscape, in plants and animals, in knowledge, and in the known extent of Aboriginal archaeological evidence contained in the landscape of the Meeting Place Precinct.

Archaeology – Section 5.8: focuses on archaeological resources and provides a policy framework to ensure the protection of these resources through recognition of the archaeological sensitivity of the place as a whole.

Built environment – Section 5.9: covers the key buildings – Alpha House, Discovery Centre, Education Centre, Ferry shelter shed, cave dwellings, entry booth, anchor and flagpoles at the entry, providing detailed policies to guide conservation and change.

Monuments – Section 5.10: covers all of the monuments within the Meeting Place Precinct, providing general conservation policies as well as specific guidance for each individual monument.

Objects, collections and records – Section 5.11: provides a general policy framework that recognises the importance of objects, collections and records to understanding and conserving the significance of the place as a whole. Detailed policies are being developed as part of a separate project.

Use, access and visitors – Section 5.12: establishes policies to ensure that the uses of the Meeting Place Precinct accord with its significance, to facilitate access by associated communities and to support continuing visitor use, while reducing any adverse impacts that could result from over-use, inappropriate activities or the development of visitor facilities.

Archival recording – Section 5.13: establishes when and how archival recordings should be made.

Consultation and participation – Section 5.14: establishes the basis for a community engagement plan for the Meeting Pace Precinct.

Research – Section 5.15: provides a policy basis for the development of research activities, including facilitating research and investigations that continue to build an understanding of its significance and, through oral history research, of its history.

Interpretation – Section 5.16: establishes policy to guide interpretation through the use of the five concepts of significance and an understanding of all of the stories and meanings of the place. Policies also guide how interpretative media may be introduced into the landscape.

Managing change – Section 5.17: establishes the key process for assessing proposed changes.

Management and decision-making processes – Section 5.18: provides a policy framework for management decision-making, including consideration of consultation.

Monitoring – Section 5.19: details the approach to monitoring, the use of indicators and establishment of a program of monitoring.

Adoption, implementation and review – Section 5.20: focuses on the need for adoption and review of the Conservation Management Plan, adequate resourcing, and processes to resolve conflicts between policies amongst other things.

Implementation

Section 6 provides six implementation strategies designed to give effect to the policies in Section 5 and to deliver the Vision. Each implementation strategy contains a strategic direction, a series of actions and priorities, a list of the policy areas addressed under that strategy, and the desired outcome.

The chart following provides a summary of strategies, actions and outcomes.

Section 6.4 sets the priorities across all of the actions contained in the implementation strategies.

Public review

The draft Conservation Management Plan for the Meeting Place Precinct (August 2007) was released for public community during September 2007 by the Parks and Wildlife Group (PWG) of the Department of Environment and Climate Change (DECC).

Comments received have been considered by PWG and incorporated into the final Conservation Management Plan.

Vision:

The Meeting Place Precinct, as the primary historic core of the site, will be the place where the stories of the encounter between Dharawal people and the Cook expedition will be told through experiencing and understanding the land, the peoples who have come here, their cultures and the ways in which they have understood that moment of encounter.

Within the Meeting Place Precinct, the tangible and intangible heritage values will be recognised and respected, and allowed to co-exist. Both conservation and change will seek to reveal the significance of the place in all its complexity.

Strategy 1: Best practice heritage management

The outstanding national significance of the Meeting Place Precinct means DECC and BBNP management practices need to align with best practice heritage conservation principles and practice. *DECC's Park Management Policy Manual* (January 2007) provides a sound basis. Programs should be established and resources provided to enable achievement of these standards, including training park staff, access to expert skills and monitoring of implementation.

Key actions:

- Give primacy to the conservation of heritage values
- Adopt the Conservation Management Plan
- Review existing plans, policies and practices
- Use accepted conservation principles and guidelines in management
- Expand the knowledge of park staff and contractors
- Establish and monitor an annual implementation action plan
- Access conservation expertise

Outcome

The Meeting Place Precinct will offer an example of best practice heritage management, building pride in the park and confidence within the management organisation and team.

Strategy 2: Recognising and conserving heritage values

The heritage values of the Meeting Place Precinct will be recognised, conserved and interpreted, respecting the symbolic importance and multiple associations of this place for Australians and communities, and its continuing role as a place where changing understandings of history can be explored.

Key actions:

- Conserve Meeting Place heritage values through a conservation & recording program
- Establish and use heritage impact assessment processes routinely
- Establish an ongoing program of research
- Where little is known, research significance before making decisions
- Minimise any unanticipated impacts on heritage values
- Monitor the condition of the place and its heritage values regularly
- Expand and update HHIMS/AHIMS to include all the information needed for management
- Establish a register of objects, collections and records

Outcome

The heritage values of the Meeting Place Precinct will be conserved, and increasingly well understood. Practical tools will be established to assist management achieve this goal.

Strategy 3: Shaping the landscape

The landscape of the Meeting Place Precinct will be subtly reshaped to better reveal its significance and to evoke the landscape known to Aboriginal people, experienced by the Cook party in 1770 and by subsequent European arrivals.

Key actions:

- Re-establish native vegetation, particularly on the dune
- Retain and, when needed, replace significant plantings
- Reinstate the freshwater stream if feasible
- Create an inventory of historic, commemorative and other plantings
- Remove plants that have become weeds
- Develop an e-tool to aid decision-making on vegetation issues
- Communicate and consult on the plans for vegetation management
- Help people get involved 'hands on' in revegetation programs

Outcome

The enduring landscape is revealed through revegetation in defined areas, and the important patterns of cultural plantings are retained. The impact of weedy plants on the significance of the place have been reduced, and the community understands and is involved in vegetation management.

Strategy 4: Building connections

People with connections to the Meeting Place Precinct will be encouraged to visit, to engage with the place and its management and to contribute their knowledge and stories for the benefits of park managers, visitors and the wider community. PWG/DECC will actively support the building of strong and ongoing community connections.

Key actions:

- Engage people and communities with strong and enduring connections in caring for this place, especially Aboriginal people
- Consult with associated communities before taking actions that may impact them
- Create a community awareness and education program
- Promote mutual respect and co-existence
- Develop new protocols and a database for stakeholder and community engagement
- Continue research into community connections
- Protect Aboriginal heritage and support Aboriginal re-connection to this place
- Consult with the Kurnell community

Outcome

Community connections will be strengthened as evidenced by active participation and engagement with the place and park management.

Strategy 5: Communicating and consulting

The importance of communication and consultation will be recognised by park management as a key to successful conservation, community involvement and visitor experiences.

Key actions:

- Develop a community engagement plan
- Promote the diverse heritage values of this place
- Develop communications protocols with key stakeholders and associated communities
- Be flexible and responsive to communications opportunities

Outcome

The vision for the Meeting Place Precinct will be well known, and those interested in the park will be able to stay well informed and be actively involved.

Strategy 6: The visitor experience

Visitors to the Meeting Place Precinct will have the opportunity to engage with the place, its history and its multiple meanings through experiencing the place, participating in activities and through other forms of interpretation. Visitors will be encouraged to respect and help care for its heritage values.

Key actions:

- Interpret the complex history, layered values and strong associations by implementing the interpretation plan
- Promote the Meeting Place Precinct to new audiences
- Communicate heritage values to all visitors
- Establish a code of responsible behaviour
- Use on-site activities to help build mutual respect
- Establish Aboriginal welcome, and sharing of knowledge and stories
- Explore reconnecting Kurnell to La Perouse by water transport
- Plan and design new visitor facilities, uses & activities to respect significance and associations
- Consult with and seek feedback from visitors and groups that use the Meeting Place Precinct regularly
- Continually refine the ways heritage values are communicated

Outcome

The Meeting Place Precinct will offer a unique opportunity for visitors to engage with important national stories and contribute to caring for the this place, through their actions and opportunities to give feedback.



1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

As part of a program to revitalise a number of Sydney's key national parks, \$5.8 million has been committed to revitalise Botany Bay National Park under a four year program - called the Meeting Place Project - managed by the Parks and Wildlife Group (PWG) of the Department of Environment and Climate Change (DECC).

The funding provided to Botany Bay National Park is supporting background research, the preparation of planning documents (including this Conservation Management Plan), the development of designs for new interpretation, landscape and building works, and implementation of these designs.

Context was commissioned in September 2006 to develop a conservation management plan (CMP), the conservation policy component, including policies, strategies, guidelines and actions.

The *Heritage Assessment*, completed in 2006 by Design 5 Architects, establishes the significance of the Meeting Place Precinct. Further work on significance completed since 2006 is contained in this Conservation Management Plan.

In commissioning the CMP, DECC recognised that a policy and management framework – a Conservation Management Plan – was needed to ensure the long-term conservation of the site and its values, especially shared values, meanings and associations, and cultural and natural heritage values.

1.2 Project objectives

As defined by the brief, the **specific objectives** for the Conservation Management Plan for the Meeting Place Precinct:

1. To identify, direct and achieve long term conservation and management outcomes for Botany Bay National Park;
2. To assist the Department in meeting its corporate objectives and statutory requirements.
3. To ensure balanced and compatible management of the shared values, meanings and associations of the Study Area.
4. To ensure the balanced and compatible management of cultural (Historic and pre-contact Aboriginal) and natural heritage values of the Study Area.
5. To develop forward looking management policies within the context of legislative requirements, the PWG management framework and stakeholder issues.
6. To give direction to the future uses for the site while protecting its significance.

To satisfy these objectives, this project seeks to provide a Conservation Management Plan that achieves three key outcomes identified in the brief. These are stated as:

- support the long-term conservation of the Meeting Place Precinct within Botany Bay National Park;
- inform the Plan of Management for Botany Bay National Park and the Master Plan for the Meeting Place Precinct; and
- ensure best practice management and maintenance of both tangible and intangible cultural heritage values.

1.3 Scope

The Conservation Management Plan (CMP) will provide a framework of policies, strategies, guidelines and actions, for managing and conserving all the identified heritage values of the Meeting Place Precinct within Botany Bay National Park.

The *Heritage Assessment* (Design 5 2006) involved undertaking historical, research, site analysis, fabric analysis, significance assessment and preparing a statement of significance.

The scope of works for *Policy* (Context 2007) entailed confirming the heritage values as presented in the *Heritage Assessment*, undertaking limited community consultation to strengthen understanding of significance where necessary, particularly with the Aboriginal community, a preliminary heritage impact assessment, and the development of conservation policies.

The preliminary heritage impact assessment was designed to determine the potential impact of changes arising from the Master Plan (2003) on the heritage significance of the place, and thereby guide a parallel project that has involved development of interpretation, landscape and architectural design concepts.

1.4 Study area

The Meeting Place Precinct is the name given to an area of over 20 hectares on the Kurnell side of the Botany Bay National Park that marks the place of a first encounter between Aboriginal people of this area and Europeans.

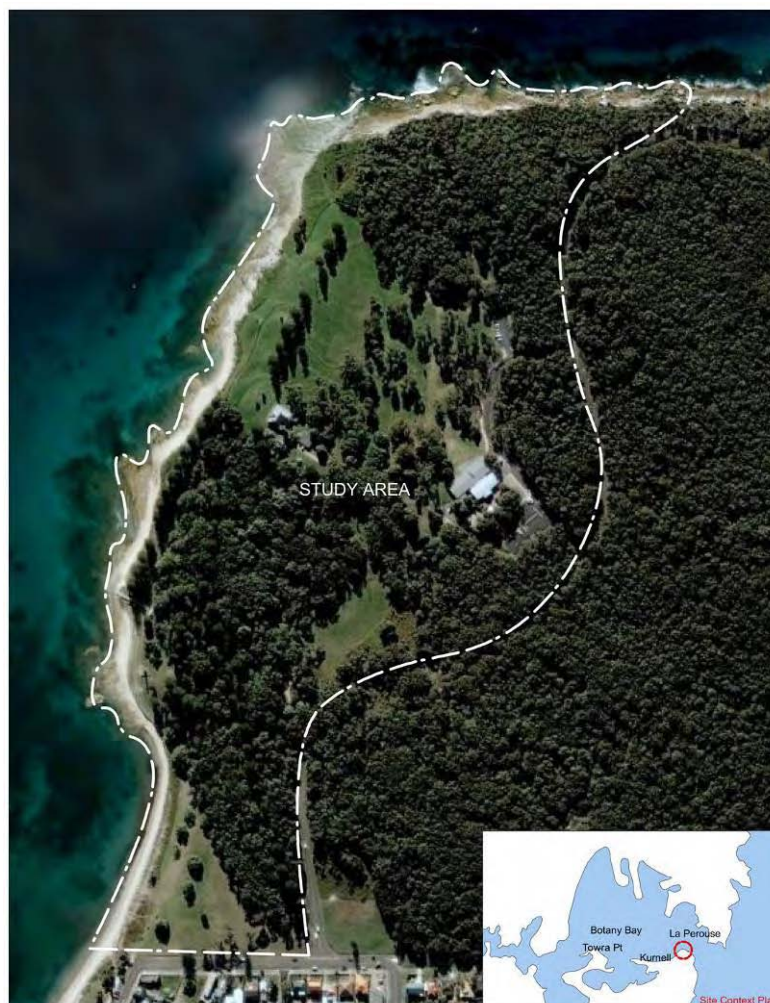


Figure 1.1 The study area

1.5 Project methodology

Method

Development of the Conservation Management Plan has been based on the methodology contained in *The Burra Charter: the Australia ICOMOS charter for places of cultural significance* (1999). It has involved the gathering of site, documentary and oral evidence, confirmation of significance, and the development of policies.

The analysis confirming the assessment of heritage values focused on the assessment of social significance and community values, interpreting landscape change, and understanding the shared values of the place as an enduring Aboriginal landscape and, as a non-Aboriginal historic landscape. This involved the review of existing non-Aboriginal heritage assessments, a technical workshop and site visit with PWG staff, and consultation to confirm and refine understanding of Aboriginal heritage values. Engagement with the wider community was undertaken as part of the Community Engagement Strategy, and the results provided to the CMP project team. Insights that emerged from the review process were incorporated into section 2 of this report; five integrating concepts of significance were developed to provide a stronger foundation for policy, priority setting and management decision-making.

Stage 3 of Context's scope of work included a preliminary assessment of the heritage impacts of the Master Plan (2003), based on an updated scope of works.

The policy framework contained in Section 5 has been based on an analysis (in Section 3) of constraints arising from significance, statutory requirements and best practice guidelines, issues arising from use, the condition of the values, management requirements and other factors.

The final stage was the development of Section 6 – an implementation strategy - followed by preparation of the draft CMP for public exhibition. Outcomes of submissions received during the exhibition, along with input from a consultation workshop, have been integrated into the final document.

Terminology

The terminology used in this report is consistent with current heritage best practice, including *The Burra Charter* (1999) and the *Australian Natural Heritage Charter* (second edition). A glossary is also included at Appendix 1.

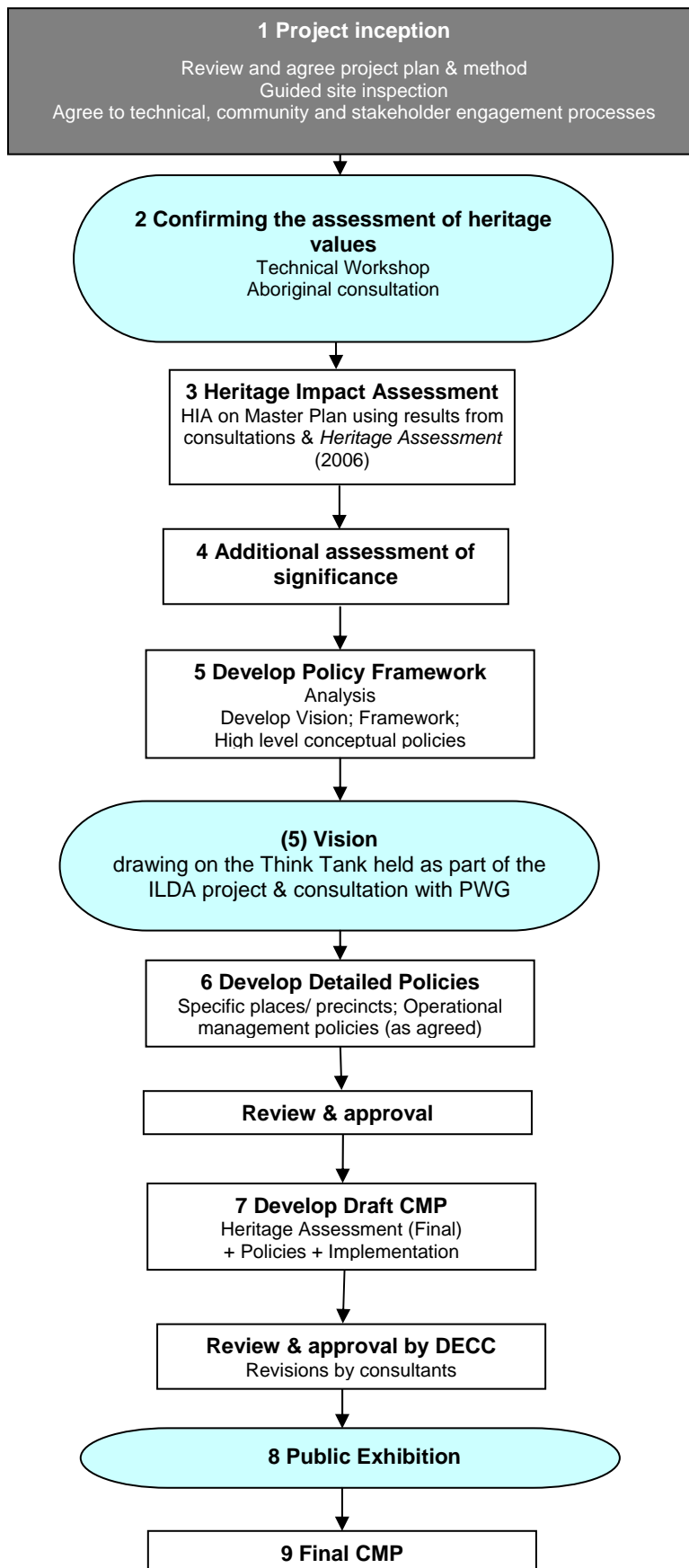
Limitations

The preliminary heritage impact assessment, (Stage 3) has been prepared without conservation policy or an endorsed conservation management plan against which to measure the heritage impacts of the concepts proposed in the Master Plan.

1.6 Sources consulted

Documentary sources consulted in the preparation of this Conservation Management Plan are listed in References.

Project flowchart



1.7 Acknowledgements

The following people are acknowledged for their contributions to the preparation of this report:

- Georgina Eldershaw, Dean Kelly, and Christine Hopkins, Parks and Wildlife Group and Olwen Beazley, Culture and Heritage Division – New South Wales Department of the Environment and Climate Change (DECC)
- Doug Benson, Botanic Gardens Trust (DECC)
- Geoffrey Britton, specialist consultant on historic cultural vegetation and landscapes
- other attendees at significance workshop held in December 2006: John Atkins, Botany Bay Environmental Education Centre; Peter Stevens, Parks and Wildlife Group and Kylie Walker, Sustainability Programs Division – both of DECC
- attendees at the December 2007 on-site workshop who contributed to a review of Aboriginal policies
- the Interpretation / Landscape and Architectural Design and Documentation team members from the Government Architect's Office (GAO), with Merrima Design.

1.8 Project management and project team

Steering Committee

The project has been overseen by a Steering Committee comprising:

Georgina Eldershaw : DECC Botany Bay National Park Project Officer

Olwen Beazley: DECC – Culture and Heritage Division

Dean Kelly: DECC – Aboriginal Community Liaison Officer.

Project team

The project team comprises:

Context Pty Ltd

Chris Johnston (Project Manager)

Christina Vos

Libby Riches

Thomas Trudeau

Fae Ingledew

Urban Initiatives

Tim Hart

Andrew Taylor

Specialists

Geoffrey Britton.

2 NEW UNDERSTANDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE

2.1 Introduction

Since the completion of the *Heritage Assessment* in 2006, further studies and consultations have revealed additional understandings of significance.

To provide a firm foundation for policy, sections 2.2 to 2.5 consider each of these new aspects in relation to the *Heritage Assessment* Statement of Significance (2006: 165-167). The Statement of Significance from the *Heritage Assessment* is contained in Appendix 2).

Finally, section 2.6 provides a synthesis of significance, drawing together five key concepts about the significance which will be used as the foundation of policy. These five elements recognise both tangible and intangible heritage elements of the Meeting Place Precinct.

Summary

In summary, the additional work undertaken has further documented and/or analysed historical or physical evidence; reviewed understandings of associations and meanings; and has sought to give greater recognition to particular elements of significance:

- **Symbolic meanings and connections:** Section 2.2 reviews the symbolic meaning of the Meeting Place Precinct along with the extent of community connections to this place.
- **Aboriginal cultural heritage values:** Section 2.3 looks at further documentation of physical Aboriginal cultural heritage that has been undertaken, resulting in a more detailed understanding of the extent of Aboriginal cultural heritage and the archaeological potential of the precinct. A new process of consultation with Aboriginal community representatives combined with a review of significance in the *Heritage Assessment* suggests a broader understanding of Aboriginal cultural heritage values.
- **Cultural landscape, land form and vegetation:** Section 2.4 looks at new work on the local native plant communities and plants collected by Banks and Solander in 1770, resulting in a more comprehensive understanding of the vegetation types across the Meeting Place Precinct, and the 1770s vegetation that formed the backdrop to the encounter. It also looks new understandings of introduced and naturalising non-local native plantings, their impacts, and what they convey about changing knowledge and management philosophies at the site. Consultation combined with a review of significance in the *Heritage Assessment*, suggests additional emphasis on the values associated with enduring aspects of the landscape and land form.
- **Buildings and structures:** Section 2.5 clarifies the levels of relative significance and in which aspects of Alpha House, the Discovery Centre and the Ferry shelter shed this significance resides.

The scope of the additional work undertaken is limited to:

- Further studies commissioned by PWG/DECC since the completion of the *Heritage Assessment* in 2006
- The results of two workshops: the first was held as part of the current project to develop a Conservation Management Plan and involved a review of the Statement of Significance. The second was held in as part of the Interpretation, Landscape and Architectural Design project being undertaken through the Government Architects Office and explored interpretive themes
- Review of the material in the *Heritage Assessment* on symbolic meanings and community connections, including a desktop review of other sources relevant to ethnic community associations

- Responses to the exhibition of the *Heritage Assessment* (Design 5 2006) by PWG/DECC via the Meeting Place Project website - www.whereculturesmeet.com.au. Feedback was sought using a structured questionnaire.

2.2 Symbolic meanings and connections

Background

Social significance is a contemporary value and the process of understanding it involves consultation with ‘communities’ who have an association with the place. Such communities may be defined by their location, cultural, ethnicity, shared experiences and so on.

This section looks at the social significance of the Meeting Place Precinct in relation to symbolic meanings and community associations with the place. It draws on the work of Jane Harrington (Biosis Research) in the *Heritage Assessment* (2006: Section 5.3 and Appendix G). Harrington refers to and provides an effective summary of the consultation that has informed her analysis. The further work undertaken by Context on specific ethnic communities and their associations with the Meeting Place Precinct is referred to. Appendix 3 describes the assessment of social significance and provides a summary of Context’s work on ethnic communities.

In terms of the New South Wales State Heritage Register, criterion (d) this means:

An item has strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group in New South Wales for social, cultural or spiritual reasons (State significance) OR

An item has strong or special associations with a particular community or cultural group in the area for social, cultural or spiritual reasons (local significance).

The National Heritage List frames the same concept in the following term:

The place has outstanding heritage value to the nation because of the place's strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons. (Criterion G)

The National Heritage List entry for Kurnell Peninsula includes three values statements related to criterion (g):

- ‘Captain Cook’s Landing Place’ at Kurnell Peninsula is considered by many to be of outstanding heritage value to the nation for its association with the ‘the birth of the nation’. The events hold a different meaning for Indigenous Australians, marking the commencement of colonization of Australia, and dispossession, underpinned by the doctrine of terra nullius. The story of Cook’s first landing on the east coast of Australia is nationally important, and Captain Cook’s Landing Place has become a symbolic place representing an important national story.
- The story of Cook’s voyage, including Cook’s landing place at Kurnell and first contact between the British and Indigenous Australians on the eastern seaboard, has become an integral part of Australian folk-lore and our collective psyche. There are ‘Captain Cook’ stories in many parts of Aboriginal Australia, including remote areas such as Central Australia and the Victoria River Downs, Northern Territory. The events have been well documented by many authors, acknowledging the place’s important association with Indigenous Australian’s at a national level.
- Captain Cook’s Landing Place is within the Meeting Place Precinct and part of the reserve set aside in 1899.

Review of the *Heritage Assessment (Design 5 2006)*

The *Heritage Assessment (Design 5 2006)* contains a thorough and well-argued case in relation to social significance in Section 5.5 and in Appendix G. These sections of the report highlight the social significance of:

- the place as a whole (and potentially its wider Botany Bay setting) for Australians for its imagined and embodied symbolic meanings, expressed through ceremony, memorialisation and cultural traditions.
- the place as a whole (and potentially its wider Botany Bay setting) for Australians for its place in ‘our story’ of becoming as a nation.
- the place as a whole (and its wider Botany Bay setting) for local Aboriginal people of the Dharawal nation as part of their traditional country (landscape, water, connection), as a place containing powerful and important evidence of Aboriginal presence (occupation sites, burials), as a place with totemic connections, as the place of ‘significant events’ (Cook expedition landing through to Survival Day etc), as a place that demonstrates their continuity and survival as a people, as a place of personal memory and experience.
- the place as a whole (and potentially its wider Botany Bay setting) for Aboriginal Australians as a symbol of the process of invasion and dispossession.
- the place in part (or as a whole?) for the people who lived along the rocky foreshore (here and in other parts of what is now Botany Bay National Park) prior to the 1960s, and defended their right to remain (demonstrating a strong attachment to this place)
- the place in part (or as a whole?) for the local Kurnell community who have used this area as their local park for many years and feel a strong sense of ownership over it and connection to it.
- the place as a whole (and specific parts, including the journey to the place by ferry) as a place to visit, use and enjoy as part of a group, family or community (e.g. ethnic community gatherings) within a ‘recreational’ and ‘bush’ landscape that for some will have symbolic meanings. Some people/groups have a long history of experiencing the place and a depth of remembered ‘times’.
- the place as a whole (and as part of a wider landscape) enjoyed by generations of schoolchildren for field trips.

As well, specific parts of the Meeting Place Precinct are likely to have particular associations and meanings, including personal memories.

These values are embodied in aspects or features of the physical place, as well as in ‘intangible’ aspects such as meanings, associations, traditions, cultural expressions (etc).

The Statement of Significance in the *Heritage Assessment* offers a narrower appreciation of these complex layers of social significance and the sections below therefore look further at two aspects: symbolic meanings and community connections.

Part of the issue is that the criterion is not fully addressed. It requires evidence that the place has the defined value “strong or special association ... for social, cultural or spiritual reasons” with a defined community. This means that the nature, extent and duration of the association needs to be demonstrated along with the values or meanings arising out of this association for a specific community or cultural group.

The *Heritage Assessment* provides a schedule of features or elements and grades them according to the analysis of significance (Design 5 2006: Section 5.9) This schedule only includes physical features of the site and does not consider aspects such as use, much less the more intangible qualities such as traditions or language for example. Again this needs to be addressed to provide a firm foundation for policy.

Symbolic meanings

The *Heritage Assessment* expresses the symbolism of the place as:

6.1.1 It is the place where the first European, Lieutenant James Cook, set foot on the eastern shores of Australia in April 1770, during his first voyage of exploration of the Pacific. Although the first British settlement did not occur on this site as initially intended, the place has taken on a symbolic association with the founding of the Australian nation.

While the Statement of Significance then goes on to look at the meanings for Aboriginal Australians (6.1.2) and the processes of commemorating, celebrating and reflecting on the Cook expedition, it does not fully reveal the symbolic nuances suggested in Harrington's analysis (Harrington in Design 5 2006: Appendix G).

Harrington explores in detail the complex symbolic meanings of the Meeting Place Precinct, layered and contradictory, encompassing opposites: possession and dispossession; beginnings and endings; national and invisible.

The narrative of possession and dispossession encompasses the Australian foundation myth, with this site seen as the birthplace of a new story and a new people. And yet, the encounter between the Cook party and the warriors on the beach equally speaks of a land not surrendered. Each story has its own voice and its own listeners, and one story has dominated to the exclusion of the other.

For settler Australians, the need for a foundation on which to build a new identity – first local and then national – meant the imbuing of certain places, events, and people with greater meaning than could have possibly been imagined by the actors on that historical stage. 'Captain Cook' has transmuted from a man to a cultural reference point, and Botany Bay likewise. The imagined moment and the imagined place of landing is powerful and ever-present, even though the experience of the Meeting Place Precinct today is dominated by past expressions of commemoration set within a landscape of water, 'bush' and industry. It is not that Cook landed here but rather what we have needed to make of this event that is significant.

What happened here was recorded and is remembered. The repetition of the encounter through ceremony, and the reassertion of Aboriginal perspectives since the 1970s mean that there are now two major narratives. And the emerging recognition of traditional Aboriginal ownership of country is just one of many ways in which the stories of this place and of the nation continue to be inter-linked. And yet the place itself is unremarkable.

From an Aboriginal perspective, Cook too is a symbol rather than a man. Across Australia, Cook and Botany Bay are known and held up as seminal in the processes of dispossession.

The marking of the site with memorials that appear to tell us about key events during that short visit by the Cook expedition – the landing place, the encounter, the well, the stream – ignores its rich and long Aboriginal history, demonstrating the effort needed to create identity from this 'genesis' moment. And while it is a site claimed a part of our national identity, it has never been well resourced, suggesting an ambivalence or at least a lack of confidence that this place can really stand up to such a major discourse.

The symbolic meanings of the Meeting Place Precinct are embodied in what is there, and what is missing. Intangible heritage refers to aspects of heritage that are embodied in traditions, knowledge, cultural and social practices, language, performance (etc) rather than through tangible places and objects. In reality, the intangible and the tangible are like the warp and the weft of our cultural cloth, neither existing alone, and this is strongly apparent at the Meeting Place.

For example, the giving of new names is a significant symbol of possession and contrasts to the invisibility of the knowledge system, language and naming of the Aboriginal people. The giving of names by the Cook expedition has been followed by a continuing process of naming: Botany

Bay, Captain Cooks Landing Place, Cook's Stream¹ and so on. Naming is a process (an intangible) but the things named are physical features.

Community connections

Review of Heritage Assessment (2006)

The Statement of Significance identifies the following aspects of significance – secondary significance - in relation to community connections:

- 6.2.4 *The ferry crossing from La Perouse to Kurnell has historic, aesthetic and social significance. The physical experience of the crossing and the view of the place that the ferry provided heightened visitor expectation and experience of the place.*
- 6.2.5 *Throughout the 19th and 20th centuries, the place has provided, and today continues to provide, opportunities for visitors, both local and from the broader community, to participate in recreational and social activities, including picnicking, walking, swimming, fishing, bird watching, and socialising. Historically, visitors also participated in camping and hunting.*
- 6.2.22 *The place has been used in the education of school children in both Australian history and the environment throughout the 20th century.*
- 6.2.23 *The place provided, in its camping grounds and foreshore caves, opportunities for temporary accommodation during the Depression years, of which there are some limited remains.*
- 6.2.24 *The place is associated with environmental politics and preservation, particularly through the work of early conservation groups and resident action groups.*
- 6.2.25 *The place, which is used by many cultural groups, provides an opportunity to strengthen the sense of community and cross cultural interaction.*

Harrington's analysis suggests that the Meeting Place Precinct, as a 'people's landscape – a place that is practiced, experienced and lived' is a strongly linked to the symbolic importance of the place as part of a national narrative, but also as part of local or community-specific narratives.

For the local Aboriginal people, for example, the sense of connection to or disconnection from the Meeting Place Precinct, is immediate and deeply felt. The Kurnell area, including the Meeting Place Precinct, is a part of the traditional country of some Aboriginal people, and is a part of the wider Botany Bay seascape and landscape for others, a place long valued and used. These local Indigenous community connections are explored further in the next section.

For the residents of Kurnell, the Meeting Place Precinct is a part of their local landscape – a place of daily experience. For some, it is a place where they played as children, and for others the connection stretches back one or two generations. Nevertheless, the larger story is also part of their connection, and one that can hardly be ignored within a local landscape where the pines are a strong visual link.

Visiting has been the primary way that people have engaged with this site since its reservation in the late nineteenth century. The journey to the site, the events witnessed and the activities shared within this memorialised landscape will have strongly framed the experience of the place. The attraction of the place was always more than its physical setting. It was a chance to visit the 'birthplace', to understand that moment of genesis and to connect to the past. Even for visitors, 'seeing' the imagined landscape of Cook's visit was a strong attractor, offering a chance to 'see' what the country was like before settlement – a 'place frozen in time, caught forever in some original moment' (Harrington in Design 5 2006: Appendix G, 30). The use of the site as a place for learning about the history of 'the nation' from the 1930s has helped

¹ The freshwater stream is no longer referred to as Cook's Stream, and this plan adopts the nomenclature 'freshwater stream' throughout.

ensure the transmission of ideas about national identity and foundation to subsequent generations of school children.

Another specific 'community' with strong past associations with the Meeting Place Precinct are those who occupied the camps in the vicinity from the late 1920s. Shacks were built along the cliff faces at Kurnell, some serving as weekenders and others as permanent housing. By the time they were being evicted in the 1950s and 60s, many claimed a decades-long occupancy and strongly resisted removal. Like in many coastal places, there was also an annual migration for summer camping, and many families would have experienced the close community of the camping grounds on this site and felt a strong sense of connection to the place.

These experiences, as documented by Harrington, are evidence of strong and enduring connections across a wide community of visitors and locals. The Meeting Place Precinct is held in high community esteem and it has served as an important reference point in community identities across several generations. Even for those who reject its focus on Cook or as a place of foundation, it offers opportunities for alternative viewpoints and different readings of the past.

For more recently arrived migrant or ethnic communities, the Meeting Place Precinct may have quite different resonances in relational to national identity. For some migrant communities, this place has been used for forty or more years as a place for large family and community gatherings; for other communities the use is more recent. Based on the limited research that has been undertaken, the Meeting Place Precinct can be expected to have distinct meanings for each community, reflecting the social circumstances of the community and cultural views about nature. Consultation for the Meeting Place Master Plan (2003) revealed strong interest in Aboriginal history and 'reconciliation' amongst some recent migrant groups.

- The Meeting Place Precinct is of potential social significance to several specific ethnic/migrant communities that actively use the site for community gatherings - Macedonian, Arabic-speaking, Pacific Islander, Vietnamese and Korean communities. It may be of importance to the Swedish community who held their annual picnic day here until 1995 (Solander monument).
- The values held across the wider community may also be relevant to ethnic communities.

Conclusions on symbolic meanings and community connections

Understanding contemporary attachments to the Meeting Place Precinct is complex. The place does not have a fixed nor a singular meaning. Rather, there are many and changing meanings, influenced by the nature of people's associations with the place and by national dialogues about identity, foundation and Aboriginal dispossession and disadvantage.

Social practices – our ways of being, our perspectives on the past and future – change over time, and are a strong influence on how people connect to place and the meanings they derive. For some places, little change may be evident, but for the Meeting Place Precinct change over time is strongly apparent.

In terms of symbolic meanings, the physical attributes of the Meeting Place Precinct demonstrate past expressions of national identity and the foundation story, and are part of the historical significance of the place. Aspects of the place that demonstrate nineteenth century processes of memorialisation and commemoration are readily apparent, as is the 1960s National Parks layer with the Discovery Centre and the introduction of site-based education and interpretation.

Contemporary expressions, those that relate to today, are not physically present within the landscape, and rely on personal reflection based on on-site information and interpretation.

In summary, the symbolic meanings of the Meeting Place Precinct are multiple, not singular. They are far more than the foundation story. The possession of the landscape is embodied in naming, landscape change, use and management. The process of seeking to create national

identity, and therefore needing a ‘foundation’ time and place, has resulted in the creation of this place to enable that moment to be marked and commemorated in an ongoing way, and the creation of a space in which to reflect. Cook has been created as ‘founding father and a discoverer’, a mythic figure for settler and Indigenous people, each seeing the agency of ‘Cook’ in very different ways.

Symbolic meanings change over time, and the challenge will be to recognise this. Equally, there is a need to allow for and encourage the expression of a diversity of perspectives.

2.3 Aboriginal cultural heritage and values

Background

This section considers the significance of the Meeting Place Precinct for its Indigenous heritage values: the tangible evidence of Indigenous history, the long associations and connections to this place, and the meanings of the place for the Indigenous community today. Contemporary meanings may include aspects of cultural and spiritual significance.

Review of documented Aboriginal cultural heritage

As part of the *Interpretation, Landscape and Architectural Design project* for the Meeting Place Precinct, consultant archaeologist Paul Irish has prepared an *Overview of the Documented Aboriginal Cultural Heritage* (2007); subsequent test excavations have since been completed (Irish 2007b, 2007c). The first report adds significant additional information to the material presented in the *Heritage Assessment* (Design 5 2006: Appendix E) by assembling information on the documented items of Aboriginal cultural heritage within the Meeting Place Precinct. The *Heritage Assessment* (Design 5 2006: Appendix E) provides a more limited presentation of items plus a predictive model that assesses the likelihood of further Aboriginal cultural heritage items being located in future.

The test excavations were undertaken in late May-early June 2007 to assist in determining whether some potential new visitor facilities, including path realignments, may impact on archaeological resources. The test excavations examined areas on both sides of the freshwater stream, on the dune, near the former jetty and in other locations. This work has further confirmed the extent of middens on the foreshore, has revealed that the outlet to the freshwater stream contains redeposited midden above lower layers of fill, and that it is unlikely Alpha House is built on a midden (Irish 2007b, 2007c). Together these reports provide a good appreciation of the physical cultural heritage. In summary:

- The majority of the Meeting Place Precinct has high Aboriginal archaeological potential. The *Heritage Assessment* suggests that the following areas where substantial disturbance has occurred in the past have a low level of potential: roads, car parks, Discovery Centre and car park, cricket pitch, Education Centre, Alpha House site, marquee site, Cook memorial, Banks memorial, dam, and the foreshore area (Design 5 2006: 147). This is discussed further below.
- Documented Aboriginal cultural evidence in-situ includes:
 - shell middens (Skeleton Cave – AHIMS 52-3-0220, foreshore midden/s AHIMS 52-3-0219)
 - human burials (Skeleton Cave – AHIMS 52-3-0220, foreshore midden/s AHIMS 52-3-0219)
 - rock engravings (single site AHIMS 52-3-0221) (Irish 2007: 11-21).

Aboriginal cultural artefacts collected and removed from the Meeting Place Precinct during and since the visit of the Endeavour in 1770 (Irish pp. 6, 23). A significant collection from Cook’s visit to Botany Bay is held in the Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology at Cambridge University and at the British Museum. Two collections of moveable heritage are

held within the Meeting Place Precinct: Captain Cook's Landing Place (CCLP) Collection, and another in the keeping of park management.

- Aboriginal cultural evidence has been uncovered through intentional archaeological investigations and through other site activities that have involved disturbance to the ground surface. Evidence located through archaeological investigations is summarised below:
- Following unintentional disturbance of burials in 1912, the Australian Museum undertook an excavation which uncovered five adult skulls and 7-8 children's skulls. In 1968, archaeologist Vincent Megaw (and his team) undertook a more systematic excavation, uncovering the skeletal remains of one adolescent and two infants, along with many artefacts (stone axes, stone files, fish hooks, bone points, and animal (food) remains) in Skeleton Cave (Irish 2007: 19).
 - Archaeological investigations of the area between the freshwater stream and the ferry wharf in 1968 by Megaw revealed shell midden throughout this area around 15cm below the surface and with a distinct midden concentration 30 m in length, and in places up to 1.8m thick. Artefacts were recovered from two trenches located to the south of the PMG vault, including items that demonstrated that the midden continued to be used after Europeans arrived (Irish 2007: 11-12).
 - Further investigations in 1970/71 by the Megaw team focused primarily on the areas to the east of the creek, with auger testing on the east and west of the creek revealing the extent of midden along the foreshore (3 distinct midden concentrations were identified) and a series of trenches dug into the south-eastern end of the midden, revealing some human remains and charcoal materials. Further trenches located 250 shell fish hooks, 'the largest assemblage of fish hooks so far found in any site in Australia', bone points and other artefacts (Irish 2007: 14-15).
 - Aboriginal cultural evidence located through other site activities includes:
 - Shells were excavated from a 'shell bank' near the freshwater stream in the 1840s to make lime, and a human burial (skeleton) was uncovered and then reburied, presumably Aboriginal but also possibly that of Forby Sutherland (Irish 2007: 12). There is some suggestion the skull may have been removed (Rich 1988: 7 in Irish 2007: 15).
 - Stone implements gathered at Kurnell in 1899 (specific location not known) (Etheridge and Whitelegge 1899: 235, in Irish, 23)
 - Part of a human skeleton was uncovered in 1899 during the erection of a flagpole for the dedication of the reserve. It is not known if the remains were reburied. (Rich 1988: 8 in Irish 2007: 15)
 - Burials in Skeleton Cave (two adults and a child) were disturbed in 1912 during construction of a drainage system (Irish 2007: 19).
 - Burials (2 skulls) were unearthed in 1936/37 near the freshwater stream, possibly part of the same burial uncovered in the 1840s but also possibly a separate burial (Forbes 2006: 10 and Rich 1988: 7 in Irish 2007: 12, 15)
 - In 1936 a 'skeleton or possibly only a skull' was uncovered about halfway between the Forby Sutherland monument and the northernmost of the two pine trees then in front of Alpha House (Irish 2007: 15).
 - Stone artefacts were found in 1947 during construction of the Banks memorial (Irish 2007: 9, 12)

- Human remains (an elderly male and a child) were exposed during excavation for a PMG inspection vault for electrical cabling in 1961 and reburied nearby (Irish 2007: 9,11)
- Stone axe was located near the park entrance during soil levelling works in 1971 associated with the anchor display (Irish 2007: 21)
- Midden material was located to the south of the main flagpole during excavations in 2006 to run below-ground electrical cable to power lights for the flagpole (G Eldershaw pers. comm.).
- Much of the Meeting Place Precinct has not been tested for Aboriginal cultural evidence. For example the archaeological testing (augering and trenches) has been to the west of the Solander monument, ‘however a burial was located there’ suggesting further middens and/or burials may occur to the east of the monument.
- Human remains removed from their burial locations with the Meeting Place Precinct or from other nearby locations (and subsequently held by museums), have been reburied in a resting place at Towra Point at the request of the Aboriginal community.
- Aboriginal cultural evidence known from historical accounts but for which no known physical evidence has as yet been recorded (Irish, 2007: 6), include:
 - another midden possibly south west of the wharf
 - a campsite described in the records of the Endeavour and the First Fleet as a group of huts near the stream (later called Cook’s Stream and now referred to as the ‘freshwater stream’), possibly part of the occupation site that has been recorded as an extensive midden by Megaw in 1968 and 1970/71
 - Cundlemong’s burial place (c1844) was located to the rear of Connell’s cottage (Alpha House site) – 150-200 yards to rear, in a location estimated to be close to cape Solander Drive about 200m northeast of the Discovery Centre (Irish 2007: 22)
 - bora ring or ceremonial ground and a marker tree have been spoken about in a recent oral history interview with local Dharawal man and Botany Bay National Park Field Office Merv Ryan (Irish 2007: 24). The location of these two features has yet to be recorded.
 - scarred trees marked through the cutting of steps into the bark to climb the tree and gather gum. Irish concludes that it is unlikely any such evidence survives (Irish 2007: 24-25).

The *Heritage Assessment* and several other documents suggest that Alpha House is built on top of a large midden, possibly conflating the presence of extensive midden along the foreshore with the shape of the knoll on which Alpha House is sited. Irish notes that there is no evidence of midden material on the knoll itself, and the ‘auger testing undertaken in 1970/71 from the foreshore upslope towards Alpha House show that the midden tapers out in this direction’ (Irish 2007: 23). Test excavations in May-June 2007 further confirms the view that Alpha House is not built on a midden (Irish 2007b, 2007c).

Consultation with Dean Kelly indicates that, in his view, the foreshore edge and water are potential places for the location of Aboriginal cultural evidence. The freshwater stream is of considerable importance to Aboriginal people. The recent archaeological testing has revealed layers of fill, including redeposited midden material in the former alignment of the stream, but this work did not attempt to try and define the edges of the former stream (Irish 2007b, 2007c).

Conclusions

Based on the new information provided through the assembling of past studies and data on documented Aboriginal cultural evidence, it is apparent that:

- The majority if not all of the Meeting Place Precinct is of high Aboriginal archaeological potential, and the areas identified in the *Heritage Assessment* as of low potential need to be treated with caution.
- The extent of Aboriginal cultural evidence located in the past through intentional archaeological investigation or unintentional ground disturbance, combined with the historical record continuing use of the site by Aboriginal people, confirms the likelihood that Aboriginal cultural evidence is present throughout the Meeting Place Precinct.
- The archaeological record, combined with the historical record from the Cook encounter onwards and Aboriginal community knowledge, means that this site offers a particularly important interpretative opportunity.
- Aboriginal community views on this newly assembled information on the extent of documented and potential evidence will be important to help guide decisions about future investigations, conservation and interpretation.

Review of the *Heritage Assessment* (2006)

The *Heritage Assessment* (Design 5 2006: 165-167) recognises the importance of this place to Aboriginal people in the following terms in the Statement of Significance:

Aspects of primary significance

- 6.1.2 *It is here also that the first contact was made between the British, who were later to possess and settle the land, and the traditional Aboriginal owners of the land, the Gweagal people of the Dharawal nation. For Aboriginal people, the place has come to represent their dispossession from the land, with Botany Bay becoming an incredibly important stage for Aboriginal protests against forms of history that ignore, silence and deny their own experiences of colonisation. It also recognises its importance to the wider Australian community because of its history and associations, and natural values.*

Aspects of secondary significance

- 6.2.8 *The place has strong cultural and spiritual associations for the Gweagal and Dharawal people, who occupied the land prior to European settlement and after. It is a place where they can pass on their knowledge of the environment, cultural practices, history and spiritual connections to the land to future generations.*
- 6.2.9 *The view across Botany Bay from La Perouse to Kurnell is important to the local Aboriginal community as it provides a visual link to country. The ferry that once operated between the two places provided an important physical link for this community.*
- 6.2.10 *The place, together with its archaeological remains, the collections of artefacts taken from the site in 1770 and since, and the oral history of the Gweagal people, has the potential to reveal information about the life and customs of the Gweagal people who occupied the land prior to European settlement.*
- 6.2.11 *The place contains several significant Aboriginal sites including among others the shell midden on which Alpha House is built², Skeleton Cave and a rock art site.*
- 6.2.12 *In recent years, the place has developed a high level of potential as a place that can foster reconciliation between indigenous and non-indigenous Australians.*

In assessing Aboriginal heritage values, in relation to the NSW State Heritage Register criteria, the *Heritage Assessment* identified the following additional points on significance:

² Note: Recent test pits and analysis by Paul Irish (2007a, 2007b) suggests that the knoll on which Alpha House is sited is probably not a midden.

- The place contains substantial evidence that it had been occupied by Aboriginal people for at least 10,000 years prior to European settlement. (criterion a)
- Post-contact Aboriginal history, including dispossession from land, incorporation into cash economy as casual labourers, creation of Aboriginal reserve settlements and struggle for recognition of Aboriginal history and rights - in this case the history of the Gweagal people of Kurnell and Botany Bay. (criterion a)
- The two Gweagal warriors who confronted Cook in 1770 are of particular significance to the Gweagal people who occupied the land prior to European settlement and to the broader Aboriginal community, as they demonstrated that the land was not surrendered to the white people. (criterion b)
- The continual retelling of the Cook story has contributed to making the place an incredibly important stage for Aboriginal people's protests against and challenges to forms of history that ignore, silence and deny their own experiences of colonization. (criterion d)
- In the context of indigenous people's interpretation of the Captain Cook story, Botany Bay has become a significant landscape in terms of Aboriginal people's efforts to communicate their own understanding of what the history that Cook embodies means to them. This also makes the place significant in terms of some reconciliation projects. (criterion g)

In addition, Section 5.3 and Appendix G of the *Heritage Assessment* highlights other aspects of Aboriginal significance:

- As a symbol of the reality of dispossession through the act of possession, accompanied by loss of language, traditional landscapes and cultural heritage, making the telling of the other side of the meeting on the beach and its historical and contemporary meanings, one of primary significance to Aboriginal people across Australia.
- As a symbol of the continuing denial of Aboriginal connection to and responsibility for country.
- As evidence that the encounter with the Cook expedition did not involve surrender of territory or land, but rather was an expression of the sovereignty of local indigenous people over the land.
- As a place where two very different stories about the 1770 encounter can now be expressed: that of settler Australians and of Indigenous Australians.
- As a significant landscape where Aboriginal people have sought to communicate their own understanding of what the history that 'Cook' embodies means to them: through both actions and protests and, for some, through distaste for the place and an unwillingness to visit.
- As a part of a wider Botany Bay landscape that continues to be known, valued and used by Aboriginal people.
- As a place where knowledge and traditions have been passed on from past to present generations, and where it is the desire of Aboriginal people to continue this tradition (but with expressed concerns about the loss of opportunities to do this through limits on access).
- As a land and seascape that retains evidence of and stories about Aboriginal culture, people and their lives (both ancient and recent)
- As a place that holds strong memories for many Aboriginal people.
- As a place containing plant and animal species of importance to Aboriginal people, including totemic and kinship relationships.

- As a place to mark or commemorate the Gweagal people who occupied the land prior to Cook's arrival and continue to connect to this landscape today.
- As a place where shared histories can be acknowledged and stories told, especially those about how Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people lived and worked together locally – about the convergences of lives and stories in contrast to the separation apparent in other stories.
- As a place where the future can be imagined and created: a future where Aboriginal people are able to connect to and care for country; a place where Aboriginal language, knowledge and traditions are respected and visible; a place to celebrate Aboriginal survival; a place that offers hope for young Aboriginal people.

Aboriginal community involvement

In December 2006, Dean Kelly was appointed to the wider Meeting Place Project to involve Aboriginal people in the project, including in the Conservation Management Plan. His work will, over time, enable PWG/DECC to build strong and ongoing relationships with Aboriginal people with associations with Botany Bay National Park, including opportunities to:

- Better understand why Aboriginal people value each place – Kurnell and La Perouse – and the landscape and waters of Botany Bay
- Welcome Aboriginal participation in the planning for the Meeting Place Precinct, Kurnell and La Perouse parts of the park
- Help Aboriginal people visit the Kurnell site and participate in the development of policies to protect Aboriginal values, sites and objects there
- Support projects that will help record Aboriginal people's connections to both of these places, build connections for young Indigenous people and build a stronger relationship between PWG/DECC and Aboriginal people
- Involve Aboriginal people in the management of the park at Kurnell.

To achieve these goals, regular meetings are being held with La Perouse Aboriginal community representatives, and other park-related projects are underway (oral history training, Towra Team employment and training program). Meetings are also being held with the Land Council.

To create a robust Conservation Management Plan for the Meeting Place Precinct, it is essential to understand:

- why Kurnell/The Meeting Place Precinct is important to Aboriginal people who have associations with this area
- what is known about Aboriginal sites and objects at Kurnell/The Meeting Place Precinct
- how Aboriginal sites, objects and values need to be looked after into the future
- how to maintain the connection with Kurnell for Aboriginal people (for individuals and as a community)
- the roles Aboriginal people can play in the future research, interpretation and management of Kurnell/Meeting Place Precinct (for example through participation in projects, employment, sharing stories and knowledge, education etc).

In the past, Aboriginal people have not always been included in such discussions. PWG/DECC recognises that it needs to welcome Aboriginal people back to the park and to provide them with opportunities to contribute to managing the natural and cultural values of the park.

The processes described above are now underway, and will continue over a period of two years. It can be expected that new understandings of the significance of this place to Aboriginal people will emerge over this time and into the future. Allowing for the emergence of these understandings will be encouraged through policy.

In the consultation to date, a number of ideas about the significance of the Meeting Place Precinct have been discussed. Aboriginal community views on the values expressed from past studies and consultations (summarised in the *Heritage Assessment* and in the above section) will provide a valuable basis for policy.

Conclusions

Aboriginal heritage values are complex and layered. The landscape of the Meeting Place Precinct is imbued with many meanings: Most of these are not represented directly in the physical landscape, although the rich evidence of Aboriginal history represented in the middens, burials, engravings offer a tangible foundation for interpretation.

The intangible heritage of the Meeting Place Precinct is embedded in traditions, story, language, knowledge and experience. The place is known, and its history – long past and recent – is remembered and told by Aboriginal people.

The Aboriginal community with traditional and experiential connections to the Meeting Place Precinct are being encouraged to get more involved in considering the significance of this place. On the other hand, PWG/DECC is being asked to create new opportunities for Aboriginal input into management, conservation and interpretation.

The multi-dimensions of significance and the likelihood that understandings will change, need to be recognised in policy.

2.4 Cultural landscape, land form and vegetation

Background

This section considers the significance of the cultural landscape, land form and vegetation of (and adjacent to) the Meeting Place Precinct. That is, the cultural patterns inscribed across the landscape, the underlying geomorphology, the remnant vegetation and cultural plantings. Together, these aspects of the landscape form an intrinsic part of, and setting for, cultural experiences and understandings of the place.

This section brings together the information contained in Appendices C, D (and G) of the *Heritage Assessment* (Britton and Biosis in Design 5 2006: Appendices C, D and G), with subsequent understandings of significance, new research and consultation undertaken as part of this project. The outcome is a new understandings of significance, with clarification of some aspects of the existing significance based on new information leading to refined understandings.

Review of *Heritage Assessment* (2006)

The *Heritage Assessment* (Design 5 2006) contains comprehensive research and analysis to support the identified heritage significance of the cultural landscape, historic plantings and the natural landscape in Sections 5.4, 5.6, 5.9 and Appendices C and D. These sections of the report highlight the various aspects of significance as follows (in summary):

- The area of land defined as the Meeting Place Precinct is identified as a whole as meeting the thresholds for National, state and local heritage significance for historic, aesthetic, social, scientific/technological, rarity and representative values.
- Individual aspects of the cultural landscape, historic plantings and vegetation communities within the meeting place, are identified as having cultural and natural heritage significance, variously at state, regional and local levels for their historic, scientific, social, aesthetic, representative and rarity values.

- The cultural landscape of the Meeting Place Precinct is divided into a series of Zones. Each Zone is attributed relative significance rankings of exceptional and high, as areas that play a crucial or important role, respectively, in supporting the significance of the place. (The modified setting of the Discovery Centre that encompasses the recently upgraded visitor car parking areas, and the landscape on the western side of the entrance drive, are the exceptions. They are identified as being of lesser significance; playing only a moderate role in supporting the significance of the place.)
- The significance of native vegetation is assessed in relation to endangered local native vegetation communities and species, remnant local native vegetation types, and for its historic associations with the scientific collections of Banks and Solander; for historic, aesthetic, scientific and rarity values.

In a broader context, the landscape contributes to the associations and meanings of the Meeting Place Precinct, represents the processes of making and re-making history that have occurred at the site. It provides physical (tangible) and symbolic (intangible and invisible) connections between the pre-1770 landscape of the original Aboriginal inhabitants, the 1770s landscape that formed the backdrop to the initial encounter, the landscape that supplied the collections of Banks and Solander, and the landscape of the present.

It is the landscape that has provided and continues to provide the setting and context for continued meetings of cultures, the recreational activities and interactions between cultures, as it has from the 19th and 20th centuries into the present.

The Statement of Significance in the *Heritage Assessment* offers a less inclusive understanding of the complexity of values that the landscape, land form and vegetation of the Meeting Place Precinct embody.

It seems that the issue may relate to the separation of values to fit the NSW Heritage Office significance assessment criteria and then further distilling the physical (tangible) elements of the landscape into a list (Section 5.9). It is not the criteria or criterion-by-criterion analysis *per se* in the Section 5 analysis that are an issue. These provide helpful insight into the nature and relative significance of each element of the landscape and the significance of the landscape as a whole. However, the statement of significance is unsuccessful in augmenting the analysis of significance in a manner that does justice to the complex layering and interconnectedness of values across the landscape.

The enduring landscape

The *Heritage Assessment* notes some aspects of the enduring land form as being of secondary significance:

- 6.2.2 *The place is one of natural beauty that provides opportunities for visitors to experience first hand the landscape of the bay, the beaches, rock platforms, cliffs, open parklands and bushland. It provides both panoramic and framed views across Botany Bay.*
- 6.2.3 *The orientation of the 20th century cultural landscape of the precinct towards Botany Bay reflects the importance of the primary access to the site, which for the whole of the 19th and the first half of the 20th century, was by water across Botany Bay.*

While acknowledging the significance and importance of the place's natural beauty (as secondary significance), there is little sense in this description of the connections between the land form and character of the landscape in the present and the auspicious orientation of the place to the bay, the bay itself, the beaches, rock and shallow sandstone platforms, cliffs, open parklands and bushland which have endured from the past. These aspects, to a lesser or greater extent, remain embodied by the existing land form and character of the site itself, historic evidence and records of once having existing at the site, the relationship and orientation of the precinct to the bay, and the 'natural beauty' of the site. Together, these aspects have provided and continue to enable visitors an experience of the place that formed the backdrop to the

experiences of Cook and his crew, to Banks and Solander's collecting, was lived in by the original Aboriginal inhabitants.

The importance of the relationship and orientation of the historic precinct to the Bay, the sandstone cliffs, sandy beaches, the western and eastern dunes, open grassed areas and 'natural' bushland as enduring aspects of the Meeting Place Precinct is discussed in Geoffrey's Britton's report in Appendix D of the *Heritage Assessment*.

In addition to being a continuous element of the landscape, the land form has remained relatively intact and, together with the remnant vegetation (in particular the Angophora forests), represent a tangible and clearly legible aspect of the place which physically and symbolically connect the landscape of encounters and scientific endeavours, with the pre-1770s landscape of the original Aboriginal inhabitants, and these landscapes with the landscape of the present. Paragraph 6.2.3 should include these understandings.

It should also recognise indigenous cultural values and the layering of indigenous and European values in this regard. It is understood that the address and orientation of the 20th century cultural landscape echoes the pre-1770 Aboriginal landscape, in particular the auspicious siting of Alpha House on its grassy knoll with a good prospect out to the bay and in close proximity, sits above (and confuses interpretation of) the midden and in close proximity to a stream that had/has indigenous cultural meaning relating to the meeting of fresh with salt water. Paragraph 6.2.3 should therefore be inclusive of this complexity

Local native vegetation

1770s vegetation communities

New information (Benson and Eldershaw 2007) has further refined the understanding of the different vegetation communities across the study area, from five to eight types. These are shown graphically at Figure 2.1, and should now be understood to comprise the following:

- Coastal scrub/woodland on sand knolls
- Littoral rainforest
- Swamp forest
- Dune woodland
- Sedge-swamp
- Scrub on sandstone
- Foreshore scrub on sand
- Foreshore scrub on sandstone

The relative significance ranking tables in the *Heritage Assessment* (Section 5.9), list significant aspects of the natural and cultural plantings within the precinct. Relative to the new understanding of vegetation types, the two natural vegetation communities identified in this list can be further clarified as follows:

The 'rare and endangered plant communities', identified as being of regional significance for historic, scientific and rarity values, refers to:

- remnant vegetation occurring within the 'coastal scrub/woodland on sand knolls' vegetation type, and located on the southern sandy knoll of the western dune. It is part of the listed Endangered Ecological Community (Kurnell Dune Forest); and
- remnant 'Swamp forest' vegetation within and adjacent to Commemoration Flat (eastern side), that is consistent with the listed Endangered Ecological Community Swamp Sclerophyll Forest.

The 'remnant plant communities from pre-settlement', identified as being of regional significance for historic, aesthetic, scientific and rarity values, refers to:

- species consistent in type and location with the eight vegetation types described above (and shown graphically in Figure 2.1); and
- the *Casuarina glauca* species on the foreshore of Commemoration Flat. These are likely to have regenerated from a pre-1770s genotype and therefore have genetic importance as seed (or root) stock. This cove of *Casuarina glauca* persists as a remnant of the swamp forest community.

Areas adjacent to the Meeting Place Precinct

The native vegetated areas adjacent to the Meeting Place Precinct (largely *Angophora costata* dominated 'scrub on sandstone' vegetation), were not included in the significance assessment because they are largely outside of the historic precinct. However, they are considered to be vitally important to the natural landscape and cultural experience of the place as they:

- Provide a locally native, vegetation-dominated landscape in contrast to the cultural landscape character that predominates in the parkland (picnic areas), cricket ground, foreshore avenue, landmark and commemorative plantings, emphasised by formal design elements and car parks.
- Provide a contrast to the urban and industrial environments of the approach experience.
- Provide a sense of enclosure for the precinct on the eastern and south-eastern sides of the precinct (framed by the opposing topography – dune).
- Contribute to a sense of enclosure for the entry experience (by road), and the sense that you are entering a special place.
- Provide the setting for walks and other activities for visitors, assisting in their interpretation and appreciation of the pre-contact landscape.
- Provide visitors with a sense of the natural landscape character of the Kurnell peninsula, and connection to the pre-1770 landscape.
- Conceal the views to the bay which are then revealed once visitors have arrived at the Commemorative Flat.
- Provide habitat for native fauna.
- Potentially provide habitat for threatened plant species.

Cultural values of the natural place (i.e. vegetation and landscape)

The *Heritage Assessment* identifies the natural vegetation and landscape of the Meeting Place Precinct as significant – secondary significance – for the following reasons:

- 6.2.2 *The place is one of natural beauty that provides opportunities for visitors to experience first hand the landscape of the bay, the beaches, rock platforms, cliffs, open parklands and bushland. It provides both panoramic and framed views across Botany Bay.*
- 6.2.6 *The place contains endangered ecological communities as listed under the NSW Threatened Species Act 1995 - EEC Kurnell Dune Forest (coastal scrub on sand) and EEC Swamp Sclerophyl Forest (Swamp Forest) and the habitat of several rare and endangered species.*
- 6.2.7 *Together with Banks' and Solander's 1770 collection of native flora from the region, the remaining local native vegetation communities have the potential to provide evidence of the vegetation communities that existed on the site in 1770.*
- 6.2.18 *The place, together with its remaining structures, archaeological remains, plantings, site works and the records of the Captain Cook Landing Place Trust, has the potential to*

provide information on the development and management of a 20th century historic site and recreational grounds, and early approaches to regeneration of a previously degraded environment.

6.2.24 *The place is associated with environmental politics and preservation, particularly through the work of early conservation groups and resident action groups.*

In summary, the natural aspects of the place are identified as important for aesthetic values (6.2.2), scientific and rarity values (6.2.6) and the scientific and historic value of Banks' and Solander's collections and their link with the present landscape (6.2.7).

The significance of early approaches to natural (and cultural) landscape conservation and management is also recognised for historical values (6.2.18) and historically, as a focus for conservation advocacy and activities (6.2.24).

However, the Statement of Significance lacks consideration of what Harrington discusses in relation to social values (2006: Appendix G) and the importance of the natural environment as a cultural value. Harrington's report discusses the cultural values of the natural landscape, in terms of its value for conservation reasons (Section 4.3), where the activity may demonstrate attachment, as well as its contribution to the 'lived' cultural experience of being in the landscape. Cultural meanings and attachments to a place can be embodied by expressions of conservation and environmental concerns in relation to the natural environment; 'the concerns of the community can represent broader range of cultural rights, social attachments and constructions of both individual and community identity'. But also, natural values can be understood as 'an integral component of lived and embodied experiences' of the place (for local Aboriginal and Kurnell communities and visitors).

In heritage practice, improved appreciation of Australian Indigenous cultures has revealed limitations arising from the separation of cultural and natural values, recognising both that Indigenous communities do not form boundaries between their sense of the land and its people, and that Australia's natural heritage has evolved through the long interaction of people with the landscape. To this end, the natural landscape and native vegetation should be acknowledged as integral to, and embodying, important cultural values; including where cultural values of natural (or natural appearing) landscapes are inconsistent with scientific understandings of natural values.

Historic plantings

This section is intended to clarify the link between the analysis of historic plantings in Section 4 and Appendix D of the *Heritage Assessment*, with the table of relative significance rankings in Section 5.9.

The relative significance ranking tables in the *Heritage assessment* (Section 5.9) list significant aspects of cultural plantings within the precinct. Review of Geoffrey Britton's work (2006: Section 4 and Appendix D) against section 5.9 and new information suggests the following historic plantings be understood as follows:

Commemorative plantings

- The 'other commemorative plantings', identified as being of local significance for historic and representative values, refers to plantings recorded in the Captain Cook Landing Place Trust Tree Register.

Structural and historic plantings

- The 'plantings associated with Maiden and the Royal Botanic Gardens' should derive their significance as a collection of plantings, rather than as individual specimens. These are identified in the *Heritage Assessment* (Section 5.9) as being of local significance for historic and aesthetic reasons. The most clearly legible collection of plantings associated with Maiden plantings and the RBG are situated between Alpha House (to the west) and the freshwater stream.

- The significance of ‘2 Pine Trees in front of Alpha House’, identified in the *Heritage Assessment* as being of exceptional significance, at a regional level, for historic, aesthetic and rarity values, should be understood to be embodied by the framed view from Alpha House and how this interprets the view from and relationship between the original stone cottage and original plantings. It is also the use of a pair of *Araucaria heterophylla* species that is significant, rather than the extant individual trees.
- There are other (non-commemorative) historic plantings listed in other records, also planted by the CCLPT as structural plantings, beautification plantings, replacements for those damaged by storms, gales or fire, and to display specimens of Australian plants, for example. The locations of some of these plantings are known, but for others only an approximate region is known.
- Photographic evidence suggests the pair of mature Italian Cypress trees (*Cupressus sempervirens*) at the rear of Alpha House is likely to be contemporary with the c1950s phase of changes to the extant building. Associated with this phase of changes to Alpha House, the pair of trees have been assessed as having no significance.

Additional work has led to the following new understandings of significance:

- The *Heritage Assessment* expresses the significance – secondary significance – of the landscape of early settlement and farming use as follows:

6.2.14 The place was part of the first land grant made on the southern side of Botany Bay, that being to James Birnie, who established Alpha Farm on the site.

Subsequent site investigations with Geoffrey Britton, Georgina Eldershaw, Doug Benson and the project team has determined that the remnant cultural plantings associated with early post-1770s use of the landscape for farming, concludes the existing Flax plants (*Phormium tenax*, within the scrub on sand stone vegetation east of commemoration flat, and the mature African Olive (*Olea africana* to the west of the Cook Obelisk) are of moderate significance as possible evidence of the early use of the place for farming – as either original specimens relating to the use of the landscape for farming (from 1815 to c1882), or their progeny.

- The *Heritage Assessment* expresses the significance – secondary significance – of the views across Botany Bay from La Perouse to Kurnell as follows:

6.2.9 The view across Botany Bay from La Perouse to Kurnell is important to the local Aboriginal community as it provides a visual link to country. The ferry that once operated between the two places provided an important physical link for this community.

For Aboriginal communities, the negative values associated with the prevalence of non-native vegetation, expressed in Harrington’s report on social values, should also be acknowledged in relation to the European cultural landscape character and historic plantings (2006: Appendix G).

Conclusions

The values of the cultural landscape, the enduring land form, remnant local native vegetation and cultural plantings are complex, layered and interconnected with the many values embodied by the Meeting Place Precinct.

The landscape is both integral to and provides the setting for understanding and telling the stories of the place. However, as both a designed cultural and remnant natural landscape, subject to natural dynamic processes and changing management approaches, philosophies and political intentions, the landscape also contributes subtly to the ambivalence of the place; in part by obscuring or confusing aspects of the places history and, in part, by emphasising others.

As the backdrop to current experiences of the place, the enduring land form, remnant vegetation, sandy beaches, sandstone cliffs and shallow sandstone platforms, and natural

bushland, provide a tangible connection between the pre-1770s landscape of the original indigenous inhabitants, the landscape of encounters and the present. Together with the remnant local native vegetation, it also provides a link to the landscape of the first scientific collections.

The enduring aspects of the natural landscape and the ceremonial and recreational aspects of the cultural landscape have provided and continue to provide the setting and context for continued meetings of cultures, recreational activities and interactions between cultures, as they have from the 19th century to the present.

The natural values of the landscape have important historic and scientific values. The natural landscape is also invested with cultural meanings and attachments, represented by past and continuing expressions of conservation and environmental concern for the natural environment. Furthermore, they also form an integral component of lived and embodied experiences of the place, for local Aboriginal and Kurnell communities and visitors. As such, the natural landscape embodies important cultural values, irrespective of the presence or absence of scientific values.

The natural landscape of the Meeting Place Precinct's setting, including the bay and the Angophora dominated woodland to the east and southeast of the study area boundary (but within Botany Bay National Park), are important for providing a locally-native dominated vegetation landscape setting that give a sense of the original landscape character of the Kurnell peninsula, and connection to the pre-1770 landscape and landscape of encounters.

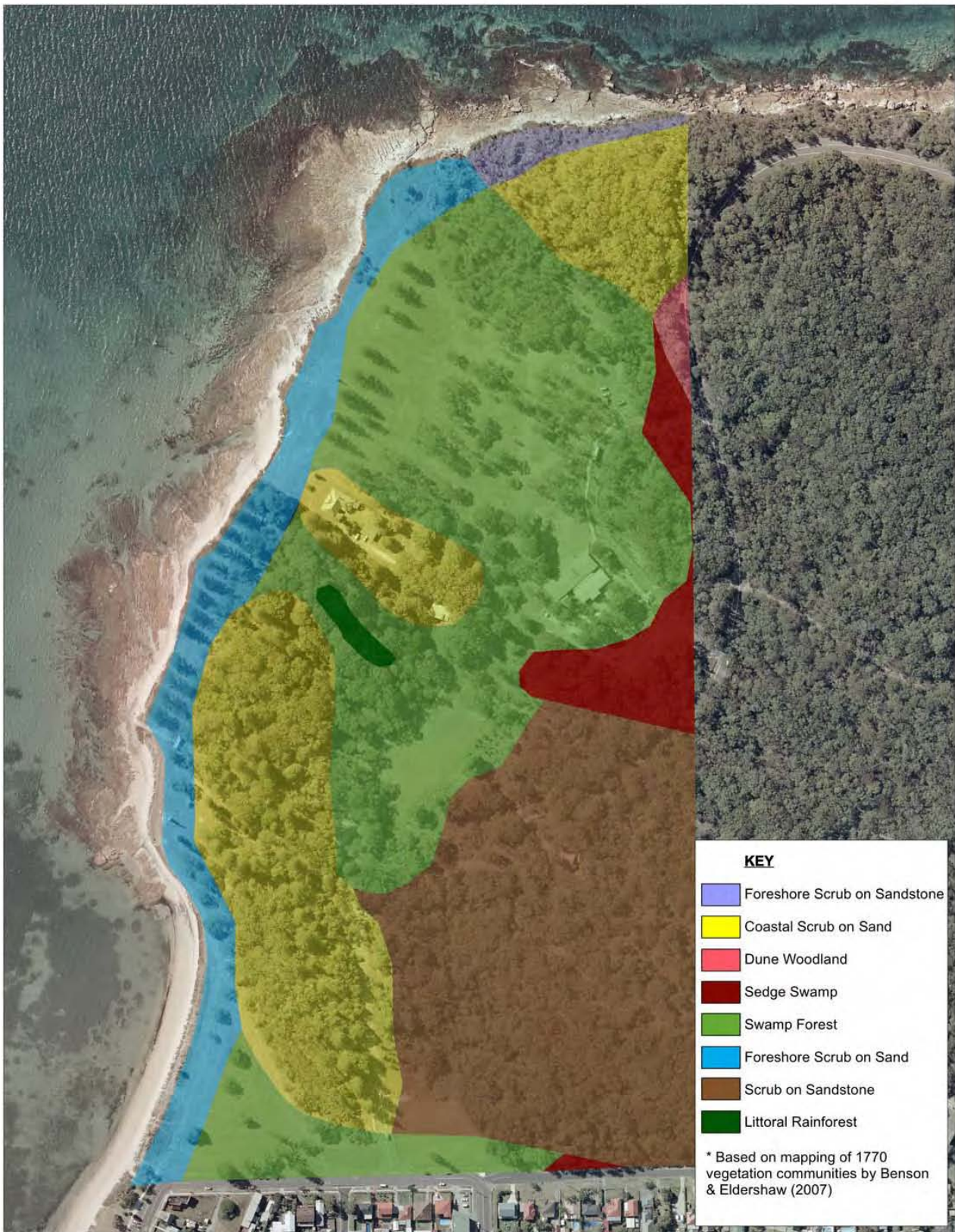


Figure 2.1 1770s vegetation communities

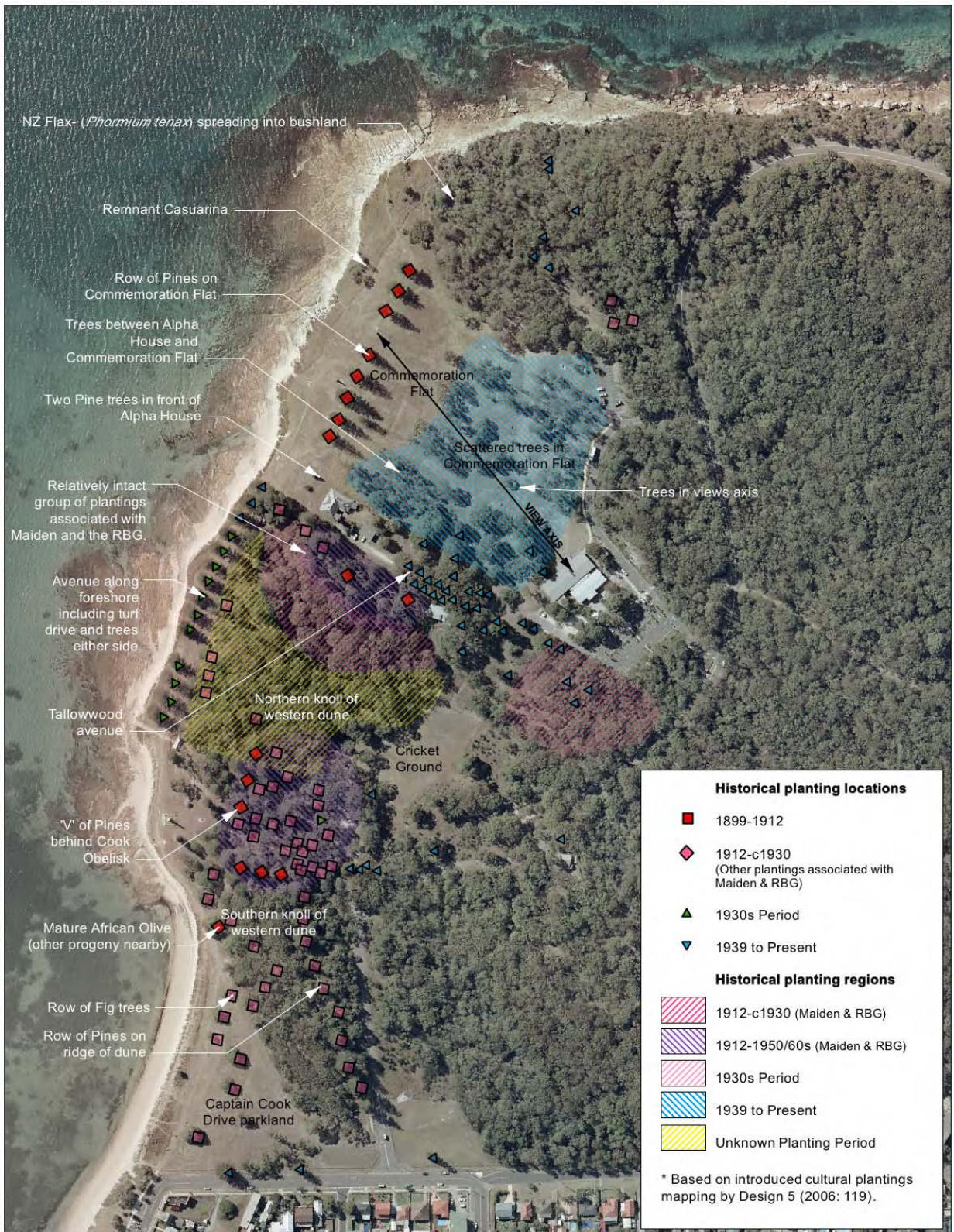
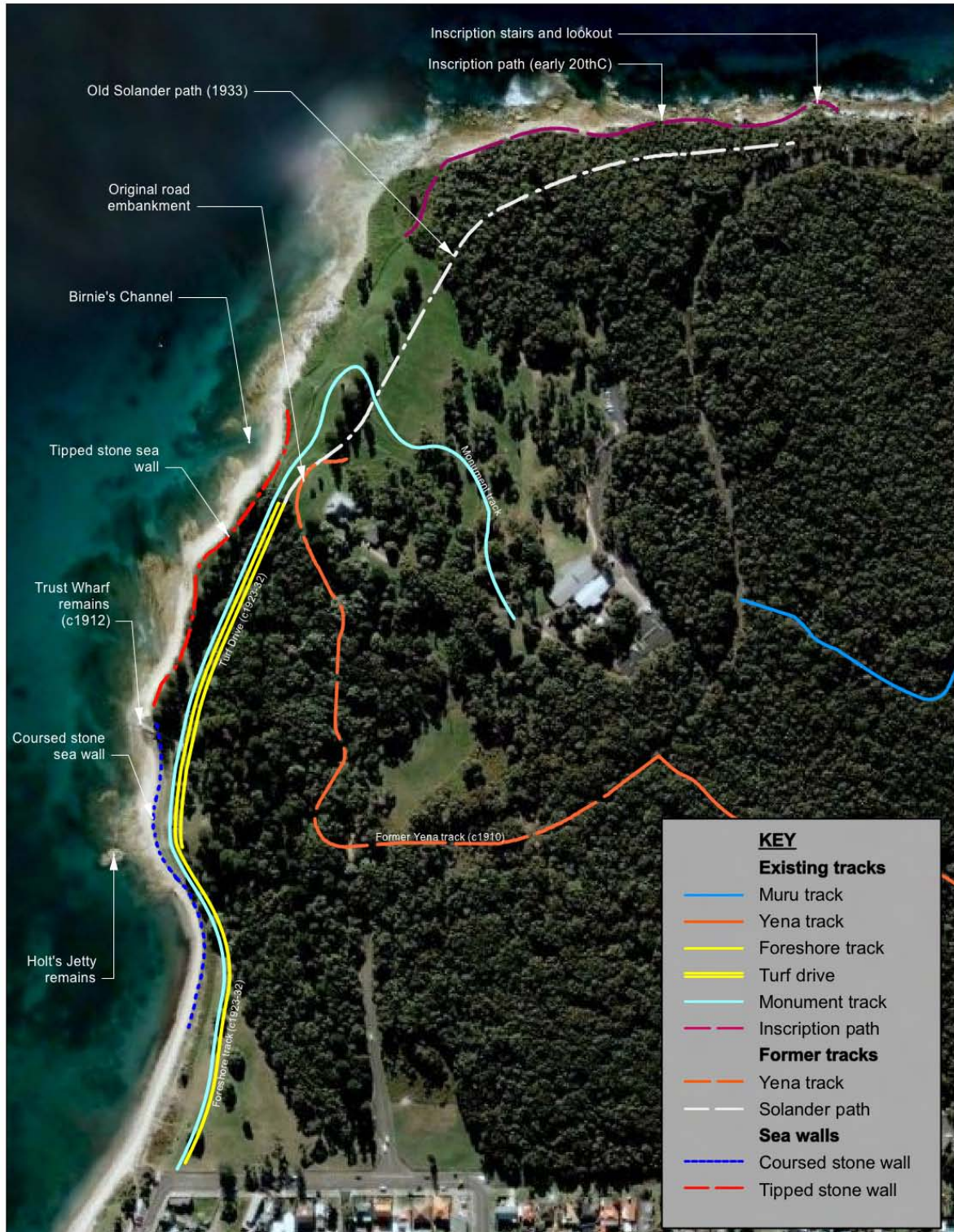


Figure 2.2 Cultural plantings



* Locations are indicative only and subject to survey and archaeological investigations. Locations have been drawn from historic site plans, the current DECC track map (2007), site surveys in section 3 of the Heritage Assessment (Design 5, 2006) and the Archaeological Assessment of the Meeting Place Precinct 2006, Prepared by BIOSIS Research, Figures 3-13. (Appendix E; Design 5, 2006)

Figure 2.3 Circulation patterns throughout the Meeting Place Precinct (existing tracks, former tracks) and sea walls

2.5 Buildings and structures

A preliminary heritage impact assessment was prepared by Context (2007) in response to the Master Plan (2003) proposal, based on the assessment of heritage significance in the *Heritage Assessment* (Design 5 2006).

The process of using the assessment of heritage values as the foundation for values-based decision making (i.e. determining potential heritage impacts) highlighted a need for those elements of a building like Alpha House that embodied the identified significance to be clearly distinguished from those elements of the same building that were of no (or lesser) significance.

In this regard, using the descriptions and analysis in Sections 3 and 4 of the *Heritage Assessment*, review of other relevant reports and physical inspections, the relative significance of Alpha House, the Discovery Centre and the Ferry shelter shed is clarified below.

Alpha House and surrounds

The following timeline synthesises the historical analyses and annotated drawings in Sections 2, 3 and 4 of the *Heritage Assessment* (Design 5 2006) and the Conservation Management Plan for the Alpha Farm site including the Kurnell Accommodation House (unendorsed draft prepared for NPWS by the University of Sydney), 1999, in relation to the building currently known as Alpha House

- 1815 – construction of the Curnell Homestead (on the site of the current Alpha House), later ruined
- 1828 – construction of Alpha Farm house, a three room stone cottage (on the site of the current Alpha House) on the ruins of the Curnell Homestead
- 1899 – vandalism of 1828 Alpha Farm house and its descent into ruins. Resumption of the site into larger government parkland
- 1902 – construction of an accommodation house built over the sandstone cellar of the earlier Alpha Farm house, to which significant additions were made in 1908. A 1901 plan names the building the Kurnell Accommodation House (Dept of Public Works, 6 June 1901)
- 1950s-1960s – significant works to the 1902 accommodation house and its immediate surrounds. A c1950s photograph identifies the building as the Trustee's Cottage (Rove Series NPWS in Design 5 2006: 48)
- From 1967 the modified 1902 building becomes known as Alpha House

The *Heritage Assessment* identifies Alpha House as making an Exceptional contribution to the significance of the Meeting Place Precinct as a whole. The significance relates to the following elements of the place.

Heritage significance	Attributes
Exceptional significance	Original fabric (joinery items, fire places and chimneys), openings and spaces, dating from 1902-1908, and remains of stone basement of early 19 th century farmhouse (Design 5 2006: 5.4.20).
Intrusive	Little
No significance	1950s and 1960s modifications

Discovery Centre

The *Heritage Assessment* identifies original 1967 elements of the Discovery Centre as making a high contribution to the significance of the Meeting Place Precinct as a whole, and the later 1989 modifications to the Discovery Centre as being of moderate significance.

These two significance rankings relate to the following elements of the place:

Heritage significance	Attributes
High significance	Original fabric, openings, hardware and joinery, spaces and uses, dating from 1967
Moderate significance	Fabric and uses associated with 1989 modifications.
No significance	Other aspects of the Discovery Centre that do not fall within these periods.

Ferry shelter shed

The *Heritage Assessment* identifies original c1910 elements of the Ferry shelter shed as being of high significance for its contribution to the significance of the Meeting Place Precinct as a whole.

Heritage significance	Attributes
High significance	Original fabric and siting that date from its original c1910 construction.
No significance	Other aspects of the structure that do not date from these periods.

2.6 Synthesis of significance

Introduction

The Meeting Place Precinct has many aspects of significance. The place has been substantially modified throughout its post-1770 history and is characterised by a complex layering of land-uses, landscape perceptions, community attachments and aspirations and management practices.

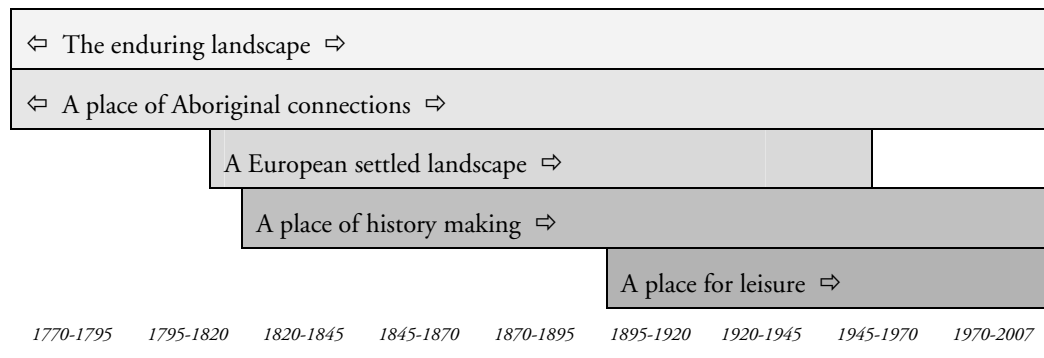
From 1770, the landscape with strong cultural and spiritual meanings for the Dharawal people, and which formed the setting for the first encounters, has been altered by the impacts of clearing, farming and grazing, the creation of ceremonial and recreational spaces, and commemorative plantings, vegetation management strategies, and parkland and amenity plantings. Structures have been built for practical, ceremonial and educational purposes; many have also been removed or rebuilt.

Dharawal traditions and activities have continued, but the opportunities for these cultural practices have been impacted by changing ownership, management and access arrangements, amongst other things. Other traditions have been created, as part of the ceremonial role of the site or by communities and families establishing their own traditions.

To provide a simpler and more integrated understanding of significance, building on the *Heritage Assessment* and the further considerations of significance in the previous section, this report defines the significance of the Meeting Place Precinct as comprising five integrated concepts:

- The enduring landscape
- A place of Aboriginal connections
- A European settled landscape
- A place of history-making
- A place for leisure.

The diagram below illustrates the relationship between the layers.



In terms of the relative significance of each of these integrated concepts of significance, three are regarded as of primary significance³:

- The enduring landscape
- A place of Aboriginal connections
- A place of history-making

The other two are regarded as of secondary significance:

- A European settled landscape
- A place for leisure

Each of these integrated concepts of significance is presented below, covering (in summary):

- Description of the concept
- Elements – tangible or intangible – that contribute to the integrated concept of significance.

³ The terms primary and secondary significance here refer to the relative importance of the five significance concepts. In the *Heritage Assessment* (Design 5 2006: 6.1) the summary statement of cultural significance is divided into aspects of primary and secondary significance, for similar reasons. However, the five significance concepts supersede the division expressed in 6.1.

The enduring landscape (pre-1770 to the present)

⇐ The enduring landscape ⇒

1770-1795 1795-1820 1820-1845 1845-1870 1870-1895 1895-1920 1920-1945 1945-1970 1970-2007

The concept - **the enduring landscape** - is of primary significance.

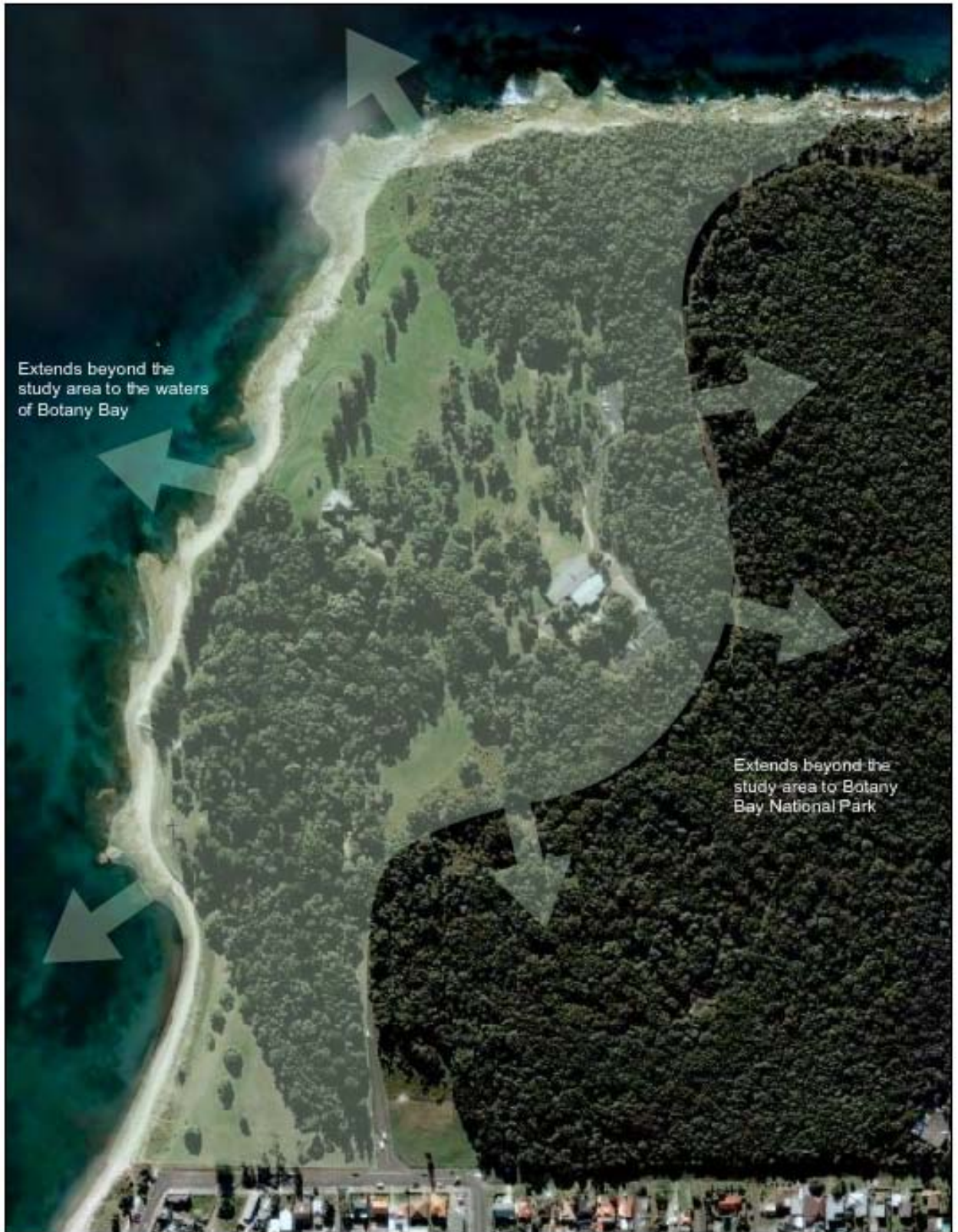
The enduring landscape refers to the land, water, plants and animals that connect Aboriginal people and the Cook party to the place in the present (6.1.1, 6.1.2, 6.1.3). These are elements of the landscape that existed prior to 1770, and have endured from that moment as continuous aspects of the place.

Tangible heritage elements of the place include:

- the underlying landform (dune morphology, landform profile, soil profile)
- the freshwater stream and littoral rainforest vegetation character along the gully
- the local native (1770s) vegetation communities, and associated animals (6.2.6)
- the collections of plant specimens collected by Banks and Solander (6.2.7)
- the waters of Botany Bay and the orientation of the site to the bay (6.2.3)
- the rocky, sandstone coastal edge and sandy beach (6.2.2).

Intangible heritage elements of the place include:

- the application of two different knowledge systems to this place: the traditional Aboriginal knowledge of the landscape, and its plants and animals, and the observations made by the Cook expedition, bringing a European scientific model to the place
- spiritual (totemic) connections to this landscape by Aboriginal (Dharawal) people (6.2.8).



Extends beyond the study area to the waters of Botany Bay

Extends beyond the study area to Botany Bay National Park

Figure 2.4 The enduring landscape

A place of Aboriginal connection (pre-1770 to the present)

⇐ A place of Aboriginal connections ⇐

1770-1795 1795-1820 1820-1845 1845-1870 1870-1895 1895-1920 1920-1945 1945-1970 1970-2007

The concept - **a place of Aboriginal connection** - is of primary significance

A place of Aboriginal connection recognises the long and continuing connection between Aboriginal people and this whole landscape. A place of Aboriginal connection refers to the whole of the landscape – land, water, plants, animals – as well as the associational and totemic relationships between Aboriginal people and that landscape.

Some changes to the landscape, especially the clearing of local native vegetation, introduction of pines and the introduction of memorials impact on the sense of connection for some Aboriginal people.

Tangible heritage elements of the place include:

- the landscape as a whole entity
- known midden areas along the foreshore to the east and west of the stream
- Skeleton Cave and other places where Aboriginal people are known to have been or still be buried
- rock engravings
- the likelihood that substantial evidence of Aboriginal people remains undisturbed within the site
- Aboriginal artefacts from this location, held locally or elsewhere.

Intangible heritage elements of the place include:

- traditional and continuing Aboriginal knowledge of the landscape, and its plants and animals
- spiritual (totemic) connections to this landscape by Aboriginal (Dharawal) people (6.2.8)
- the views of Kurnell and La Perouse across Botany Bay offer a link to traditional country and places of long association for Indigenous people (6.2.9)
- cultural traditions, long-standing and relatively recent
- the use of the site for as a stage for protests against the telling of history that ignores, silences and denies Aboriginal experiences of colonisation (6.1.2)
- personal and community stories, memories and oral traditions.



Figure 2.5 A place of Aboriginal connection

A place of history-making (1821 to the present)

A place of history making ⇨

1770-1795 1795-1820 1820-1845 1845-1870 1870-1895 1895-1920 1920-1945 1945-1970 1970-2007

The concept - **a place of history making** - is of primary significance

A place of history making refers to the ways in which the significance of the history of the site has been shaped and interpreted through activities, memorialisation and landscape design.

The landscape layer of history-making (6.1.4, 6.2.16) comprises the formal structural elements of the landscape, the landmark and avenue plantings (most prominently the rows of Norfolk Island Pines). These are most evident as towering vertical forms in shades of green contrasting with the muted grey-greens and prostrate forms of Australian coastal vegetation. The memorials sit within this landscape.

Although it evolved over a long period of time, and was created by many hands, the memorials and landscape provides evidence of the use of the site by settler Australian society to commemorate and reflect on the Cook expedition. It also demonstrates how the place has been managed as a nationally and state significant public landscape. As a public landscape, there is a strong relationship between the landscape of history-making and the recreational landscape, in terms of chronology, spatial arrangement of the landscape and use. The patterns inscribed in the landscape relating to the making of history do not strongly relate to the landscape of early use.

Tangible heritage elements of the place that demonstrate the making of history include:

- the commemorative plantings
- the ceremonial spaces (Commemoration Flat) and linking spaces between Commemoration Flat and the Cook Obelisk
- the monuments, as a grouping and individually, including plaques and associated flagpoles
- main flagpole
- the monumental and structural plantings
- Alpha House
- Discovery Centre.

These elements mostly date from the Cook's Landing Place Trust era (from 1899 to 1967) but also include earlier elements like the Inscription Plate (1821), the Cook Obelisk (1870), The Prince's Tree memorial (that marks the 1881 Royal visit), the other monuments throughout the site, and the Monument Track.

Intangible heritage elements of the place include:

- traditions of commemoration, celebration and protest
- personal and community memories and oral histories.



Figure 2.6 A place of history making

A European settled landscape (c1815 – 1899; 1920s-50s)

A European settled landscape ⇔

1770-1795 1795-1820 1820-1845 1845-1870 1870-1895 1895-1920 1920-1945 1945-1970 1970-2007

The concept - **a European settled landscape** - is of secondary significance.

A European settled landscape refers to the two distinct periods of ‘settling’ the landscape. The first relates to the earliest European land clearance close to the stream by the First Fleet in 1788, followed by the acquisition of the land for a farm (Alpha Farm) by James Birnie in 1815, with subsequent clearing of vegetation, building of a cottage and fencing (etc) – a phase of settlement which lasted until 1899 when the site was acquired as a public park.

The second phase relates to the unofficial development of small settlements during the 1920s, as informal camps used by fishermen turned into shacks, becoming permanent dwellings in the 1930s depression, and remaining a significant land use on the coastal edge towards Inscription Point, on the camping grounds and in other parts of the park until the 1950s, when these ‘campers’ were moved on and the dwellings were removed. This phase of activity is linked to the concept **A place for leisure** as it was, in part, the attractions of the park combined with its relative isolated location that made it ideal for the establishment of these informal settlements.

Evidence of these phases forms an interesting part of the overall landscape, but is considered of secondary significance compared to the three primary concepts of significance.

Tangible heritage elements of the place include:

- cleared landscape (6.2.13)
- farmed landscape (6.2.14, 6.2.17)
- remnant plantings potentially planted in association with the early use of the land for farming – New Zealand Flax (*Phormium tenax*) (most likely these are later progeny from an early specimen) and a mature African Olive (*Olea africana*)
- Alpha Farm, including associated archaeological sites, including the servant’s outhouse, farm dairy and boat shed (Design 5 2006: 110), and the positioning of the pair of pines (*Araucaria heterophylla*) in front of Alpha House
- cave dwellings and camping areas (6.2.23)
- views.

Intangible heritage elements of the place include:

- personal and community memories and oral histories associated with the twentieth century camp settlements.

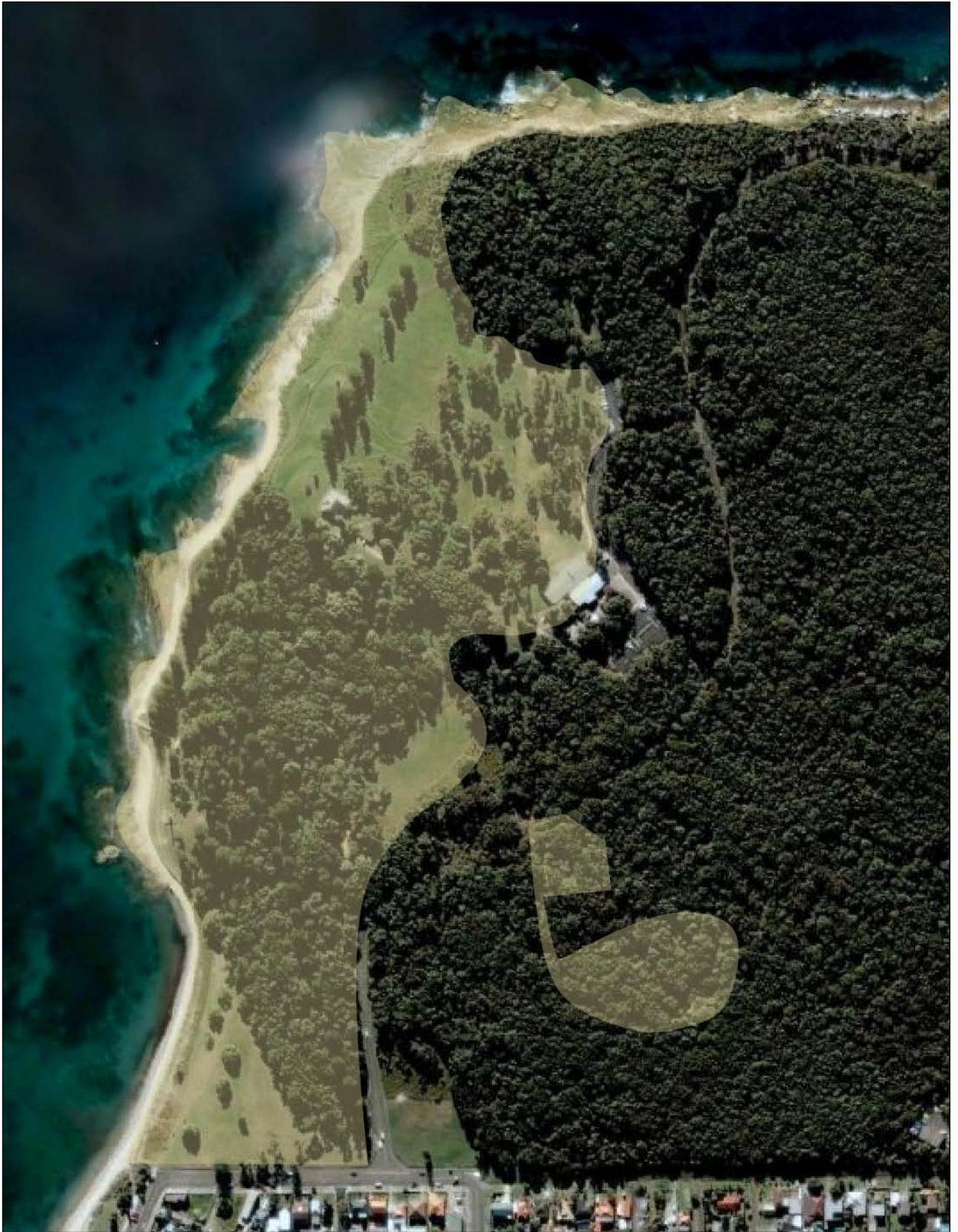


Figure 2.7 A European settled landscape

A place for leisure (c1850s to the present)

A place for leisure ⇨

1770-1795 1795-1820 1820-1845 1845-1870 1870-1895 1895-1920 1920-1945 1945-1970 1970-2007

The concept - **a place for leisure** - is of secondary significance.

A place for leisure refers to the landscape created and used for leisure since the late nineteenth century.

In areas such as Commemoration Flat, the picnic and cricket grounds, evidence of the post-contact European recreational landscape is prominent, characterised by large expanses of mown lawn with scattered trees, with soft unmown edges gradually merging into the bushland.

Initially cleared for early farming activities (from 1815 to 1900), people began to visit and its creation as a public park intensified visitation. Access was by water, with the ferry wharf offering the primary entry. Facilities for visitors were developed over the years, accommodating a changing range of activities from picnicking, walking, swimming and fishing through to whale watching being popular today. The open spaces and coastal setting attracted community and cultural groups for larger gatherings.

The landscape demonstrates how the place has been managed as a nationally and state significant public recreational landscape, with a strong relationship between the patterns of the recreational landscape and the landscape of history-making.

Tangible heritage elements of the place include:

- cultural plantings of introduced vegetation, including the plantings associated with Maiden and the Royal Botanic Gardens as part of a designed park landscape (6.2.20)
- Commemoration Flat
- picnic grounds, cricket ground and cricket pitch
- the Trust wharf and remains, Holt's Jetty remains, the Ferry shelter shed, and stone sea walls (6.2.3, 6.2.4)
- the monumental and structural plantings
- Alpha House
- Discovery Centre
- Cottage No. 3 (outside the defined Meeting Place Precinct)
- land management practices (of the Trust and NPWS) creating a recreational landscape (6.2.18, 6.2.19)
- the bay side setting and views (6.2.2)

Intangible heritage elements of the place include:

- long community associations with the use of the site for recreation and leisure
- long-standing and continuing traditions of use for community groups (and probably families) (6.2.5)
- personal and community memories and oral histories.



Figure 2.8 A place for leisure

2.7 Significance of elements

Heritage Assessment (Design 5 2006)

The *Heritage Assessment* (Design 5 2006) grades the significance of elements⁴ of the Meeting Place Precinct in two ways:

- **Contribution to the significance of the place as a whole**, considering its integrity or degree of intactness, and its historical, aesthetic, social/spiritual and scientific/technical values
- **Relative significance of each element (or group of elements) in relation to the State Heritage criteria.**

The gradings used are described below.

Contribution to the significance of the place as a whole

Heritage Assessment (Design 5 2006) adopts the following categories to denote the relative contribution of an element to the significance of the place as a whole:

1: Exceptional cultural significance

These spaces or elements are of exceptional cultural significance for historic, aesthetic, scientific or social values. They play a crucial role in supporting the significance of the place.

2: High cultural significance

These spaces or elements are of slightly less cultural significance than those of grade 1. They play an important role in strengthening and supporting the significance of the place and its parts.

3: Moderate cultural significance

These spaces or elements are of lesser cultural significance. They play a moderate role in supporting the significance of the place.

4: Little cultural significance

These spaces or elements retain only minor or neutral significance. They may play a minor role in supporting the significance of the place.

5: Intrusive

These spaces or elements retain no significance, and are considered intrusive. They obscure rather than support the significance of the place.

These elements are mapped in the *Heritage Assessment* (Design 5 2006: p 157)

Relative significance against State Heritage criteria.

Heritage Assessment (Design 5 2006) adopts the following categories to define the relative significance of each element or group of elements in relation to the State Heritage criteria.

- National
- State
- Regional
- Local
- Not significant.

⁴ Elements refers to physical and intangible parts or aspects of the Meeting Place Precinct, including spaces. Vol 1 *Heritage Assessment* uses the terms spaces and elements.

The category of regional significance is no longer accepted by the NSW Heritage Office. Elements ranked as 'regional' require reassessment to determine if they are of either State or local significance.

The *Heritage Assessment* shows the relative levels of significance of the individual site elements under the state heritage criteria and indicates their significant values in a table format (Design 5 2006: pp 156-159)

Archaeological potential

The *Heritage Assessment* (Design 5 2006) defines the archaeological potential of the Meeting Place Precinct for elements related to the history of the place prior to and after 1770, up until recent times.

Archaeological potential is defined and the categories applied as follows (Design 5 2006: Appendix E):

Aboriginal archaeological potential:

- High archaeological potential relates to areas where there is a low level of disturbance, and is based on predictive modelling which indicates a high likelihood of Aboriginal archaeological remains across the site.
- Low archaeological potential relates to areas where there is a high-medium level of disturbance, and is based on predictive modelling which indicates a high likelihood of Aboriginal archaeological remains across the site.
- Interface archaeological potential refers to the boundary zone between high and low archaeological potential
- Nil archaeological potential refers to areas where the extent of disturbance means there is no likelihood of archaeological remains.

Historical archaeological potential:

- High archaeological potential relates to areas where the physical remains of an element are visible on the surface or disturbance to the area is believed to have been minimal, and the built element is thought to have made a substantial archaeological impact to the ground.
- Low archaeological potential relates to areas where there are limited remains of the building or there are no physical remains present on the site, and post-depositional processes, such as grading, reurfing of areas have significantly impacted on archaeological potential.

Conservation Management Plan (Context 2007)

The relative significance of site elements is considered in the *Heritage Assessment* (pages 155-159); however not all significant elements are listed, none of the intangible heritage elements are listed and archaeological potential is treated in a different way. As well (as explained above) further consideration of some aspects of heritage significance has occurred since the completion of the *Heritage Assessment* (Design 5 2006).

To assist in the development and application of conservation policy for the site, the two sets of gradings from the *Heritage Assessment* have been combined and supplemented by the additional assessment of significance described in Section 2 of this report. The five concepts of significance have also been added, enabling the user to consider how each site elements relates to these concepts.

Three tables follow:

Table 1 – Intangible heritage elements

Table 2 – Tangible heritage

Table 3 – Archaeological potential.

In reading Table 2:

- where elements were not specifically assessed in the *Heritage Assessment*, but their significance has been considered in this Conservation Management Plan, Section 2, an indication of significance is provided in the columns marked 'Indicative contribution to the significance of the place as a whole' and 'Indicative level of significance'
- where it has not been possible to assign a level of significance, primarily due to lack of information, this is indicated in the table by the text 'Significance not assessed'.

Table 1: Intangible heritage

This table and all its content derives from the understandings of significance reported in Section 2 of this report (Context 2007). None of these intangible elements were assessed in the *Heritage Assessment* (Design 5 2006). The level of significance in relation to the State Heritage Register has not been assessed.

Element	<i>Heritage Assessment</i> (Design 5 2006)		Conservation Management Plan (Context 2007)		Integrated significance concepts				
	Contribution to the significance of the place as a whole	Level of Significance: State Heritage Register	Indicative contribution to the significance of the place as a whole	Indicative Level of Significance	The enduring landscape	A place of Aboriginal connection	A place of history making	A European settled landscape	A place for leisure
Intangible Heritage									
Knowledge systems: Aboriginal & European – 1770 ⁵			1: Exceptional						
Aboriginal spiritual/totemic connections to the land			1: Exceptional						
Visual links to country			1: Exceptional						
Aboriginal cultural traditions			2: High						
Traditions of commemoration, celebration, protest			1: Exceptional						
Personal and community stories			2: High						
Memories and associations			2: High						

⁵ The existence of two knowledge systems – Aboriginal traditional knowledge and the application of European scientific approaches – provides a rich and relatively well documented or known resource that is part of the intangible heritage of the place.

Table 2: Tangible heritage

This table builds on the assessments of contributory and relative significance of individual site elements in the *Heritage Assessment* (Design 5 2006) and is supplemented by additional work of significance undertaken by Context in the preparation of this report.

Element	<i>Heritage Assessment</i> (Design 5 2006)		Conservation Management Plan (Context 2007)		Integrated significance concepts				
	Contribution to the significance of the place as a whole	Level of Significance: State Heritage Register	Indicative contribution to the significance of the place as a whole	Indicative Level of Significance	The enduring landscape	A place of Aboriginal connection	A place of history making	A European settled landscape	A place for leisure
Meeting Place Precinct	1: Exceptional	National State Local							
Aboriginal heritage									
Landscape as an entity			1: Exceptional	State					
Freshwater stream			1: Exceptional	State					
Foreshore midden areas	1: Exceptional	State							
Skeleton Cave	1: Exceptional	Regional ⁶							
Rock engravings	1: Exceptional	Local							
Burial places: known and unknown			1: Exceptional	State					
Aboriginal artefacts	Significance not assessed								

⁶ As stated above all assessments of regional significance require re-assessment.

Element	Heritage Assessment (Design 5 2006)		Conservation Management Plan (Context 2007)		Integrated significance concepts				
	Contribution to the significance of the place as a whole	Level of Significance: State Heritage Register	Indicative contribution to the significance of the place as a whole	Indicative Level of Significance	The enduring landscape	A place of Aboriginal connection	A place of history making	A European settled landscape	A place for leisure
Landscape (inc built elements) ⁷									
Underlying land form			1: Exceptional	Significance not assessed					
Land form profile			1: Exceptional	Significance not assessed					
Soil profile			1: Exceptional	Significance not assessed					
Western Dune			1: Exceptional	Significance not assessed					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Northern knoll of Western Dune • Southern knoll of western dune 	1: Exceptional								
Eastern Dune		2: High							
Rocky sandstone coastal edge			1: Exceptional	Significance not assessed					
Sandy beaches			1: Exceptional	Significance not assessed					
Water of Botany Bay			1: Exceptional	Significance not assessed					

⁷ The list of **Landscape** elements includes the built elements within the broader landscape as these area covered under Policy 5.5 Landscape.

MEETING PLACE PRECINCT: CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT PLAN

Element	Heritage Assessment (Design 5 2006)		Conservation Management Plan (Context 2007)		Integrated significance concepts				
	Contribution to the significance of the place as a whole	Level of Significance: State Heritage Register	Indicative contribution to the significance of the place as a whole	Indicative Level of Significance	The enduring landscape	A place of Aboriginal connection	A place of history making	A European settled landscape	A place for leisure
Commemoration Flat	1: Exceptional	State							
Freshwater stream	1: Exceptional	State							
Cricket ground	1: Exceptional	State							
Dam & early crossings on the freshwater stream	2: High	Local							
Camping ground no. 1			4: Little	Significance not assessed					
Camping ground no. 2 (former)	4: Little	—							
Captain Cook Drive parkland	2: High								
Birnie's Channel	2: High	Local							
Trust Wharf remains (1912)	1: Exceptional	Local							
Holt's jetty remains (c1880s)	1: Exceptional	Local							
Coursed stone sea wall	1: Exceptional	Local							
Tipped stone sea wall	3: Moderate								

Element	Heritage Assessment (Design 5 2006)		Conservation Management Plan (Context 2007)		Integrated significance concepts				
	Contribution to the significance of the place as a whole	Level of Significance: State Heritage Register	Indicative contribution to the significance of the place as a whole	Indicative Level of Significance	The enduring landscape	A place of Aboriginal connection	A place of history making	A European settled landscape	A place for leisure
Inscription Path	2: High	Local							
Inscription stairs and lookout	1: Exceptional								
Yena Track		Local							
Muru Track		Local							
Former Solander Track		Local							
Solander path embankment	2: High								
Monument Track		Local							
Original road embankment (below Alpha House)	2: High								
Inscription stairs and lookout	1: Exceptional								
Circular Drive	3: Moderate								
Bridge over creek (north)	2: High								
Bridge over creek (south)	3: Moderate								

Element	Heritage Assessment (Design 5 2006)		Conservation Management Plan (Context 2007)		Integrated significance concepts				
	Contribution to the significance of the place as a whole	Level of Significance: State Heritage Register	Indicative contribution to the significance of the place as a whole	Indicative Level of Significance	The enduring landscape	A place of Aboriginal connection	A place of history making	A European settled landscape	A place for leisure
Carparks (x3)	4: Little								
Views									
Orientation of the site the bay ⁸			1: Exceptional	Significance not assessed					
View axis from Discovery Centre	2: High								
View from Alpha House	1: Exceptional								
Views of the MPP across Botany Bay			2: High	Significance not assessed					
Views of Kurnell and La Perouse across Botany Bay			2: High	Significance not assessed					
Vegetation									
Rare and endangered plant communities: • Coastal Scrub on Sand • Swamp Forest	1: Exceptional Regional								

⁸ This refers to views of the bay on approach, but it is also about the historical and physical design of the Meeting Place Precinct, and the historic, visual and physical relationship between the site and the bay.

Element	Heritage Assessment (Design 5 2006)		Conservation Management Plan (Context 2007)		Integrated significance concepts				
	Contribution to the significance of the place as a whole	Level of Significance: State Heritage Register	Indicative contribution to the significance of the place as a whole	Indicative Level of Significance	The enduring landscape	A place of Aboriginal connection	A place of history making	A European settled landscape	A place for leisure
Remnant plant communities from pre-settlement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eight remnant vegetation communities • Remnant casuarinas 	1: Exceptional	Regional							
2 Pine Trees in front of Alpha House	1: Exceptional	Regional							
Row of pines on Commemoration Flat	1: Exceptional	Regional							
'V' of Pines behind Cook Obelisk	1: Exceptional	Regional							
Avenue along foreshore including turf drive and trees either side	2: High	Regional							
Other commemorative plantings		Local	2: High	Significance not assessed					
Plantings associated with Maiden & Royal Botanic Gardens		Local	2: High	Significance not assessed					
Row of fig trees	2: High								
Tallowwood avenue	3: Moderate	—							
Historic non-commemorative plantings in CCLPT records			3: Moderate	Significance not assessed					

Element	Heritage Assessment (Design 5 2006)		Conservation Management Plan (Context 2007)		Integrated significance concepts				
	Contribution to the significance of the place as a whole	Level of Significance: State Heritage Register	Indicative contribution to the significance of the place as a whole	Indicative Level of Significance	The enduring landscape	A place of Aboriginal connection	A place of history making	A European settled landscape	A place for leisure
Row of pines (on ridge of western dune)	4: Little								
Scattered trees in Commemoration Flat (x2)	3: Moderate								
Trees between Alpha House and Commemoration Flat	5: Intrusive								
Trees in view axis (between Discovery Centre and main Flagstaff)	5: Intrusive								
Plantings from early farm use (or progeny of) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> African Olive New Zealand Flax 			4: Little	Significance not assessed					
Monuments									
Monuments as a group	1: Exceptional	State							
Inscription Plate	1: Exceptional	State							
Cook Obelisk	1: Exceptional	State							
Solander Monument	1: Exceptional	State							

Element	Heritage Assessment (Design 5 2006)		Conservation Management Plan (Context 2007)		Integrated significance concepts				
	Contribution to the significance of the place as a whole	Level of Significance: State Heritage Register	Indicative contribution to the significance of the place as a whole	Indicative Level of Significance	The enduring landscape	A place of Aboriginal connection	A place of history making	A European settled landscape	A place for leisure
Banks Memorial Seat	1: Exceptional	State							
Main Flagstaff	1: Exceptional	State							
Forby Sutherland Memorial	2: High	Regional							
Isaac Smith Monument	2: High	Local							
Cook's Well	3: Moderate	Local							
Freshwater Stream Plaque									
Landing Place Memorial	2: High	Regional							
Prince's Tree Memorial	2: High	Local							
Captain Cook Buoy (plaque) ⁹		Regional							
Buildings and structures									
Alpha House	1: Exceptional	Regional							

⁹ Outside study area and jurisdiction of DECC.

Element	Heritage Assessment (Design 5 2006)		Conservation Management Plan (Context 2007)		Integrated significance concepts				
	Contribution to the significance of the place as a whole	Level of Significance: State Heritage Register	Indicative contribution to the significance of the place as a whole	Indicative Level of Significance	The enduring landscape	A place of Aboriginal connection	A place of history making	A European settled landscape	A place for leisure
Ferry shelter shed	2: High	Local							
Discovery Centre	2: High	Local							
Discovery Centre additions	3: Moderate								
Education Centre	3: Moderate	Local							
Entry booth	4: Little	—							
Anchor and flagpoles at entry	4: Little	—							
Garages behind Alpha House	4: Little	—							
Cottage No. 3 (outside of MPP)	4: Little	—							
Remains of cave dwellings	2: High	Local							
Objects, collections and records									
Collections as a whole			1: Exceptional	National State Local					
Collections of Banks and Solander			Significance not assessed	State					

Element	<i>Heritage Assessment</i> (Design 5 2006)		Conservation Management Plan (Context 2007)		Integrated significance concepts				
	Contribution to the significance of the place as a whole	Level of Significance: State Heritage Register	Indicative contribution to the significance of the place as a whole	Indicative Level of Significance	The enduring landscape	A place of Aboriginal connection	A place of history making	A European settled landscape	A place for leisure
CCLP collection ¹⁰			Significance not assessed	State					
CCLP records			Significance not assessed	Significance not assessed					
Aboriginal objects held elsewhere			Significance not assessed	National					
NPWS records			Significance not assessed	Significance not assessed					

¹⁰ Items acquired during the CCLP period up to 1967.

Table 3: Archaeological potential

Archaeological potential assessments are based on the *Heritage Assessment* (Design 5 2006).

Element	Archaeological potential	Integrated significance concept				
		The enduring landscape	A place of Aboriginal connection	A place of history making	A European settled landscape	A place for leisure
Aboriginal archaeological potential						
Meeting Place Precinct as a whole ¹¹	High archaeological potential					
Historical archaeological potential¹²						
Alpha Farm House	High archaeological potential					
Alpha Farm Dairy	High archaeological potential					
Alpha Farm Servants 'outhouse'	Low archaeological potential					
John Connell Cottage (1828)	Low archaeological potential					
Possible boat shed	Low archaeological potential					
'Fisherman's Hut'	Limited archaeological potential					

¹¹ Investigations of the Aboriginal archaeological values and potential of the site are underway and have been reported on by Paul Irish (February 2007, June 2007a, June 2007b).

¹² A historical archaeological monitoring report has been prepared by Dan Tuck (2007) based on Aboriginal archaeological test excavations in various site locations.

Element	Archaeological potential	Integrated significance concept				
		The enduring landscape	A place of Aboriginal connection	A place of history making	A European settled landscape	A place for leisure
Jetty (c1880) (Holt's Jetty remains)	High archaeological potential					
Remains of 1815 (Curnell Homestead) and 1828 (Alpha House) structures.	Standing and archaeological evidence High archaeological potential					
Round shelter sheds (1907 onwards)	Limited archaeological potential					
Marquee (site of) on Commemoration Flat	High archaeological potential					
Cottage Number 2	High archaeological potential					
Ferry Jetty (c1905) (site of 1912 Trust Wharf)	High archaeological potential					
Workshop group	Low archaeological potential					
Stone sea walls	High archaeological potential					
Toilets	Low archaeological potential					
Cricket pitch	Low archaeological potential					

3 CONTEXT FOR POLICY FORMULATION

3.1 Introduction

This section provides an overview of the key factors to be considered in the development of conservation policy (Section 5) for the Meeting Place Precinct.

The Conservation Policy Guidelines to the Burra Charter clarify the purpose and content of a conservation policy:

The purpose of the conservation policy is to state how the conservation of the place may best be achieved both in the long and short term. It will be specific to that place. (Article 2.1)

In terms of content, a conservation policy is expected to address, as a minimum: the fabric and setting, use, associations and meanings, interpretation, and management of a site; control of impacts on values, and constraints on investigation at the site; the future development of the site; and the adoption and ongoing review of the policy itself.

Developing conservation policies requires an understanding of a wide range of factors that may impinge on or create opportunities for the conservation of the significance of the place. This section therefore considers relevant constraints and opportunities for conservation, including:

- the obligations to conserve identified cultural, natural, and Indigenous heritage significance
- the existing statutory context within which the Meeting Place Precinct is managed, (Sections 3.3, 3.5)
- other guidelines and policy frameworks that reflect best practice in heritage conservation (Section 3.4); and existing programs and strategies which have been developed for areas and concerns specific to the Meeting Place Precinct (3.6)
- opportunities and constraints arising from significance (Section 3.7)
- ongoing use and access (Section 3.8)
- the condition of the fabric of the site and its components, and apparent threats, including environmental threats (Section 3.9)
- logistical, resource and operational issues, which include available resources and sources of funding; and use and access issues, which must also satisfy Australian standards and provide for disability access and safety (Sections 3.5, Section 3.10)
- the views, concerns, and aspirations of those with associations¹³ with or a particular interest in the Meeting Place Precinct (Section 3.11)
- any other issues and opportunities (Section 3.12).

3.2 Obligations to conserve significance

The Meeting Place Precinct is of exceptional heritage significance and its cultural values are identified in the Statement of Cultural Significance (Appendix 2), and synthesised in Section 2 of this report. Importantly, the nature of the site as the location of a critical interaction between European and Indigenous groups, itself brought about by environmental factors (the suitability of land and resources), is such that any one set of values – cultural, natural or Indigenous – cannot exist without the other. This fundamental quality of the site, described in

¹³ *Associations* is defined in the Burra Charter and means ‘the special connections that exist between people and a place’ (Burra Charter 1999, Article 1.15).

the Statement of Significance, provides an obligation for the appropriate and effective conservation of *all* values of the site in a unified manner.

This obligation requires that all identified aspects of significance be retained and managed to facilitate the long-term conservation of these cultural values, and the tangible and intangible aspects of the place in which these values are embodied: fabric, setting, use, associations, meanings, records, related places and related objects.

For the Meeting Place Precinct this includes:

- managing all values in their complexity
- respecting and retaining significant associations
- recognising the contribution of the cultural landscape, land form and vegetation to significance
- retaining significant physical fabric
- respecting and retaining intangible cultural heritage: traditions, knowledge, language, uses, etc.
- protecting the setting and views to and from the precinct, and
- recognising the importance of the related records and objects.

Retaining the significance of the Meeting Place Precinct will involve establishing sound conservation principles, policies and management processes, which will ensure that:

- the significance of the Meeting Place Precinct and all its components is recognised and respected
- the management of the Meeting Place Precinct is based on its significance, and
- decisions regarding uses, activities, and development in the Precinct will give due consideration to the significance of the items and areas which they may affect; and to their overall impact on the significance of the place as a whole.

3.3 Statutory planning frameworks

Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act, 1999, and Regulations, 2000

In 2004, a new Commonwealth heritage management system was introduced for Australia's heritage places. Key elements are amendments to the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation (EPBC) Act 1999*, which include explicit requirements for cultural heritage protection, the creation of a National Heritage List (and a Commonwealth Heritage List), and the establishment of the Australian Heritage Council under the *Australian Heritage Council Act 2003*.

The *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation (EPBC) Act* establishes a statutory framework for involvement of the Commonwealth Government in natural and cultural heritage management and protection.

Under the environmental assessment provisions of the EPBC Act, actions that are likely to have a significant impact on a matter of National Environmental Significance are subject to a rigorous assessment and approval process.

An action includes a project, development, undertaking, activity, or series of activities, and the Act is 'triggered' in the case of any action involving the seven matters of national environmental significance, one of which specifically concerns national heritage places. These are places inscribed on the National Heritage List.

The entirety of the Botany Bay National Park (south section) is listed on the National Heritage List (for the purposes of the list, the Park is known as the Kurnell Peninsula). As such, the entire Meeting Place Precinct forms part of the National Heritage Listing for the Kurnell Peninsula. Note that while the Cape Baily Lighthouse is the only part of the Park listed on the Commonwealth Heritage List, it is outside the boundaries of the Meeting Place Precinct.

The EPBC Act retained the Register of the National Estate (RNE), on which the Meeting Place Precinct is listed, as 'Captain Cook's Landing Place historic site' (Place ID: 3335). The management of the Meeting Place Precinct by DECC (as State government owners) is not directly affected by its listing on the RNE.

The EPBC Act (as amended) requires that any person proposing to carry out an action that has, will have, or is likely to have, a significant impact on the national heritage values of a listed place, must first obtain the approval of the Australian Commonwealth Minister for the Environment and Water Resources. It is a criminal offence not to comply with this legislation.

Government authorities and agencies that own or control a place with national heritage values must make all reasonable steps to assist the Commonwealth Minister for the Environment and Water Resources and the Australian Heritage Council with identifying, assessing and monitoring a place's heritage values.

If the place is on State or private land, it can be protected by the Commonwealth where it has the appropriate Constitutional power to do so. In the case of Indigenous heritage places in the National Heritage List, the Commonwealth has the power to protect them irrespective of land tenure. In other cases, places may be protected under state legislation (through a bilateral agreement) or by private owners under a conservation agreement with the Commonwealth. Management plans are required for all places listed.

Management plans required under the EPBC Act (1999, as amended)

Matters prescribed by the EPBC Regulation to be included in a Heritage Management Plan include:

- the identification of the place's heritage values
- legislative requirements and opportunities arising from those values, in regards to the use of the place
- owner and stakeholder requirements
- policies and strategies to achieve compatible and beneficial outcomes.

Management Plans need to be consistent with the National Heritage Management Principles (see Appendix 6). Where a national heritage place is in a State or territory, the Australian Government must use its best endeavours to ensure that a management plan is prepared and implemented in cooperation with the relevant state or territory government. Plans are required to be reviewed every five years.

A bilateral agreement exists between the Commonwealth and NSW governments in relation to management plans for places on the National Heritage List, and a management plan prepared in line with that agreement and adopted by the State government meets the requirements under the EPBC Act.

The EPBC Act does not replace existing approval processes such as those required by local government or State heritage agencies. While the Meeting Place Precinct, being covered by a Regional Plan (SREP No. 17—Kurnell Peninsula) and other Regional/State Plans, is exempt from local government controls, it may still be necessary to obtain other approvals.

Australian Heritage Council

The Australian Heritage Council is the principal adviser to the Australian Government on heritage matters. The functions of the Australian Heritage Council are outlined in full in the *Australian Heritage Council Act, 2003*. Some of its key responsibilities include assessing

nominations for the National Heritage List and the Commonwealth Heritage List; providing Ministerial advice for the conservation of places on the National or Commonwealth Heritage List; promoting the identification, assessment and conservation of heritage; and compiling and maintaining the Register of the National Estate. The Council, an independent body of heritage experts, was appointed on 19 February, 2004 and replaced the Australian Heritage Commission.

Protection of Movable Cultural Heritage Act, 1986, and the Protection of Movable Cultural Heritage Regulations, 1987

The Commonwealth *Protection of Movable Cultural Heritage Act 1986 (as amended)* and the associated Regulations protect movable items of national heritage significance by regulating the export of such items.

They do not affect an individual's right to own or sell items of moveable heritage within Australia.

NSW National Parks and Wildlife Act, 1974

The Meeting Place Precinct at Kurnell is located at the northern end of the Kurnell peninsula, within the boundaries of the Botany Bay National Park. The *National Parks and Wildlife Act (NPW) Act, 1974 (as amended)* is administered by the Parks and Wildlife Group (PWG, formerly the National Parks and Wildlife Service), now a division of the NSW Department of Environment and Climate Change (DECC).

The Act sets out the legal responsibilities regarding the management, control and conservation of natural flora and fauna; Aboriginal places and cultural objects; and places and objects of historic cultural heritage, in all areas under the jurisdiction of the PWG.

Under Section 2A of the Act, the conservation of cultural heritage is stated as a key objective for the PWG (Section 2A(a)(b), and Section 30F of the Act). The conservation of cultural heritage covers the identification, protection, and conservation of *areas associated with a person, event or historical theme, or containing a building, place, feature or landscape of cultural significance* within the natural landscape.

Cultural heritage conservation includes the conservation of places significant to Aboriginal people, places of social and/or associative value to the people of New South Wales, and places of historic, architectural, and scientific significance (Section 2A(1)(b)(i), (ii), and (iii) of the Act). This includes objects and places of Aboriginal archaeological interest. The objectives of the Act also seek to enhance the understanding and appreciation by the public of these heritage values, and underline the importance of access in this regard (Section 2A(1)(c) of the Act).

The objectives of the Act in relation to cultural heritage conservation are to be met through the preparation and adoption, for each National Park, of a Plan of Management (POM), being a legal document that provides providing clear management framework for all decision-making affecting the Park. The Botany Bay National Park POM was adopted in May 2002 (see below). A draft amendment to the POM, relating to lifting restrictions on the construction of further monuments in the Park, is currently on public display.

Under the terms of Section 170 of the *NSW Heritage Act, 1977*, heritage places must be listed on a Heritage and Conservation Register (see below).

Aboriginal archaeology and cultural heritage

The *National Parks and Wildlife Act, 1974*, and the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* are the principal pieces of State legislation that are relevant to the management and protection of Aboriginal cultural heritage.¹⁴

The NPW Act provides for the protection of all Aboriginal ‘relics’ within NSW (Glossary in Appendix 1), being the physical evidence of Aboriginal occupation. The Act also protects Aboriginal places – which may or may not contain physical evidence of Aboriginal occupation – that are of significance to an Aboriginal community or individuals; such places are declared by the Minister as Aboriginal Places.

The Department of Environment and Climate Change NSW (DECC) is the primary agency responsible for administering the Act, and for the identification and protection of places and items of Aboriginal heritage significance. The Director-General of National Parks & Wildlife is empowered to regulate entry onto and use of land in archaeological areas. He or she is responsible for the care, preservation and protection of an Aboriginal place or object on any Aboriginal area, historic site or archaeological area. Under the Act, it is an offence to knowingly destroy, deface, damage or disturb any Aboriginal sites without first obtaining the written consent of the Director-General of National Parks & Wildlife Service. The Act prohibits the destruction or disturbing of any Aboriginal heritage sites or items, regardless of whether they have been formally registered by DECC. A Permit or Consent must be gained before any form of disturbance or more formal excavation of deposits can proceed.

The Act also establishes an Aboriginal Heritage Cultural Advisory Committee, responsible for all matters relating to the *identification, assessment and management of Aboriginal cultural heritage, including providing strategic advice on the plan of management and the heritage impact permit process* (Sections 27 and 28 of the Act).

Care of Aboriginal heritage within the Sydney area falls within the mandate of the Culture & Heritage Division of DECC.

National Parks and Wildlife Regulation

This regulation came into effect on 1 September 2002, and directs various activities under the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974* (NSW), including:

- the regulation of the use of national parks and other areas administered by the NPWS (Part 2);
- licences and certificates (Part 4);
- the protection of fauna (Part 5);
- the exemption of Aboriginal people from the restrictions imposed by various Sections of the Act on the hunting of certain animals and the gathering of certain plants (Part 6);
- boards of management and plans of management in relation to Aboriginal land (Part 7); and
- advisory committees constituted under Section 24 of the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974 (Part 8).

The regulation replaces the former *National Parks and Wildlife (Land Management) Regulation 1995*, the *National Parks and Wildlife (Administration) Regulation 1995* and the *National Parks and Wildlife (Fauna Protection) Regulation 2001*.

¹⁴ Other relevant State statutory provisions are made in the NSW Heritage Act 1977, the Local Government Act 1993, the National Parks and Wildlife Amendment (Aboriginal ownership) Act 1996, and Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997.

Botany Bay National Park Plan of Management (NPWS, May 2002)

The Botany Bay National Park Plan of Management (PoM), prepared by NPWS, was adopted by the Minister for the Environment on 27 May 2002.

The PoM, as stated in its foreword,

... provides for the protection, and where necessary rehabilitation, of the landscapes, ecosystems, vegetation communities, fauna and faunal habits of the park. It also provides for the conservation of historic features and significant cultural landscapes.

The PoM outlines the core values of the Botany Bay National Park, and provides policies and framework for management. The PoM also establishes a scheme of operations for the Park, through the provision of an implementation schedule and performance measurement indicators.

The PoM replaced earlier plans of management adopted for Captain Cooks Landing Place Historic Site (1972) and for Bare Island Historic Site (1975).

Meeting Place Precinct Master Plan, Botany Bay National Park, Kurnell (NPWS, April 2003)

In April 2003, a Master Plan was prepared for DECC (then NPWS). The aim of the document was

... to prepare plans that offer visitors to the Meeting Place Precinct of Botany Bay National Park a world-class experience consistent with the cultural significance and conservation values of the site.

The resulting Master, Interpretation and Consultation Plans aim to ‘improve functionality and identify key themes and areas for interpretation’.

The Master Plan outlines a series of recommendations for the future of the site (Section 5.0). A Progress Plan was prepared in May 2006 and provides an updated version of the Master Plan concept, indicating the works completed and any concepts that had been amended (Appendix 1).

NSW Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995

This Act aims to conserve threatened species, populations and ecological communities of animals and plants. It amends the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974*, the *Environmental Planning & Assessment Act 1979* and certain other Acts. It will repeal the *Endangered Fauna (Interim Protection) Act 1991*.

Within the Meeting Place Precinct, the Act applies to decision-making that affects areas of vegetation listed under, or consistent with vegetation types listed in, the Act. This applies to the following areas of the Meeting Place Precinct:

- EEC Kurnell Dune Forest (Coastal Scrub on Sand), and
- EEC Swamp Sclerophyll Forest (Swamp Forest).

NSW Heritage Act, 1977

The *NSW Heritage Act, 1977* (as amended) define and sets out the responsibilities of heritage management for all items and places of local and State cultural heritage significance within NSW. Under Section 170 of the *NSW Heritage Act*, all government agencies are required to establish and maintain a Heritage and Conservation Register. The Register is to contain details of each item of environmental heritage that is on the State Heritage Register; is subject to an Interim Conservation Order; or is listed in an environmental planning instrument (i.e. is a local heritage item). The Register is also to provide details of those items which could be considered as items of State heritage significance, or which could be the subject of an Interim Conservation Order.

Regarding moveable heritage, these Acts consider moveable objects as part of the environmental heritage of the State, and as items of potential heritage significance in their own right. In this context, moveable objects are defined as ‘objects that are not relics’, and as such are subject to all the provisions for the protection of heritage items of State or local significance under the Act.

Under Section 170 of the Heritage Act, State Government organisations are required to include all items of listed or potential heritage significance on a Heritage and Conservation register, to be endorsed by the Heritage Council of NSW; and maintain a minimum standard of care for those items.

In January 2005, the NSW Heritage Office issued a series of guidelines entitled *State Agency Heritage Guide: Management of Heritage Assets by NSW Government Agencies*. A key requirement of this document was that all NSW government agencies have a heritage asset management strategy, prepared and approved by the Heritage Council, in place by 31 January 2006, as the first step towards a S170 Heritage and Conservation Register, itself to be completed by December 2009. The aim of the guidelines is to introduce a common and integrated approach among State agencies in order to ensure sustainable heritage conservation practices, a required by the NSW Government’s Total Asset Management Strategy.

As the PWG is a division of the NSW DECC, the responsibility for completing the Heritage and Conservation Register rests with DECC.

At present, the Culture and Heritage Division of DECC maintains a Historic Heritage Information Management System (HHIMS) which contains information on all of DECC’s historic heritage which is over 25 years old and on lands managed by DECC (approximately 9,000 heritage items and sites). The HHIMS replaced the previous NPWS Historic Places Register in August 2002, and allows the DECC to meet its obligations under Section 170 of the *Heritage Act 1977* (NSW). Items on the s170 Register are a subset of data on the HHIMS. It is the responsibility of staff from individual Parks and sites to enter and maintain details of items and places on the Register.

At present, the HHIMS database for Botany Bay National Park contains 58 items and ‘complexes’ (collections of items). Of these, 22 items are within the Meeting Place Precinct and 13 individual items and one complex (the monument group) are included on the S170 Register.

The *Heritage Assessment* (Design 5 2006) established that the site met the threshold for inclusion on the State Heritage Register (SHR), administered by the NSW Heritage Office. All activities affecting items listed on the SHR, excepting minor works which are granted standard exemptions, require approval by the Heritage Council of NSW.

In line with DECC policy, the PWG is to prepare Conservation Management Plans (CMP) for items listed on the State Heritage Register. These Plans detail the significance of items and places, and set out guidelines for their conservation and management. Where a CMP has been endorsed by the Heritage Council, activities consistent with the policies of the CMP may be exempted from further approvals from the Heritage Council, under Section 57(2) of the Act.

Historical Archaeological Relics

The Meeting Place Precinct at Kurnell may contain historical archaeological relics, in particular within the vicinity of existing buildings.

The *Heritage Act* provides automatic statutory protection to ‘relics’ (see Glossary of Terms at Appendix 1), unless there is an applicable gazetted exception. An excavation permit issued by the NSW Heritage Council is required where the disturbance or excavation of land is likely to result in a relic being discovered, exposed, moved, damaged, or destroyed. The Director of Cultural Heritage, DECC, has delegations under the *Heritage Act* for the following activities on NPWS estate: to determine applications for certain minor works affecting archaeological relics, and to issue excavation permits.

Aboriginal archaeological relics are covered by the terms of *the National Parks and Wildlife Act (NPW) Act, 1974* and other legislation (see above).

NSW Environment Planning and Assessment Act, 1979 and the Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation, 2000

The Environment Planning and Assessment (EP&A) Act provides planning controls and requirements for environmental assessment in the development approvals process. It also established the framework for Aboriginal heritage values to be formally assessed in land use planning and development consent processes. The Act considers the ‘environment’ – the subject of its controls – as including cultural heritage of both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal origin.

Under Part 5 of the EP&A Act, PWG is required to assess the environmental impacts of any proposed activity (within the definitions provided by the EP&A Act) that is to take place on lands reserved under the PWG, prior to approving that activity.

Any and all activities that may impact upon an item of cultural heritage of 25 years or older that is within PWG control are to be assessed under Part 5 of the Act. An Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) or Review of Environmental Factors (REF) is required in accordance with Part 5 of the Act. Requirements of the EP&A Act for the PWG are additional to approvals under the NSW Heritage Act for items listed on the State Heritage Register (SHR).

The REF process should give consideration to potential impacts on the environment from activities such as the rebuilding or replacement of historic structures, including impacts on soil and water quality, species of flora and fauna (particularly threatened species and communities). It should also assess potential impacts on Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal cultural heritage, and the potential for increased threats to the community, such as bushfire risk.

The preparation of Reviews of Environmental Factors (REF) under the EP&A Act should be used to assess the impacts of proposals developed *as a result of* policies developed in the Meeting Place Precinct Study, *rather than* becoming determinants of policy for the Precinct by any perception of necessity.

State and regional planning policies

The following State and regional environmental plans and policies are relevant to the study area and therefore may impact on decisions regarding the management and conservation of the Meeting Place Precinct.

It should also be noted that other SEPPs may apply in cases of certain types of proposed development.

State Environmental Planning Policy (SEPP) 4—Development without Consent and Miscellaneous Complying Development

This policy allows relatively simple or minor changes of land or building use and certain types of development without the need for formal development applications. The types of development covered in the policy are outlined in the policy. SEPP 4 excludes PWG managed land from Part 4 of the EP&A Act.

Sydney Regional Environmental Plan (SREP) 17—Kurnell Peninsula, 1989

This SREP excludes all land within its boundaries (the entire Kurnell Peninsula, including all areas under PWG management) from the controls of the *Sutherland Shire Local Environmental Plan 2006*.

This SREP requires the risk assessment study reports to be taken into account in the assessment of development applications in the area covered by the Plan, including for items and areas of heritage significance. A Land Use Safety Study (NSW Department of Planning, February

2007) has been developed to update this Plan, and should be read in conjunction with the SEPP (Development on Kurnell Peninsula) 2005 (noted below).

State Environmental Planning Policy (SEPP) 60—Exempt and Complying Development

This SEPP provides a more efficient and effective approval process for certain classes of development. The policy is an essential part of the reforms introduced to the development assessment system in July 1998. It applies to areas of the State where there are no such provisions in the council's local plans.

3.4 Other policies and guidelines

The Burra Charter (Australia ICOMOS)

The *Burra Charter* (Australia ICOMOS, 1999) is the principal guiding document for Australian cultural heritage conservation, and establishes a 'best practice' approach to which all Australian heritage conservation bodies subscribe.

The Burra Charter balances an emphasis on the tangible aspects of a place with a strong emphasis on retaining use and associations (intangible qualities) as equally important aspects in conserving the significance of a place.

Article 5.1 of the Burra Charter states that the conservation of a place "should identify and take into consideration all aspects of cultural and natural significance without unwarranted emphasis on any one value at the expense of others."

All aspects of the place that contribute to its significance should be conserved: fabric, use, associations and meanings (including the significant associations and meanings which a place may have for people with strong connections to that place).

Where management actions or decisions may result in a loss of the cultural significance of a place, these actions should be reversible or, at the very least, should adopt a cautious approach.

Australian Natural Heritage Charter

The *Australian Natural Heritage Charter: for the conservation of places of natural heritage significance* (2nd ed.) recognises the coexistence of natural and cultural heritage values of places. In making decisions that will affect the future of a place, the Natural Heritage Charter emphasises the importance of considering all the values of a place, encompasses a wide interpretation of natural heritage, and is fundamentally based upon a respect for that heritage.

The Charter acknowledges three key principles of intergenerational equity (being the need to pass on the sites of natural and cultural values intact to future generations); existence value; uncertainty and precaution (see Glossary, Appendix 1).

Museums Australia

Regarding guidelines for moveable heritage, the Museums Australia document *Previous Possessions, New Obligations: Policies for Museums in Australia and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Peoples*,¹⁵ accepted by all museums of the Museums Australia network, is referred to as a benchmark document in regards to establishing and maintaining good working relations between Indigenous peoples and museums.

Its principles relate to:

- self-determination (supporting the right of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to self-determination in respect to issues concerning their cultural heritage);

¹⁵ See <http://www.amonline.net.au/pdf/matcon/policy.pdf>

- the necessity for Indigenous involvement in decisions relating to management and collections policies which affect their cultural heritage; and
- the acknowledgement of Indigenous peoples determining rights of access to those collections. The document also contains policies relating to human remains, secret or sacred material, collections in general, and training and financial support.

NSW Heritage Office

Regarding guidelines for moveable heritage, the NSW Heritage Office publication *Objects in their Place: An Introduction to Movable Heritage*, 1994, and *Movable Heritage Principles*, 2000, provide two key principles relating to the conservation of moveable heritage. In respect to such items, owners are recommended to:

- document moveable heritage (a process that may include photographing and inventorying the item(s); researching the item(s); assessing the condition and significance of the item(s); and preparing a conservation management plan); and
- keep movable heritage in its place, to maintain its significance and association with a site; and consider storage/shelter of the items for their protection in order to minimise wear, damage, and theft.

3.5 Australian Standards and legislation for safety and disability access

Of particular relevance to the management of activities and works within the Meeting Place Precinct are the national building codes, disability access regulations and Australian Standards, which along with NSW occupational health and safety legislation influence the day-to-day management of the site.

Disability Discrimination Act 1992

The Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (DDA) is Commonwealth legislation requiring that people with disabilities be given equal opportunity to participate in and contribute to the range of social, political and cultural activities. The legislation is a complaints based law which requires people who consider themselves discriminated against to lodge a complaint with the Human Rights and Equal Opportunities Commission.

Building Code of Australia (BCA)

The Building Code of Australia (BCA) is intended to provide nationally consistent standards for building design and construction. It replaces the former state based building regulations and sets out uniform provisions for all forms of commercial, industrial and domestic structures. The goals of the BCA are to maintain acceptable standards of structural sufficiency, safety, health and amenity for the benefit of the broader community.

PWG works are required to comply with BCA Standards. These include, but are not limited to, fire requirements, building construction, and safety. Exemptions to these Standards may be granted through the NSW Heritage Office for non-compliance in certain circumstances relating to heritage places and buildings.

The design of works and new works must also comply with, or state exception from, PWG Design and Building Standards, and all other relevant Australia ASA standards as appropriate, as well as other relevant legal requirements include, but not limited to, the *Occupational Health & Safety Act 2000* and the *Residential Tenancies Act 1997*.

Australian Standards

Australian Standards are published by the independent body Standards Association of Australia which aims to establish and maintain national benchmarks for products and services. These standards are documents which set out specifications and procedures, designed to ensure that a material, product, method or service is fit for its purpose and consistently performs the way it is intended to. They are regularly revised to take account of changing technology. Standards are not legally binding unless. As commonly occurs, they are incorporated into state of Commonwealth legislation.

AS 1428 Design for Access and Mobility is the Australian Standard to the design of facilities to accommodate people with disabilities. Part 1 (AS1248.1) established minimum design criteria for new building work to enhance access for people with disabilities. This includes guidelines for the design of ramps, landings, steps, handrails, toilets, car parks, signage and the like. Compliance with this standard will generally satisfy the access requirements of the BCA.

New South Wales Occupational Health and Safety Act 2000

The New South Wales Occupational Health and Safety Act 2000 (OHS Act) is a state Act that establishes responsibilities and obligations relation to workplace health and safety. In particular it establishes that employers must ensure the health, safety and welfare of their employees when at work, and must ensure the health and safety of people visiting or working at their places of work, who are not their employees, by not exposing them to risk.

Further constraints that may impact on the Meeting Place Precinct include the ‘over-engineering’ of structures to be conserved, in order for new development to meet current OHS standards, or potential OHS issues related to working volunteers.

3.6 DECC (PWG)¹⁶ policy and management

Introduction

The PWG, in its previous role as the NPWS, produced many policy and strategy documents which are relevant to the management of Botany Bay National Park in general, and to the Meeting Place Precinct in particular. Further documents are the result of independent studies and also contribute to the knowledge of the site. The use and relevancy of these documents to the management of the Meeting Place Precinct is of great importance and is reflected in the process of policy formation in Section 5.0.

Aside from the Botany Bay National Park Plan of Management and the Meeting Place Precinct Master Plan (discussed above), these documents fall into two groups:

- General reports and guidelines:
 - DEC Corporate Plan 2006-2010
 - DEC Park Management Policy Manual, January 2007
 - DEC Guidelines for Works: Cultural Heritage Buildings and Structures, July 2004 (Version 1.6)
 - Fire Management Strategy, Botany Bay National Park (south), December 2006 (Draft)
 - NPWS Field Management Guidelines (1988)
 - Two Ways Together DEC Action Plan (June 2006)
 - DEC National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974: Part 6 Approvals—Interim Community Consultation Requirements for Applicants

¹⁶ Note: DEC (Dept. of Environment and Conservation) is now DECC (Dept of Environment and Climate Change) and NPWS (National Parks and Wildlife Service) and PWG (Parks and Wildlife Group) is now PWG (Parks and Wildlife Group) of DECC,

- Guidelines for Approvals: Cultural heritage places, buildings, landscapes and heritage items on DEC estate (revised 2006)
- NPWS Risk Management Strategic Plan (2002)
- NPWS OHS Risk Management System (July 2002, Version 1.11)
- NPWS Visitor Safety Policy (July 2002)
- NPWS Cultural Heritage Community Consultation Policy (2002)
- NPWS Cultural Heritage Strategic Policy 2006
- DECC Aboriginal Community Engagement Framework (2007).
- Site- and issue-specific reports and guidelines:
 - Draft Conservation Management Plan for The Alpha Farm Site and Kurnell Accommodation House (June 1999), (not endorsed), prepared by University of Sydney Masters of Conservation students.
 - Benson and Eldershaw, 'Backdrop to the encounter: the 1770 landscape of Botany Bay, the plants collected by Banks and Solander and rehabilitation of natural vegetation at Kurnell' *Cunninghamia*, Vol. 10 (1) 2007.
 - *Built Monuments and Ceremonial Plantings Conservation Management Plan*, prepared by the University of Sydney Masters of Conservation students, June 1999
 - *Cook's Stream, Botany Bay National Park: Research, assessment and rehabilitation strategy*, June 1999.

Corporate Plan 2006-2010

The role of the *Corporate Plan 2006-2010* is to guide planning and decision-making throughout the organisation, and to reinforce cross-divisional operation and links between its constituent divisions and former agencies. All other DECC organisational plans and policies, and the plans and policies of the PWG, sit within the framework established by the plan, and give effect to it.

The corporate mission of the DECC, as set out in the plan, is to create and maintain a 'healthy environment cared for and enjoyed by the whole community and sustained for future generations'.

The current corporate plan promotes an integrated and holistic approach to the conservation of all aspects of the environment, including ecological, natural, cultural and indigenous values. The conservation of natural and cultural values across the landscape is one of the DECC's four broad goals, and it involves the protection and restoration of biodiversity; the protection and revitalisation of Aboriginal culture and heritage; and the effective management of national and marine parks, reserves and botanic gardens. In these goals, the DECC maintains the previous holistic approach of the NPWS, by seeking to conserve and promote a variety of cultural values and associations, which may be Aboriginal or non-Aboriginal in origin, or indeed shared between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities.

Client aspirations

Management objectives for the park as a whole

The Botany Bay National Park Plan of Management (2002) establishes the objectives for the park as a whole:

- To make Botany Bay National Park a place of significance to all Australians and to contribute to the sense of identity as Australians

- To develop the theme and symbolism of ‘meeting place’ between the land, the Aboriginal people and the people who have arrived in Australia since 1770
- To provide a lasting venue for recognition and celebration of Australian culture, especially Indigenous culture
- To protect, and where necessary rehabilitate, the landscapes, ecosystems, vegetation communities, fauna and faunal habitats on the park
- To conserve historic features and significant cultural landscapes
- To promote an understanding and awareness of the natural and cultural heritage of the park through appropriate events, story telling, gatherings and celebration, and
- To recognise the relationship and dependence of protected areas to their surrounding landscapes and communities by promoting a cohesive and holistic approach to the management of the natural and cultural heritage of Botany Bay. (Botany Bay National Park 2002: 6)

Aspirations

In 2005, the NSW Government committed \$38 million over 4 years to revitalise a number of Sydney’s key national parks, including Blue Mountains, Sydney Harbour, Botany Bay, Kuring-gai Chase, Royal, Lane Cove and Georges River.

Of this commitment \$5.8 million was directed to Botany Bay National Park (Kurnell section), to proceed with its revitalisation program - the Meeting Place Project.

The funding provided to Botany Bay National Park is supporting background research, the preparation of planning documents (including this report), the development of designs for new interpretation, landscape and building works, and implementation of these designs. The particular focus is on improving the visitor experience, upgrading facilities and ensuring that the Meeting Place Precinct becomes a lasting venue for the recognition and celebration of Australian culture. DECC’s goal is to:

Enhance the park and its presentation to offer visitors a world class experience that is consistent with the heritage values and cultural significance (CMP brief: 22)

In commissioning the CMP, DECC recognised that a policy and management framework was needed to ensure the long-term conservation of the site and its values.

More specifically, DECC recognised that the CMP would need to ensure balanced and compatible management of the heritage values of the Meeting Place Precinct, especially shared values, meanings and associations, and cultural and natural heritage values. The CMP is also required to give direction to future uses that are compatible with significance.

The concept the ‘meeting place’ is still being developed, and it is this concept that most strongly expresses the aspirations of PWG and DECC for the Meeting Place Precinct. A web site – www.whereculturesmeet.com.au – was established in February 2007 as a central information point. The aspirational nature of the ‘meeting place’ concept is captured in the following quote from the web site:

The role of the park at Kurnell as a ‘meeting place’ is a central theme for the development of the reserve. The park offers a unique and challenging opportunity to explore the history of meetings between indigenous and other cultures in Australia. It is also intended that the Park will play an active role in the reconciliation process, by providing a venue for open discussion of the consequences of past ‘meetings’ and the development of new partnerships between cultures. (‘The Challenge, www.whereculturesmeet.com.au accessed 28 May 07).

Proposals

Following the completion of the Plan of Management, a Master Plan was developed for the key historic section of the park, described as the Meeting Place Precinct. The Master Plan (2003)

provided recommendations for the enhancement of park facilities and on-site interpretation. The Master Plan has not been fully implemented, but many aspects of that plan are currently being considered as part of an *Interpretation Plan, Landscape and Architectural Design Documentation* (IPLADD) project currently underway for the Meeting Place Precinct.

Given that the CMP is occurring at the same time as the development of proposals and designs that may result in changes to the Meeting Place Precinct, DECC commissioned a preliminary heritage impact assessment as part of the development of the CMP to ensure that the consultants for the *Interpretation Plan, Landscape and Architectural Design Documentation* (IPLADD) project were aware of the potential heritage impacts of the 2003 Master Plan.

The proposals arising from this project will be subject to a Heritage Impact Statement (HIS) and a Review of Environmental Factors (REF)¹⁷ to identify any impacts on heritage values and to determine the scope of archaeological approvals required¹⁸.

Resourcing

The funds provided to Botany Bay National Park as part of the program described above, are a one-off funding opportunity. The resourcing for management of the Meeting Place Precinct and its values in the longer-term has not been increased by this allocation.

The Meeting Place Precinct has also gained additional staff resources during the period of special funding, including a project officer (Georgina Eldershaw) and an Aboriginal Liaison Officer (Dean Kelly) dedicated to the Meeting Place Precinct project.

The availability of resources – funds, staff, expertise – is regarded by park managers as an important issue.

3.7 Opportunities and constraints arising from significance

The purpose of this section is to recognise the constraints and opportunities that arise from the obligations to conserve the significance of the site. Some of the factors considered relate to the condition and integrity of the fabric. Section 3.9 Condition and Threats further considers the current state of the place (i.e. condition) relative to the values for which the place is considered significant.

Cultural landscape, land form and vegetation

Key factors to consider in developing policy for the cultural landscape, land form and vegetation include the following:

- The values embodied by the cultural landscape, land form and vegetation are complex. Some values are expressed clearly and strongly in the landscape, while others have been masked or obscured over time, and are therefore now expressed less well. Policy therefore needs to allow space for those important but less visible values to become more visible, so that all values are represented to a degree that is consistent with their relative contribution to the significance of the place as a whole.
- The significance of the cultural landscape, cultural plantings and remnant vegetation communities needs to be conserved primarily in the context of their contribution to the significance of the place as a whole.
- Use forms an important part of the significance of the Meeting Place Precinct which will have impacts, to varying degrees, on the conservation of elements of the cultural landscape,

¹⁷ Preparation of the Review of Environmental Factors will be based on NPWS guidelines on the process. The Heritage Impact Statement will be based on the NSW Heritage Office guidelines. Both processes will use the draft CMP in the assessment of impacts.

¹⁸ The *Interpretation Plan, Landscape and Architectural Design Documentation* includes an archaeological component to ensure that the proposals developed consider archaeological issues.

potential the land form, and particularly on cultural plantings and remnant vegetation communities.

- Vegetation and vegetation communities are dynamic, and significant cultural plantings and other significant vegetation will continually change, senesce and die. Short, medium and long term management, removal and replacement strategy will therefore be necessary. Policy will also need to respond to the fact that all species are competing for the same water, light, space, nutrients, and will have different biological strategies for competing for these resources.
- The experience of being in the areas of local native vegetation is an important part of the cultural experience of the place.

Conservation should recognise that there are also opportunities to:

- restore the 1770s vegetation for interpretative, educational and scientific purposes
- use the cultural landscape to enhance the understanding of the significance of the precinct as a whole, and to acknowledge and appreciate of all the layers and complexities of its historical and contemporary meanings
- enhance the diversity of the eight remnant vegetation communities (through restoration and reinstatement, for example)
- recover an understanding of the land form that has endured through the site's long and complex history
- enable Aboriginal communities and families to reconnect symbolically and practically to this landscape and contribute to its ongoing conservation, and
- to remove plantings that obscure or which are not in accordance with the significance of the place.

The built environment

Important buildings (Alpha House and Site, Discovery Centre, Education Centre, for example) are addressed individually. The monuments within the Precinct are treated collectively, as a group.

Alpha House and site

Key factors to consider in developing policy for Alpha House include the following:

- insufficiencies in the structure and content of the existing CMP, which may impede developing appropriate conservation management policies
- the development of new policies must also give due consideration to the outbuildings and grounds around Alpha House.

Conservation should recognise that there are also opportunities:

- for removal of later accretions to Alpha House itself, and its immediate surrounds, that are not significant, in order to reveal aspects of greater significance such as original fabric, and allow for its conservation
- for adaptive re-use to return the building to a public use and enhance its significance
- to define a heritage curtilage and site boundaries that would allow conservation policies to treat the management of the site's surrounds; allow for a more holistic approach to the conservation of the place; and thereby enable a key aspect of the site's significance (as the site of the first land grant) to be better displayed.

Discovery Centre

Key factors to consider in developing policy for the Discovery Centre include the following:

- Constructed in 1967, the Discovery Centre underwent significant modifications in 1989 and the 1990s, including re-orientation of its entrance from the north to the south elevation, and resulting in a loss of integrity of the original building.

Conservation should recognise that there are also opportunities:

- for recovery of original fabric, internal spatial arrangement, light and cross-ventilation qualities
- to clear displays currently obscuring internal window openings in order to increase solar access, cross-ventilation and reveal the original interior of the building
- to return the building to its original colour scheme, more fitting with its natural surroundings
- to restore the building's original relationship to Commemoration Flat and the flagstaff.

Education Centre

This weatherboard building (constructed in 1957) was converted in 1994 from a kiosk to an education centre and classroom. The building in its current use appears to function well. From a heritage conservation viewpoint, a change from this current use is not required.

Conservation should recognise that there are also opportunities:

- to reinstate the building's original function as a refreshment kiosk
- to make decisions about the future of the Education Centre that may recover aspects of the Meeting Place Precinct which are of greater significance.

Cave dwellings

Physical degradation of the rock surface, and oxidisation and salt damage to the metal fixings, is inevitable and unpreventable given the site's proximity to the sea, and will therefore be a constraint on its conservation. While conservation methods and treatments would be possible and are available, their cost would be disproportionate to the assessed significance of the site. Material remains will eventually be lost.

The remains of the cave dwellings present an opportunity to interpret and convey a secondary, yet important, facet of the use and evolution of the Meeting Place Precinct. This could be achieved through:

- recording the remains of these dwellings,
- guides using the caves as a stopping point to discuss the uses and history of this part of the site, and
- ensuring that mention of this aspect of the site's history is made in all leaflets and booklets.

It is possible that people who once lived in the caves, or knew those who did, are still alive. Recording their stories of the site and its uses would form a highly valuable addition to the research on the site and would greatly inform understandings and interpretation.

Ferry shelter shed

Constraints on the conservation of the Ferry shelter shed include:

- its existing physical condition and the need for urgent works for its stabilisation and conservation
- continued physical degradation, and the need for replacement of elements

- likely loss of significant portions of original fabric meaning reconstruction will need to incorporate new elements
- the need for design to conform to current BCA standards.

Conservation should recognise that there are also opportunities:

- to use archival photographs of the structure for accurate conservation and reconstruction treatments
- for the shelter shed to provide a focal point for interpreting the original arrival point.

Monuments

This section addresses all of the monuments within the Meeting Place Precinct, given the relatively similar conservation constraints and opportunities affecting them.

Main Flagstaff	Isaac Smith Memorial
Inscription Plate	Cook's Well
Cook Obelisk	Freshwater Stream Plaque
Solander Monument	Landing Place Plaque
Banks Memorial Seat	Prince's Tree Memorial
Forby Sutherland Memorial	Captain Cook Buoy Plaque

Key factors relevant to conservation of the monuments include recognising:

- that material degradation of the components of the monuments is inevitable, but that it could be slowed, or in some cases avoided, through appropriate conservation treatments
- the need for conservation in situ
- the need to balance the cost of conservation treatments against the relative importance of the individual monument on a case-by-case basis by park management in consultation with heritage advisers
- the desire for additional plaques to be added to existing monuments arising, for example, out of a desire to present new interpretations of history or to recognise and celebrate continuing community associations.

Conservation should recognise that there are also opportunities:

- to maintain the visibility of memorials and monuments in their open landscape setting, and avoiding the construction of shelters
- to document the monuments, and in particular their inscriptions
- for the monuments, and the messages they convey, to contribute to interpretation
- to investigate whether people associated with the unveiling or opening ceremonies of these monuments are still alive, and to record their oral testimonies of these events as a valuable reference and source of information on historic perceptions of the importance of each monument. This would also assist in understanding the ways in which perceptions of each item, and the place in general, may have changed over time.

Moveable heritage

The Meeting Place Precinct contains a large and highly significant collection of moveable heritage that includes objects, collections and records. Some of these items are of particular value to the Meeting Place Precinct, the State, and the nation as a whole. A distinct part of the

larger collection of moveable heritage within the Meeting Place Precinct is the Captain Cook's Landing Place (CCLP) Collection.

The items in the Captain Cook's Landing Place (CCLP) Collection are detailed in separate reports, notably the Stage 1 Assessment of Captain Cook's Landing Place (CCLP) Collection within the Moveable Heritage Collection of Botany Bay National Park Kurnell, undertaken by the DEC in July 2006. This report identifies a number of key factors relevant to conservation of this component of the moveable heritage collection within the Meeting Place Precinct including:

- the CCLP Trust collection consists of approximately 980 objects and documents collected between 1899 and 1999
- as a whole, the collection is considered of State and National significance
- 35 items are identified as 'Key items' in the CCLP Collection stage 1 assessment (DEC 2006) and are recommended to the s170 Register. 24 of the 35 key Items are recommended for listing on the NSW State Heritage Register. (DEC 2006: Appendix 1)

Conservation should recognise existing opportunities, insofar as:

- Extensive reporting on the moveable heritage of the site has already been completed, with existing guidelines, assessments, and past conservation efforts providing a solid framework for the conservation of the Precinct's moveable heritage.
- In particular, the DECC Stage 1 Assessment of Captain Cook's Landing Place Collection within the Moveable Heritage Collection of Botany Bay National Park Kurnell (July 2006 [Stage 2 and Stage 3 are scheduled for completion in the coming years]), provide detailed research, structured strategies, and recommendations regarding the care and management of a significant proportion of the moveable heritage of the site.

Views

Key factors to consider in formulating conservation policy relevant to views include:

- competition of the dominant and towering vertical forms and deep greens of post-1770 introduced elements of the landscape (araucarias along the ridge of the western dune, the Norfolk Island Pines along the foreshore, the flagstaff, buffalo grass, for example) with the potential to clearly read the original and enduring land form (the dune morphology in particular), and the prostrate forms and muted grey-green colours of the original coastal scrub on sand vegetation community
- competition between some landscape elements over other meanings and connections to the place.

Key conservation opportunities include:

- creating a sense of heightened visitor expectation and a land approach experience through Kurnell, on arrival at the entrance to Botany Bay National Park and upon entering the Meeting Place Precinct
- recognising that views form an important part of the experience of being in and perceptions of the place. These visual connections contribute, or have the potential to contribute, to creating or reinforcing intangible connections to and positive perceptions of the place
- managing views so that they can contribute to an understanding of the many stories and meanings associated with the place
- interpreting views that extend beyond the study area boundary as representative of values that extend beyond the study area boundary.

Community connections and associations

Key factors relevant to formulating conservation policy include:

- acknowledging the diversity of community associations with this place
- recognising Aboriginal traditional ownership of the land as a fundamental cultural and spiritual association
- the need to understand in more detail the nature of each community association so that significant associations can be maintained.

Key conservation opportunities include:

- building relationships with key communities with long-standing associations with the Meeting Place Precinct.

Interpretation

Key factors relevant to formulating conservation policy include:

- the diversity of uses and users of the Meeting Place Precinct (including diversity of cultural backgrounds, differing levels of knowledge about and interests in Aboriginal and settler history)
- recognising that all conservation and development actions offer an interpretation of the history and meanings of this place, requiring that a careful attention is needed in relation to all actions
- some of the values of the Meeting Place Precinct may be culturally sensitive and may require limitations on how and by whom stories are told, visitor numbers and access to various areas of the site, and codes of conduct
- care will be needed in the siting and design of interpretive media to avoid disrupting views, ambience and the authenticity of the place. Hand held or temporary signs or guided tours may be preferable to permanent signs (or unifying landscape treatments) in visually or culturally sensitive locations.

Key conservation opportunities include:

- creating new opportunities for visitors to engage with each of the primary significance concepts through use, activities and events
- reinterpreting old stories in new ways, using the landscape to reveal new or different perspectives and allow multiple readings.

Aboriginal and historical archaeological elements

Key factors relevant to formulating conservation policy include:

- the extensive areas of the site that are known to or could potentially contain evidence of Aboriginal history, including the high likelihood that further burials remain undisturbed on the site
- the importance of the evidence of Aboriginal history to Aboriginal people
- the potential of archaeological elements of the site to reveal information about Aboriginal history, the early periods of contact and colonisation, and the later periods of farming, informal settlement and park development
- the limited knowledge about the condition of archaeological elements across the Meeting Place Precinct, recognising the incomplete and potentially fragile nature of some of these elements

- the importance of avoiding damage to archaeological resources through site use, works or development.

Key conservation opportunities include:

- revealing, through interpretation and archaeological investigation, the location of elements no longer visible and that are associated with the primary concepts of significance
- revealing and recovering significant elements of the former landscape (for example, the former course of the stream into the bay).

3.8 Use and access

The public use of and access to the Meeting Place Precinct is a significant aspect of the place's historic and continuing use as a recreational landscape, providing opportunities for visitors, from local and the broader community, to participate in recreational and social activities.

The public use of and access to the Meeting Place Precinct also provides opportunities for the place's continued orientation as a place 'where cultures meet'.

It is these uses that connect with the history of the place – as a recreational landscape, a landscape of history making and a landscape of encounters.

Visiting the place has been and continues to be a fundamental way that people have engaged with this site since its reservation in the late nineteenth century. It is important that the journey and approach to the site and the activities shared within the landscape of the Meeting Place Precinct continue to frame people's experiences of the place.

Continued use by school children for educational purposes (in both Australian history and the environment throughout the 20th century) is a key factor in maintaining significance.

It is also through continued use by many cultural groups that place has the strongest opportunity and potential to strengthen the sense of community and cross cultural interaction.

The use of the place for recreation, to reflect on the history of the place, and where cultures meet has been and continues to be an important part of the place's significance.

The results of the community consultation conducted for the Master Plan (2003) show that appreciation of the place for its recreational and social values is often combined with an appreciation of its Aboriginal and historic cultural values.

For the residents of Kurnell, the Meeting Place Precinct is a part of their local landscape – a place of daily experience. For some, it is a place where they played as children, and for others the connection stretches back one or two generations. Nevertheless, the larger story is also part of their connection, and one that can hardly be ignored within a local landscape where the pines are a strong visual link.

Continued use and public access by many cultures will enable the site to be 'a meeting place' into the future in terms of:

- use of the Meeting Place Precinct by specific communities
- the place as a whole (and its wider Botany Bay setting) for local Aboriginal people of the Dharawal nation as part of their traditional country (landscape, water, connection), as a place containing powerful and important evidence of Aboriginal presence (occupation sites, burials), as a place with totemic connections, as the place of 'significant events' (Cook expedition landing through to Survival Day etc), as a place that demonstrates their continuity and survival as a people, as a place of personal memory and experience
- the local Kurnell community who have used this area as their local park for many years and feel a strong sense of ownership over it and connection to it.

Access to site for these purposes is fundamental to the significance of the Meeting Place Precinct. However, a number of obstacles to both local and broader community use have been identified that are relevant to access:

- the physical distance from La Perouse to the Meeting Place Precinct (in spite of visual proximity between the two site across Botany Bay)
- cultural rights and sensitivities: need to recognise that there may be Aboriginal community concerns relating to conservation of and access to significant sites, and
- the unprepossessing approach from Cronulla along Captain Cook Drive.

The Meeting Place Precinct is also subject to intensive seasonal pressures associated with high visitor numbers, especially during whale watching season. The main impacts are associated with an increased need for car parking within the Meeting Place Precinct, from where visitors walk or are shuttled to the eastern coastal edge of the National Park. There is an overflow car park (grassed surface, open only during peak seasons) to accommodate more intensive demands on car parking. However, demand frequently exceeds this space, necessitating further overflow into a defined area on the eastern edge of Commemoration Flat and picnic ground.

Issues related to use of and access to the Meeting Place Precinct may indeed threaten the fabric and values of the site, by:

- intensive use of the site leading to direct or cumulative damage (i.e. wear and tear), particularly relating to:
 - unclear way-finding and desire lines
 - high visitor numbers during peak seasons
 - car parking demands exceeding available and designated car parking areas
 - insufficient and/or inappropriate toilet facilities and water supplies to meet visitor demand
 - inappropriate siting for and/or damage caused by picnics, games, triathlons and other visitor activities
 - insufficient facilities and/or methods for rubbish disposal
- behaviour or actions that do not respect established cultural and indigenous values
- the failure to mitigate major problems, as they arise, through proper and timely identification and resolution of minor issues
- vandalism.

3.9 Condition and threats

The condition of particular elements within the Meeting Place Precinct is indicated in relation to opportunities and constraints arising from significance in Section 3.7 above.

This section considers the condition of the place as a whole and identifies a number of threats that exist for the built, cultural and natural values of specific elements or the Meeting Place Precinct in general.

Condition

Condition refers to the current state of the place relative to the values for which the place is considered significant¹⁹. Condition reflects the cumulative effects of management, use and

¹⁹ As defined in *Management Plans for Places in the Commonwealth Heritage List*, Department of the Environment and Heritage, November 2006.

environmental factors. Understanding the condition of these values is an important part of conservation management planning.

The condition assessment contained in this report is based on a review of the physical analysis and description provided in the *Heritage Assessment* (Design 5 2006) and other studies consulted, combined with observations during site work during the preparation of policy. It is not based on a detailed, element by element condition or structural assessment.

Understanding condition includes considering the integrity of the place, its degree of intactness and whether the values ascribed are still well represented by the place.

Condition may be defined in relation to a baseline such as a known past condition, or a to a defined desirable state. For example, in relation to a threatened plant species, the desired state may be restoration to a sustainable population²⁰.

The Meeting Place Precinct is a complex layered landscape that creates opportunities to conserve elements from the past and interpret the different ways in which this place has been understood over time. As a cultural landscape, the Meeting Place Precinct is considered to have considerable integrity; on the other hand, it is also true to say that each historical period and use has made its mark, often removing or obscuring the evidence of previous periods.

Section 2 of this Conservation Management Plan defines five concepts of significance, of which three are primary and two secondary. These concepts assist in understanding the condition of the place in relation to its recognised values.

The enduring landscape

The enduring landscape comprises the land and water of the place, along with the local native plants and animals, and the associated intangible values.

The enduring landscape is evident in the land forms of the place, modified by European settlement, and later landscape development associated with the creation and management of the land as a public park. Many of the landform changes are subtle, whereas the distinct contrast between the areas of local native vegetation and mown lawns demonstrates the impact on the site's ecology.

The gradual expansion of the areas containing local native vegetation communities over the last 40 or so years through changed management regimes is improving the condition of this value; conversely increases in the spread of non-local trees species is a continuing threat to these local vegetation communities.

The coastal edge of the site is one where change can be expected to be evident, part of the nature of the land and water interface. Here the effects of wind and water endure, shaping and reshaping the natural sandstone faces, and gently eroding the built elements.

The waters of Botany Bay have been changed by developments within the catchment, but many of these changes relate to water quality and marine life and are not immediately apparent.

The visual landscape has been altered by the introduction of major industrial developments on both sides of the bay. Despite this it is possible to look from the Meeting Place Precinct and see the parts of the northern headland and a bush setting. From the northern side, the form of the dune and the remnant bush is clearly apparent.

The intangible values survive but may be increasingly at risk the longer that active Aboriginal engagement with the landscape is limited (by access, feelings about the place etc).

²⁰ Cairnes, L. 2004 Chapter 20 Condition, in *Assessment of the values of Kosciuszko National Park* pp. 253-264.

The enduring landscape survives, sufficiently intact to be a strong element of the site; for visitors, the strong sense of an 'enduring landscape' powerfully evokes a past time and moment in history.

A place of Aboriginal connection

A place of Aboriginal connection recognises the long and continuing connections between Aboriginal people and the whole landscape – land, water, plants, animals – and including totemic and spiritual connections.

These connections are evidenced in the physical fabric of the site: in its known Aboriginal sites (middens, burials, rock engravings), in the potential for extensive evidence that remains undisturbed, and in the aspects of enduring landscape described above.

The condition of the evidence of Aboriginal occupation is difficult to assess. It is considered likely that extensive areas of evidence remain undisturbed. Other areas have suffered considerable disturbance, including areas where buried human remains have been excavated, and midden deposits disturbed during the installation of infrastructure. The rock engravings are in 'faded' condition (Irish 2007: 20).

Changes to the landscape, including the clearing of vegetation, planting of exotic trees and the building of monuments in prominent locations have impacted on a sense of connection and welcome for many Aboriginal people whose families have long links to the area. The difficulties of maintaining an active connection to the place, a result of access difficulties combined with limited opportunities for Aboriginal people to contribute to the management of the place, has meant that associational and totemic relationships have been put at risk. As a consequence, traditions and knowledge that form part of the intangible heritage of the Meeting Place Precinct are at risk. However, current programs within the park offer opportunities to reverse these impacts over the next 5-10 years.

A place of history-making

The evidence of the concept – a place of history making – is strongly evident in the designed landscape and monuments, as well as in traditions and activities.

The pattern of clearing and the cultural plantings on the site are artefacts of the process of history making. The significant extant cultural plantings date from 1905 through to the 1930s, and within twenty years some of the earliest plantings may be nearing the end of their natural life. Other impacts on the condition of these cultural plantings include management practices, uses such as car parking resulting in ground compaction, damage by visitors, and natural factors (disease, climatic variation) which may shorten the life of individual specimens. Some of the cultural plantings, in particular the Tallowwood (*Eucalyptus microcorys*) and to a lesser extent Brush Box (*Lophostemon confertus*), Turpentine (*Syncarpia glomulifera*) and Willow Myrtle (*Agonis flexuosa*) have the potential to dominate the local native vegetation communities, impacting on the significance of the Meeting Place Precinct as a whole.

The monuments are also important elements that contribute, as a group and individually, to the significance of the Meeting Place Precinct as A place of history-making. A condition report was prepared on the commemorative plaques associated with the monuments in 2001, and treatments were recommended²¹. The current project does not include a detailed condition assessment of each of the monuments, and regular condition assessments are recommended in policy. In general, however, the physical fabric of the monuments is in good condition.

²¹ Cummins, A., 'Conservation Condition Report on Commemorative Plaques associated with the Monuments at Kurnell with Botany Bay National Park', report produced by Sydney Artefacts Conservation for NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, November 2001; and Cummins, A., 'Conservation Treatment Report on Commemorative Plaques associated with the Monuments at Kurnell with Botany Bay National Park', report produced by Sydney Artefacts Conservation for NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, May 2002.

Deliberate changes to the fabric and setting of some monuments, most commonly the installation of crazy paving and/or pipe rail guards around the monuments, and in some cases alterations to the monument itself (e.g. Cook's Well), have reduced their integrity. While such changes have reduced the integrity of some monuments, this can be reversed/ reinstated by the removal of later introduced elements such as crazy paving, pipe rail barriers, etc. However, the integrity of their function as elements of historical recall also remains high. This can be further maintained and enhanced through effective interpretation.

Changes to the monuments, and to the interpretation of the historical events, continues; this in itself is an important aspect of the Meeting Place Precinct as a location of history-making. Acknowledging this implies an acceptance that further changes to the memorial character of the Precinct's landscape, and indeed to the monuments themselves, may be acceptable. Any proposed change, however, would be subject to strict assessments of possible impacts to the recognised heritage significance of the place.

The intangible heritage has been the most at risk, with the introduction of National Parks management closing some doors and opening others. On the other hand, the active process of history-making offers the potential for the emergence of new ways of engaging with the place and understanding its contemporary meanings. The risk of inadvertently losing some traditions should reduce as the Conservation Management Plan is implemented.

A European settled landscape

The European settled landscape comprises the evidence remaining from two distinct 'settlement' periods, the 1788- 1890s period of clearing and farming, and the 1930s – 50s period of informal settlement in the caves along the foreshore and in the camping grounds.

There is limited physical evidence remaining of both periods. The evidence of the earlier period is restricted to areas of cleared landscape, two plant species which may be remnants²² and the archaeological evidence associated with Alpha Farm. These elements survive, but are clearly remnants, with limited integrity as a cultural landscape. The condition of the archaeological evidence is not known. The cleared area is the most distinct element, but is also an artefact of the use and development of area as a public park. The two plants which may be remnants of the farming period are also potent environmental weeds; the flax and African Olive are spreading into areas of local native vegetation and impacting on those values. The positioning of the pair of pines (*Araucaria heterophylla*) in front of Alpha House is also part of the evidence, however it is the position of the trees rather than the specimens themselves (which are clearly replacements); one of these trees is the wrong species and the top of the canopy of one is missing, impacting on the values.

The evidence of the camp settlements is limited to iron fixings, stone shelving, fireplaces, water troughs and rills cut into the sandstone cliffs. Elements of the pathway to Inscription Point are earlier. These remnants of the camp settlements are limited in extent, a result of the active removal of the dwellings in the 1950s/60s. These remnants are exposed to the erosive forces of wind and water²³ as well as the impacts of visitors traversing the area. It is not known if any archaeological evidence survives on the areas of camping grounds (assessed as low archaeological potential).

The intangible heritage aspects relate to personal and community memories and oral histories associated with the twentieth century camp settlements. Given the extent of change in the areas of these camp settlements and the period that has passed, recording of oral histories and personal memories, and gathering of images may assist in revealing and retaining important community and personal associations. The action underway to record oral histories associated with the Meeting Place Precinct is an important initiative in this regard²⁴.

²² New Zealand Flax (*Phormium tenax*) and African Olive (*Olea africana*).

²³ Most of the evidence is above high water mark (Design 5 2006: 87)..

²⁴ This action is an initiative of the Botany Bay National Park: Kurnell.

A place for leisure

The place for leisure is represented across the landscape of the Meeting Place Precinct through a wide range of elements: the park landscape with picnic areas and cricket ground, cultural plantings designed to improve its amenity, the ferry wharf and shed, Alpha House and the Discovery Centre, the setting and views across Botany Bay.

This landscape is substantially intact, a reflection of the primary ‘park’ management objective for more than a century. The cultural plantings vary in condition, depending on age, location and environmental factors. Some past plantings may have died or been removed as a result of damage; the extent of this loss is not able to be assessed because of the lack of detailed documentation of the plantings. A detailed condition assessment of individual cultural plantings has not been undertaken.

The open park-like nature of the picnic areas and cricket ground may be more pronounced than in the past, a result of the stronger contrast between these open areas and the height of the ‘bush’ areas which enclose the sides of the picnic area, surround the cricket pitch and cover the dune. The overall canopy appears to be higher than in the past as a result of non-local tree species (eg. Tallowood) spreading into these ‘bush’ areas and dominating the local native species. It is not known if this change is impacting associational values.

The use of the Meeting Place Precinct is an important aspect of the significance of the site as a ‘place for leisure’, and the current uses appear to closely reflect the range of uses allowed in the park over the last 50 or more years²⁵. An important change has been the loss of water access since the regular ferry service from La Perouse ceased in 1957; this loss potentially impacts on values. The associated structures – the wharf remnant and the ferry shed are incomplete through alteration and damage. Alpha House no longer retains a public use. The Discovery Centre retains its original purpose but the building has been altered in a way that has removed its orientation and links to the site.

Continuation of public use of the Meeting Place Precinct as a whole is essential to retaining significant community associations, even though some users may pose problems for park management, particularly in relation to collecting of marine resources (this area is a declared Intertidal Protection Zone and collection of shellfish is illegal). Park management encourages the continuation of traditions such as Christmas Day picnics by some families and cultural groups and this will help maintain the associational values of the site. Oral history and similar programs will help further reveal the nature and extent of community associations and will assist in the protection of these values.

Environmental threats

Apparent environmental threats, ecological threats, and human threats exist on the site; some of these are known, and others may occur in time.

Environmental threats include:

- storms, heavy rains and strong winds, causing structural damage through material weathering (monuments), cracking, and/or water ingress (buildings and collections) and erosion (sandstone surfaces, foreshore, sea wall, dune)
- weeds and invasive species
- pests and diseases
- condition of vegetation, senescence and die back
- pollution, including noise and smells associated with the nearby refineries and airport sites
- drought and unreliable rainfall

²⁵ There have been some relatively minor changes to the suite of uses over recent years.

- modified drainage
- climate change
- bushfires.

Installation of infrastructure associated with the desalination plant development will occur in other areas of Botany Bay National Park, outside of the Meeting Place Precinct. These works will have no direct impact on the historic precinct.

Management threats

Additional threats may arise from the carrying out of remedial or new works within the Precinct, which may occur in a manner inconsistent with the values and policies set out in this report and/or other DECC guideline and policy documents.

Other risks that may arise are those associate with the management of the Precinct, if Park staff are not mindful of the complex and layered values of the place, and their integrated nature, and where there may be a danger of one set of values being traded-off, or dominating, over another (i.e. favouring those items and interpretations of the site relating to Cook's arrival, at the expense of Aboriginal interpretations, or post-contact developments at the Meeting Place Precinct).

The Botany Bay National Park Plan of Management (NPWS, 2002) identifies a number of additional threats, some of which are applicable to the Meeting Place Precinct, and include:

- proliferation of informal walking tracks along 'desire lines', which contribute to erosion, may be dangerous, and can also diminish the aesthetic appeal of places.
- use of mountain bikes within the Precinct, which contribute to erosion of soils and gullyng of dunes. Mountain bike riding is sustainable only in areas where trails have been hardened.

3.10 Logistics and resources for effective management

Management of the Meeting Place Precinct will need to address a range of logistical and resource issues as part of developing sustainable management and conservation plans for the site. These include:

- conflicts between obligations under the Plan of Management, the Precinct Master Plan, statutory obligations, and extreme events
- conflicts between these obligations and the availability of financial resources
- availability of skills and other human resource limitations
- availability of consistent and sound heritage advice
- sharing of responsibilities between Botany Bay National Park staff and C&HD of DECC.

3.11 Stakeholders & associated communities

A wide range of people and organisations have an interest in the Meeting Place Precinct specifically and Botany Bay National Park more generally.

Stakeholder organisations

During the development of the Master Plan (2003) a consultation process engaged with a wide range of stakeholders. Consultation has continued as the Master Plan is implemented. Stakeholders with an active interest in the Meeting Place Precinct include:

- Australian Garden History Society (Sydney & Northern NSW Branch)

- Botany Council
- Botany Bay Catchment Alliance
- Botany Bay Environmental Education Centre
- Caltex
- Guriwal Aboriginal Corporation
- Historic Houses Trust of NSW
- Koorie Centre, University of Sydney
- Kurnell Incorporated
- Kurnell Progress and Precinct Residents' Association Inc.
- Kurnell Regional Environmental Planning Council
- Kurrunulla Aboriginal Corporation
- La Perouse Local Aboriginal Land Council
- National Parks Association (Southern Sydney Branch)
- National Trust of Australia (NSW)²⁶
- NSW Department of Aboriginal Affairs
- NSW Department of Planning (Botany Bay Strategy)
- NSW Fisheries
- NSW Heritage Office
- South Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils (SSROC) (the Botany Bay Program)
- Sutherland Shire Council
- Sutherland Shire Environment Centre
- Sutherland Shire Historical Society
- The Australian Museum.

Other stakeholders who may have an interest could include other local tourism operators, schools and education groups, ethnic communities and others who were not specifically identified in the consultative processes.

Associated communities

Some of these stakeholders are 'associated communities' that is communities with recognised special cultural associations with the Meeting Place Precinct. These communities are:

- Aboriginal community, including people with traditional links to the site and La Perouse Aboriginal community representatives
- the local Kurnell community
- the broader Sydney community

²⁶ The National Trust of *Australia* (NSW) is a heritage advocacy group concerned with the preservation of built heritage. The National Trust of Australia (NSW) has listed the 'Botany Bay Entrance' (including both the north and south headlands of Botany Bay) as a classified place in its register.

- the Australian community more broadly, for whom the place has symbolic value
- the broader Aboriginal Australian community for whom the place symbolises the moment when colonisation starts⁷
- PWG and former NPWS staff
- communities with a long-standing use of the site for recreation and community gatherings
- people for whom the place may have value through past, or long and continuing associations with the place.

Views expressed

Viewpoints of various stakeholders that are relevant to this Conservation Management Plan have been gathered in response to:

- The Meeting Place Precinct, Botany Bay National Park, Kurnell - Master Plan (NPWS, 2003)
- *Heritage Assessment* (Design 5 2006)
- Aboriginal views, through consultation processes being conducted by Dean Kelly (this is an ongoing consultative process).

No additional community consultation has been undertaken as part of the present project.

Through each of the above projects and consultative processes a range of interests and perspectives have emerged:

- The natural environment and the cultural heritage aspects of the place are valued, including Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal history and heritage. There is pride expressed in the place for its unique historic, natural and cultural values.
- Wide recognition that both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal stories need to be told; the European encounter story should be recognised but within a broader context.
- The naming of the place is sensitive.
- The community are supportive of improvements and conservation works to the park.
- The Master Plan proposal for the rejuvenation of the freshwater stream is supported.
- The Master Plan proposal for the selective restoration of 1770s vegetation communities is supported, along with retention of the significant cultural plantings.
- There is a perceived opportunity for the Meeting Place Precinct to represent a way towards achieving reconciliation and the meeting of cultures.
- There is need for a strong community engagement strategy that ensures understanding of and confidence in decision-making processes, the intent of proposed works and allocation of funding.
- There is a need to involve the local community in the development of landscape plans that detail how the Kurnell edge of the park and mature exotic tree population will be treated, and also address other issues such as perceived fire risk.

3.12 Other issues and opportunities

A number of issues and opportunities arising from the statutory and non-statutory frameworks discussed above have been identified during the preparation of this report, and are relevant to the current and future management and conservation of the Meeting Place Precinct. These include:

- The opportunity to retain and recover the significance of the site through carefully guiding any construction and/or reconstruction of sites, landscape design, and interpretation. Another key part of retaining and recovering significance relates to the mitigation of threats through the implementation of programs such as ongoing maintenance and fire prevention plans, for built fabric, important sites and natural areas.
- The opportunity to build support in the community associated with the park, and the wider Aboriginal community, and through interpretation and education, promote the significance of the Meeting Place Precinct within the broader Botany Bay National Park to local and associated communities, user groups, and visitors—and equally, to the greater Australian public.
- Capitalising on opportunities identified in consultation for co-operative management to achieve shared goals between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal stakeholders, user and community groups. Opportunities may also exist for skills and knowledge exchanges between these groups.
- The opportunity to acknowledge new research and new information as it comes to light.

The development of excellent conservation and management policies for the Meeting Place Precinct represents an opportunity for the PWG and DECC to continue the direction established in the DECC 2006-2010 Corporate Plan, which, by promoting a holistic approach to environmental and cultural care, conservation and management, incorporates and integrates natural and ecological values, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal cultural values, and contemporary community and stakeholder values.

In line with the principles and direction established in the DECC Corporate Plan, it will be necessary to prioritise resources accordingly. While the importance of the ongoing involvement of associated groups and communities should be a priority, there are many programs that should also be prioritised, including:

- The review of NPWS strategies, in light of:
 - their age and the need for regular review to maintain relevant content;
 - the change of administration and responsibilities through transformation of NPWS to the PWG, and absorption within the DECC;
- Entering new data and updating existing data for entries in the Historic Heritage Information Management System (HHIMS) and the Aboriginal Heritage Information Management System (AHIMS); and to render the data relevant to the Meeting Place Precinct distinct from that relating to the Botany Bay National Park in general;
- Preparing and implementing cyclic maintenance plans for all significant sites within the Precinct.

The 'precautionary principle' should be invoked in any conservation decision where conflict is apparent in the management of natural, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal values. Assessment processes must be transparent, consistent, accountable, and involve all necessary and affected stakeholders. They must also be subject to peer review and assessment by relevant DECC and scientific staff. Assessments must also satisfy the concerns of relevant statutory authorities such as the Heritage Council of NSW. Claims of the costs and benefits of proposed actions affecting the values of the Meeting Place Precinct must be substantiated by sound scientific and economic evidence.

4 VISION AND PHILOSOPHY

4.1 Introduction

This section introduces the idea of an overarching vision and statement of philosophy as a link between significance (Section 2) and detailed policy (Section 5).

The Meeting Place Precinct is a place of national significance. It offers outstanding opportunities to tell the story of the arrival in Australia of Europeans, the consequences for Aboriginal people, the ways in which Australians have understood this story in the past and the opportunities it offers for new and richer understandings through continuing these processes of history making and through experiencing the place.

4.2 Vision

The Botany Bay National Park Plan of Management establishes the primary management objective for the whole park as being 'to protect, maintain and enhance the values identified in Botany Bay National Park'. Three specific objectives which help guide the 'meeting place' vision include:

- To make Botany Bay National Park a place of significance to all Australians and to contribute to their sense of identity as Australians
- To develop the theme and symbolism of 'meeting place' between the land, the Aboriginal people, and the people who have arrived in Australia since 1770
- To provide a lasting venue for recognition and celebration of Australian culture, especially Indigenous culture²⁷

PWG/DECC has captured their aspirations for the Meeting Place Precinct on the new Where Cultures Meet web site (www.wheremculturesmeet.com.au) which describes the precinct as a 'meeting place' of cultures - referencing the past, the present and the future. When the concept is fully realised, they hope that visitors to the site will be:

- Intrigued by how Aboriginal people used traditional knowledge to live sustainably with the land around Botany Bay for thousands of years
- Mindful of the impact of European colonisation on Aboriginal people and respectful of their ongoing connection to land and culture
- Inspired by the incredible achievements of James Cook in reaching and navigating these shores
- Interested in the first contact between the crew of the Endeavour and the local Aboriginal people - a meeting of two very different cultures
- Fascinated by the work of the Endeavour botanists, Banks and Solander, who identified, named and made an extensive collection of Australian native flora
- Impressed that the park provides a "meeting place" where people of many cultures can gather, talk and celebrate Australia's shared history.

These ideas are, of themselves, a vision for the site, and create a larger vision and purpose.

Conserving the natural and cultural heritage values of the place is the focus of this Conservation Management Plan, and the vision within this plan therefore needs to recognise:

²⁷ *Botany Bay National Park Plan of Management (POM)*, prepared by NPWS, adopted by the Minister for the Environment on 27 May 2002.

- The primacy of heritage values in the management of the site.
- That the primary significance of the site rests in its enduring landscape, its continuing Aboriginal connections and its role in understanding the story of the 1770 encounter, a key story in the process of Australian history-making. The site also has other important heritage values that need recognition and protection.
- That many diverse meanings are attributed to this place and these meanings are not fixed – they have changed and will change again. New understandings about this place and its meanings will be created through experiencing the place and appreciating its multiple histories.

The vision is:

The Meeting Place Precinct, as the primary historic core of the site, will be the place where the stories of the encounter between Dharawal people and the Cook expedition will be told through experiencing and understanding the land, the peoples who have come here, their cultures and the ways in which they have understood that moment of encounter.

Within the Meeting Place Precinct, the tangible and intangible heritage values will be recognised and respected, and allowed to co-exist. Both conservation and change will seek to reveal the significance of the place in all its complexity.

4.3 Philosophy

Defining a conservation policy for the Meeting Place Precinct requires recognition of all aspects of significance and resolution of the issues, opportunities and constraints summarised in Section 3.

The heritage significance of the place imposes an obligation to consider and protect the multiple and layered heritage values of the Meeting Place Precinct: the tangible and the intangible heritage.

For the Meeting Place Precinct the tangible heritage comprises the underlying landscape, the rich remnants of the local native or 1770s vegetation, the structures and plantings designed to mark the 1770s encounter, along with archaeological evidence, later structures and plantings associated with early farming and the use of the site as a park. As well there are objects in Australia and elsewhere that illuminate important stories.

The intangible heritage is more challenging to define. It includes many traditions and connections, some with a long history and others more recent. Aboriginal traditions, knowledge, names and language are a remarkable and significant component. The development of ceremonies to mark the encounter, in celebration and in opposition, are another notable component, shown in part through the landscape. Many people have memories, stories and photographs about the place, and together these comprise another important part of its intangible heritage. Together all of these aspects indicate the strong connections between people and this place, each bringing to it their own story, and perhaps seeking from the place an understanding of the past, to hear others' stories or simply to experience the land and seascape of the Meeting Place Precinct.

The heritage significance of the place has been synthesised and understood as comprising a series of layered and interrelated places (Context 2007: Section 2):

- The enduring landscape
- A place of Aboriginal connections
- A European settled landscape
- A place of history-making

- A place for leisure.

Because of the complex nature of the Meeting Place Precinct and the contested and unresolved nature of its history, this place offers an outstanding opportunity to understand and conserve tangible and intangible heritage together, recognising that the fabric of this place – while important – may not always be sacrosanct.

The Australia ICOMOS *Burra Charter* and the *Natural Heritage Charter* offer guidance and principles for conserving heritage places and values, and these have been considered in establishing the principles below.

Principles

The following principles provide the fundamental philosophical basis for the Meeting Place Precinct conservation policy.

Recognise all aspects of significance

The Meeting Place Precinct has many aspects of significance. Section 2 offers five integrated concepts about significance that seek to recognise all aspects of significance within a broader framework. These concepts are proposed as the foundation for policy.

The significance of the Meeting Place Precinct as a whole place, and of its component parts will be addressed in policy.

Not all aspects of significance are equally important and the conservation policy will be informed by relative significance.

Appreciation of heritage values will be an ongoing process

Some heritage values of the Meeting Place Precinct are relatively well understood. New appreciations of the heritage values of the physical landscape, setting and fabric of the Meeting Place will emerge as a result of current and future investigations, for example through a growing understanding of the 1770s vegetation communities, interpretation of past archaeological investigations, appreciation of Aboriginal community understandings of the significance of the land and sea, and so on.

Many aspects of significance related to people's connections to place will also emerge over time as more work is done with particular communities. Essentially this work is about creating opportunities for people to express how they feel about the place, its history and its future, and the current Meeting Place Project offers a starting point for this work. This principle applies to Aboriginal and settler Australian communities, and also to communities who will, in the future, become part of this place.

Conservation of heritage values at the Meeting Place Precinct will recognise the likelihood that new information and new understandings of heritage significance will emerge over time and the conservation policy will be designed to accommodate this as an ongoing process.

Respect and support connections

The Meeting Place Precinct will be conserved as a place that has and continues to allow, many community connections to be made with this place. Opportunities to strengthen these connections will be supported.

For local Aboriginal people the connections to the Meeting Place Precinct arise from their long and continuing connections to the area.

For settler Australians, community connections with the Meeting Place Precinct arise from the history of the site, participation in commemorations and in the public use of the land as a park for over a century. For the local community, these connections relate to long use and a sense of personal connection to this place.

And for Indigenous and settler Australians alike who have not visited this place, the imagined place may be a powerful metaphor for Australian 'foundation' or invasion.

The nature of the Meeting Place Precinct, its significance and the fundamental importance of the community connections offers PWG/DECC the opportunity to build strong and ongoing relationships with these associated communities.

Demonstrate new possibilities for Aboriginal connections

The Meeting Place Precinct as a place with long and continuing connections for local Aboriginal people – both traditional and through long association – offers opportunities to build connections that will last into the future.

Aboriginal people have expressed concern that their connections with the site, and the opportunity to pass on knowledge, traditions and connections to the next generation are at risk of being lost.

The significance of the Meeting Place Precinct, and the possibility of new interpretations of the 1770 'encounter' and its historical ramifications, requires strong and enduring Aboriginal connections, not just with the place but also in the way the place is conserved and managed. Possibilities existing in relation to in caring for country; in telling stories; in reintroducing traditions, language; in engaging in management.

Recognise the process of history-making as an important component of significance

History-making, that is the interpretation of and active dialogue about the history of the site is, and should continue to be, a key process that shapes the Meeting Place Precinct.

The process of history-making needs to engage everyone. It should not be seen as an activity, but rather as an overall approach to the place. The process of history-making needs to be relevant to those who come to the site, those who manage the site and those for whom it is a subject of interest from afar.

History-making is also a practice and a tradition at the Meeting Place and, as such, is an important aspect of significance. Ceremony is an important part of the tradition, as is memorialisation, and policy will need to address how these traditions can continue as practice without freezing the interpretation of the place at one point in time.

A consequence is that the landscape of the Meeting Place Precinct will change as an expression of the dynamic nature of the history-making process. Such change however, will be guided by the conservation policy framework, and will be designed to conserve significance.

Recognise interpretation as a core part of conservation

Interpretation involves all the different ways that the cultural significance of the place may be presented and shared. This includes how the physical fabric of the place is cared for, the uses and activities allowed, the introduction of explanatory processes (signs, tours, displays etc). Interpretation also has the potential to impact on the significance of a place.

At the Meeting Place Precinct, interpretation will be a core conservation activity, exploring and explaining the significance of the place and encouraging new or as yet un-revealed aspects of significance to emerge.

Use of the place will accord with significance

The Meeting Place Precinct has been used as a public park since 1899 and as a place of commemoration since 1821. These uses are part of the significance of the place and should continue. However, these uses may have the potential to impact on significance, and will need to be managed in a way that will help retain all aspects of significance.

Aboriginal connections to this site pre-date these uses, and are fundamental to the significance of the site; re-establishing Aboriginal community connections may require that parts of the site are available primarily for Aboriginal people at certain times or for certain purposes.

5 POLICY

5.1 Conservation policies for the Meeting Place Precinct

Foundations

This section sets out a foundation for ensuring values-based decision making for conserving and managing the Meeting Place Precinct into the future.

Conservation policy needs to consider:

- The Meeting Place Precinct as a whole, within its wider landscape setting
- The five concepts of significance, and the contribution of parts of the Meeting Place Precinct to each
- Groups and assemblages of individual elements, and
- Individual elements.

The **elements** of the Meeting Place Precinct refers to tangible and intangible aspects of the place that may contribute to its cultural significance. The **significant tangible or physical elements** include:

- The place itself: landscape, vegetation, buildings, structures, archaeological evidence
- The setting: Botany Bay and the headlands
- Related places: La Perouse
- Related collections, objects and records.

Intangible heritage refers to aspects of heritage that are embodied in traditions, knowledge, cultural and social practices, language, performance (etc) rather than through tangible places and objects. Intangible heritage values are the meanings, memories and associations that people have with a place. The **significant intangible elements** of the Meeting Place Precinct therefore are both the intangible heritage (performative practice) and the intangible heritage values and include:

- Uses: long-established uses and activities
- Cultural practices: social and cultural practices including gatherings, performance, art and other cultural expressions
- Knowledge: knowledge that comes from traditional associations or long-established use of a place and may include knowledge of language, names, stories, natural processes (etc)
- Associations: the special connections that exist between people and a place, and for the Meeting Place Precinct there are multiple associations that contribute to significance
- Meanings: the meanings attributed to the place – what the place signifies, indicates, evokes or expresses (Burra Charter Article 1.17)
- Totemic (spiritual) and kinship relationships between Indigenous peoples and a place.

In reality, the intangible and the tangible are closely connected in the Meeting Place Precinct and policy will need to be sensitive to both aspects.

Principles

Section 4 establishes seven over-arching principles which provide the fundamental philosophical basis for the Meeting Place Precinct conservation policy:

- Recognise all aspects of significance
- Appreciation of heritage values will be an ongoing process
- Respect and support connections
- Demonstrate new possibilities for Aboriginal connections
- Recognise the process of history-making as an important component of significance
- Recognise interpretation as a core part of conservation
- Use of the place will accord with significance.

The Botany Bay National Park POM establishes the primary management objective for the whole park as being '*to protect, maintain and enhance the values identified in Botany Bay National Park*' with the following specific objectives:

- To make Botany Bay National Park a place of significance to all Australians and to contribute to their sense of identity as Australians;
- To develop the theme and symbolism of 'meeting place' between the land, the Aboriginal people, and the people who have arrived in Australia since 1770;
- To provide a lasting venue for recognition and celebration of Australian culture, especially Indigenous culture;
- To protect, and where necessary rehabilitate, the landscapes, ecosystems, vegetation communities, flora and faunal habitats of the park;
- To conserve historic features and significant cultural landscapes;
- To promote an understanding and awareness of the natural and cultural heritage of the park through appropriate events, story telling, gatherings and celebration; and
- To recognise the relationship and dependence of protected areas to their surrounding landscapes and communities by promoting a cohesive and holistic approach to the management of the natural and cultural heritage of Botany Bay.²⁸

Obligations

This Conservation Management Plan further illuminates the values of the Meeting Place Precinct with Botany Bay National Park. The primary obligation arising from this understanding of values is to ensure that the significance of the Meeting Place Precinct is retained for present and future generations. More specifically, and considering the significance of the Meeting Place Precinct as expressed in the *Heritage Assessment* and Section 2 of this Conservation Management Plan, these obligations include:

- Recognising and conserving all aspects of the heritage significance of the Meeting Place Precinct, framed by the five over-arching concepts of significance in this report (Context 2007: Section 2).
- Conserving the significant physical elements that contribute to the significance of the place, including the underlying landscape, the local native (1770s) vegetation and cultural

²⁸ *Botany Bay National Park Plan of Management (POM)*, prepared by NPWS, adopted by the Minister for the Environment on 27 May 2002.

plantings, the extensive evidence of Aboriginal history, and assemblage of monuments and commemorative spaces.

- Respecting, retaining and supporting the significant associations between people and this place, including enduring Aboriginal connections, and providing opportunities for participation in conservation, management and interpretation.
- Respecting the significant and diverse meanings of this place to people, including spiritual meanings, and supporting activities and processes that enable people to engage with these meanings.
- Retaining and enhancing the evocative experiential qualities of the place created by the landscape and setting, along with the overlain commemorative design.
- Actively encouraging the respectful co-existence of the multiple cultural values attributed to this place by different people and cultural groups.
- Engaging people in understanding and developing their own perspectives on the history of this place as part of an ongoing process of history-making, commemoration and celebration.
- Managing this place in accordance with best-practice conservation principles, recognising that the nature of this place and its values will require particular care in all aspects of management and monitoring.

Relative significance

Tables 1 and 2 in this report (Context 2007: Section 2) recognise that elements within the Meeting Place Precinct may contribute to the significance of the Meeting Place Precinct as a whole, and ranks their relative contribution as exceptional, high, moderate or low. Intrusive elements are those that impact on the significance of the place as a whole.

The *Heritage Assessment* (Design 5 2006) also ranks the relative significance of each element individually (or group of elements) in relation to the State Heritage criteria, using the categories of national, state, regional, local significance.

This terminology is used in the conservation policy, and where necessary a distinction is made between the relative contribution to the significance of the place as a whole and the significance of the element.

Defining conservation processes

The policies outlined in this section make reference to a number of key conservation processes related to the management of heritage values. The terms used have been derived from the Burra Charter²⁹ and Australian Natural Heritage Charter (AHNC)³⁰, and the definitions used are provided below:

Adaptation: means modifying a place to suit the existing use or a proposed use (Burra Charter Article 1.9).

Conserve: Conservation means all the processes of looking after a place so as to retain its cultural significance (Burra Charter Article 1.4).

Maintain: Maintenance involves the provision of continuous protective care of the fabric and setting of a place and is distinguished from repair. Repair involves restoration or reconstruction (Burra Charter Article 1.5).

²⁹ *The Burra Charter. The Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance*, 1999.

³⁰ *The Australian Natural Heritage Charter for the conservation of places of natural heritage significance* (Second Edition), Commonwealth of Australia, 2002.

Preserve: preservation means maintaining the fabric of a place in its existing state and retarding deterioration (Burra Charter Article 1.6).

Use: use or uses means the functions of a place, as well as the activities and practices that may occur at the place (Burra Charter Article 1.10).

Compatible use: means a use which respects the cultural significance of a place. Such a use involves no, or minimal, impact on cultural significance (Burra Charter Article 1.11).

Recover or reveal aspects of significance: conservation processes may assist in recovering or revealing significance as an outcome of the processes. For example, restoration and reconstruction should reveal culturally significant aspects of the place. Removal of intrusive elements is designed to reveal significance; removal of a significant element may also be a conservation action where its removal would recover or enhance an aspect of the place that is of greater significance (Burra Charter Article 18).

Restore: restoration involves returning a place (or habitat) to an earlier known state by repairing damage (or degradation), removing accretions (or introduced species) or by reassembling existing components without the introduction of new material (or by reinstatement), and should only be carried out where sufficient evidence exists to inform the reconstruction (or reinstatement) (Burra Charter Article 1.7; ANHC 1.24 – 1.25).

Reinstate: reinstatement is a conservation process defined in the Natural Heritage Charter and specifically means introducing to a place one or more known species or elements of habitat that are known to have existed there naturally at a previous time, but that can no longer be found at that place (ANHC 1.25). It is closely related to restoration with the primary difference being that in the case of reinstatement there is no physical evidence of the species or elements of habitat at present within the place.

Reconstruct: reconstruction involves returning a place to an earlier known state with the introduction of material that is new to that place, and should only be carried out where sufficient evidence exists to inform the reconstruction (Burra Charter Articles 1.8 & 20). Reconstruction may be appropriate where the significance of a place is reduced through damage or alteration and where reconstruction would enhance significance.

Interpret: interpretation means all of the ways of presenting the significance of the place. Conservation process may create an interpretation of a place; where the significance of a place is not readily apparent, interpretation may be introduced to enhance understanding. Interpretation must always be culturally appropriate (Burra Charter Articles 1.17 & 25).

5.2 Policy structure

Conservation policies for the Meeting Place Precinct are contained in Sections 5.3 to 5.20 below.

Each major policy grouping contains:

- Objectives – outlining the desired end point that is informing the policy direction.
- Rationale – explains the (values-based) reasons why a particular policy direction has been established.
- Policy – the policy is contained within a succinct set of numbered statements which together form the requirements for conserving the significance of the Meeting Place Precinct, as established in Section 2.0 of this Conservation Management Plan (Context 2007) and in the *Heritage Assessment* (Design 5 2006).

The policies cover eighteen broad policy groupings (see below). For any desired management action, a number of policies may apply. Cross-referencing between policies has been provided to assist the user.

Place as a whole – Section 5.3: contains over-arching policies designed to achieve the conservation of the Meeting Place Precinct by recognising the importance of both tangible and intangible elements, establishing appropriate conservation actions based on relative significance, and recognising the importance of associations, the processes of history –making and interpretation. Reading of this section is fundamental to an understanding of the conservation policy.

Living connections – Section 5.4: focuses on connections between people and this place, and provides policies designed to recognise, respect and strengthen significant Aboriginal and other community connections, to support the telling of all of the stories that contribute to an understanding of this place and to acknowledge how the meanings of the Meeting Place Precinct have and will continue to change over time.

Landscape – Section 5.5: focuses on the cultural landscape of the Meeting Place Precinct, introducing policies designed to conserve significant landscape qualities, elements and meanings and protect them from adverse impacts that may arise through processes of change. It identifies the specific elements and provides appropriate conservation policies. It also provide policy responses to conserving historical circulation patterns, approaches to the place and paths; protecting views and the broader setting; conserving the enduring land and water forms; and the requirements that need to be met if new elements are to be introduced into the landscape.

Vegetation – Section 5.6: provides clear policies and a decision-making framework for the retention, maintenance, reinstatement and replacement of significant vegetation – both individual specimens and vegetation communities. It covers commemorative plantings, structural and historic plantings, other introduced plantings and local native plant communities.

Aboriginal cultural heritage – Section 5.7: provides policies for the recognition and protection of tangible and intangible Aboriginal cultural heritage as embodied in the landscape, in plants and animals, in knowledge, and in the known extent of Aboriginal archaeological evidence contained in the landscape of the Meeting Place Precinct.

Archaeology – Section 5.8: focuses on archaeological resources and provides a policy framework to ensure the protection of these resources through recognition of the archaeological sensitivity of the place as a whole.

Built environment – Section 5.9: covers the key buildings – Alpha House, Discovery Centre, Education Centre, Ferry shelter shed, cave dwellings, entry booth, anchor and flagpoles at the entry, providing detailed policies to guide conservation and change.

Monuments – Section 5.10: covers all of the monuments within the Meeting Place Precinct, providing general conservation policies as well as specific guidance for each individual monument.

Objects, collections and records – Section 5.11: provides a general policy framework that recognises the importance of objects, collections and records to understanding and conserving the significance of the place as a whole. Detailed policies are being developed as part of a separate project.

Use, access and visitors – Section 5.12: establishes policies to ensure that the uses of the Meeting Place Precinct accord with its significance, to facilitate access by associated communities and to support continuing visitor use, while reducing any adverse impacts that could result from over-use, inappropriate activities or the development of visitor facilities.

Archival recording – Section 5.13: establishes when and how archival recordings should be made.

Consultation and participation – Section 5.14: establishes the basis for a community engagement plan for the Meeting Place Precinct.

Research – Section 5.15: provides a policy basis for the development of research activities, including facilitating research and investigations that continue to build an understanding of its significance and, through oral history research, of its history.

Interpretation – Section 5.16: establishes policy to guide interpretation through the use of the five concepts of significance and an understanding of all of the stories and meanings of the place. Policies also guide how interpretative media may be introduced into the landscape.

Managing change – Section 5.17: establishes the key process for assessing proposed changes.

Management and decision-making processes – Section 5.18: provides a policy framework for management decision-making, including consideration of consultation.

Monitoring – Section 5.19: details the approach to monitoring, the use of indicators and establishment of a program of monitoring.

Adoption, implementation and review – Section 5.20: focuses on the need for adoption and review of the Conservation Management Plan, adequate resourcing, and processes to resolve conflicts between policies amongst other things.

5.3 Place as a whole

The Meeting Place Precinct comprises the place as a whole, within the wider setting of Botany Bay, and with all of its tangible and intangible heritage elements.

Objectives

- To conserve the significance of the Meeting Place Precinct as a whole, recognising and respecting its current associations and meanings, retaining and conserving significant fabric and facilitating ongoing processes of community engagement with the place.

Rationale

The Meeting Place Precinct is a defined area within the Botany Bay National Park that contains the 1899 declared Captain Cook's Landing Place Reserve and some adjoining land that together form the core of a cultural landscape of outstanding significance for its place in telling the story of Australian colonisation and Indigenous dispossession.

The Meeting Place Precinct, through commemoration, celebration and protest, has witnessed the expression of the many different and changing meanings that the 1770 landfall of the Endeavour has inspired, reflecting the perspectives of successive generations, and the different cultural viewpoints of the diverse peoples that make up Australia today.

To the extent that these processes are evident in the landscape, all significant physical evidence should be considered for conservation. However, as much of the significance of this place is embodied in connections, use and activities, and experiences, these intangible aspects also need to be respected and retained.

In this sense it is the place as a whole, people's experience of the place and the processes of telling and retelling its history that is the critical foundation for conservation policy.

Policy

This section contains the overarching policies for the Meeting Place Precinct, and establishes the basis for the policies contained in Sections 5.3. – 5.20. These overarching policies are based on the Principles in Section 4 and the obligations described in Section 5.1.

- 5.3.1 The Meeting Place Precinct will be managed and conserved in a way that recognises the importance of the place as a whole, in addition to the values of individual elements.

- 5.3.2 In conserving the significance of the Meeting Place Precinct as a whole, the contribution of both tangible and intangible elements will be recognised and respected.
- 5.3.3 In conserving the Meeting Place Precinct as a whole, conservation of the three primary concepts of significance should be given precedence over the two secondary concepts of significance should any conflicting conservation requirements arise.
- 5.3.4 Conservation of individual elements will be based on their contribution to the significance of the place as a whole and to the concepts of significance in Policy 5.3.2 (see Table 2, Section 2):
- elements of exceptional and high heritage significance must be conserved and maintained
 - elements of moderate heritage significance should be conserved, but may be removed where this would allow the recovery of aspects or elements of greater significance
 - elements of little heritage significance may be removed following careful consideration and recording (see Policy 5.13 – Archival recording)
 - elements that are considered intrusive to the significance of the Meeting Place Precinct should be removed.
- 5.3.5 Actions that restore, recover or reinstate elements of exceptional and high significance and that enhance the significance of the Meeting Place Precinct as a whole Precinct are supported.
- 5.3.6 Understandings of the significance of the Meeting Place Precinct as a whole may change as a result of new research, site-based investigations, or changing community appreciation of the meanings of this place. Such changes may require a review of the assessed significance prior to decision-making or action.
- 5.3.7 The Meeting Place Precinct as a whole will be conserved and managed to ensure that the existence of multiple cultural values and meanings attributed to place will be recognised and respected. Further, the co-existence of cultural values will be recognised, respected and encouraged, especially where these values conflict³¹, and the *Code on the Ethics of Co-existence in conserving significant places*³² will be used to guide management processes.
- 5.3.8 Communities and groups for whom the Meeting Place Precinct as a whole has special associations or meanings, or who have special cultural responsibilities for the place will be involved in decisions that may impact on this aspect of its significance. This includes Aboriginal people (see Section 5.4).
- 5.3.9 The Meeting Place Precinct is a part of a wider landscape, and the setting of the Meeting Place Precinct – Botany Bay (including the northern headland and La Perouse) and the other parts of the Botany Bay National Park (South) – contributes to its significance. The attributes, qualities and connections evident in this setting that contribute to the significance of the Meeting Place Precinct as a whole should be conserved.
- 5.3.10 In relation to the conservation of the values, the primary use of the Meeting Place Precinct as a whole will be for the understanding of the place, its history and the multiple meanings it holds for people.

³¹ *The Burra Charter: The Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance* (Australia ICOMOS 1999).

³² *Code on the Ethics of Co-existence in conserving significant places* (Australia ICOMOS 1998).

- 5.3.11 The experience of being in the Meeting Place Precinct is strongly evocative, as a result of the qualities of its 'enduring' land and waters – including a sense of connection to an Aboriginal landscape and history - and the retained 'bush' areas. The local native vegetation species within the existing bush areas that enhance these experiences will be restored and reinstated, and conserved.
- 5.3.12 Interpretation of the Meeting Place Precinct as a whole will respect the significance of the place as a whole and its significant elements, tangible and intangible, and seek to present the multiple meanings of the place.
- 5.3.13 Priorities for conservation action on significant elements within the Meeting Place Precinct will be based on:
- the significance of the element in terms of its contribution to the significance of the Meeting Place Precinct as a whole
 - the significance of the element in terms of its relative importance as assessed against the NSW Heritage Register criteria
 - the immediacy and potential impact of any risk or threat that is prompting the conservation action.

5.4 Living connections

The significance of the Meeting Place Precinct is strongly linked to its symbolic meanings and community connections. These are expressed in the five concepts of significance, and in particular in **A place of Aboriginal connections** and **A place of history making**, but also in **The enduring landscape**, **A place for leisure** and **A European settled landscape**.

Aboriginal community connections are long-standing and link to traditional ownership of the land as well as other local connections with this site. Other communities have specific and long-standing connections as well: local residents; people with connections to the informal settlements of the 1930s-50s; communities and groups who come to mark historical events or engage in their own community's social gatherings. Many people have a long history of visiting the site.

The creation of this place as a venue for commemorating and interpreting the start of the colonisation of Australia has made it a focus of national sentiment and interest, both through celebration and protest, and therefore a place where the processes of 'history-making' are evident. On this site, the processes of history-making include public events designed to express particular sentiments about the past, park-based interpretation programs, and community, family and personal visits. For some people, avoiding going to the site expresses their feelings, and this equally part of that history-making process.

The *Park Management Policy Manual* (2007: 144) recognises that DECC has a 'special responsibility for finding creative and positive ways for the DECC and Aboriginal people to move forward together with a shared understanding of the past'. This may include working together on management, providing cultural access, education and interpretation and commercial partnership. The fundamental principle is the involvement of Aboriginal people in determining the most appropriate management of Aboriginal cultural heritage.

These responsibilities also extend to enabling Aboriginal people to continue and strengthen their connections with the Meeting Place Precinct and Botany Bay National Park by assisting with access, enabling the use of resources³³ for cultural purposes, supporting the revitalisation of language and offering employment opportunities.

³³ Resources are defined as 'the native and introduced plants and animals and inorganic materials in the landscape' and cultural resource use as 'the collecting of native and introduced plants and

Objectives

- To recognise, respect and retain significant associations including:
 - Aboriginal community connections, deriving from traditional and contemporary associations, and connected to knowledge, spiritual and totemic relationships, cultural traditions, and a desire to establish new and enduring relationships as traditional owners, managers and interpreters of this place
 - local community of Kurnell
 - communities with a long-standing use of the site for recreation and community gatherings
 - people for whom the place may have value through past, or long and continuing associations with the place
 - visitors, and
 - the wider Australian community.
- To recognise and respect the multiple symbolic meanings and cultural values attributed to the Meeting Place Precinct by all associated cultural groups.
- To support continuation, re-establishment or revival of significant associations.
- To build effective relationships through opportunities for meaningful participation.
- To support the telling of all the stories of the place, in all their complexity.
- To value the experience of the place and the opportunities it offers to reflect and participate as the primary means of understanding the significance of the place to all associated cultural groups.
- To acknowledge that the meanings of the Meeting Place Precinct will change over time.

Rationale

The Meeting Place Precinct is a locus of community connections and history-making activities. These aspects of heritage may be described as ‘intangible’ to distinguish them from place and fabric, but they nevertheless have a strong cultural reality.

Policy

Aboriginal people

- 5.4.1 Aboriginal associations, deriving from traditional and contemporary associations with the Meeting Place Precinct will be strengthened through initiatives designed to assist and support Aboriginal people’s participation in planning, managing and interpreting this place. These initiatives may include:
- providing Aboriginal community/people with the information that they need to enable them to participate effectively
 - enabling access to land and sea resources for cultural purposes
 - assisting Aboriginal people to access the Meeting Place Precinct (see also Policy 5.4.13)
 - hands-on management

animals and other natural materials for medicinal, subsistence or other cultural purposes’ (NSW Government *Cultural Resource Use – Whole of Government Framework*).

- recording, sharing and use of language (see also policy 5.4.6 and 5.16.13)
 - rebuilding connections to the site and associated language, culture and activities
 - community education and visitor interpretation.
- 5.4.2 Aboriginal knowledge, spiritual and totemic relationships, and cultural traditions relevant to the Meeting Place Precinct and its wider landscape will be respected. Where agreeable to Aboriginal people, this knowledge may be shared with managers of and/or visitors to the Meeting Place Precinct to enable them to gain a richer appreciation of Aboriginal history and culture.
- 5.4.3 Regular and ongoing consultative processes will be established between Botany Bay National Park/Meeting Place Precinct and Aboriginal community/people.
- 5.4.4 Visits to the Meeting Place Precinct by Aboriginal people will be encouraged and supported.
- 5.4.5 Aboriginal access to the Meeting Place Precinct for cultural purposes, including access to land and sea resources, will be supported and facilitated. Areas for cultural activities may be designated through consultation between DECC and the Aboriginal community/people, and exclusive use of these areas will be permitted during the times that they are being used for this purpose. However, this should not constitute permanent exclusive use rights.
- 5.4.6 The revitalisation of Aboriginal language by Aboriginal people will be supported through the use of language in interpretation and visitor information (including talks, tours, events), in publications, through the naming of features, locations and activities that need a name, and in other ways as appropriate. Use of Aboriginal language will enhance a sense of Aboriginal landscape, history and people within the Meeting Place Precinct; create an increased sense of connection for Aboriginal people; increase awareness of Aboriginal history and culture for visitors; and reintroduce the opportunity for Aboriginal names for locations, features, and activities. The implementation of this policy will be guided by the DECC *Aboriginal Languages Policy* (Draft 2008).
- 5.4.7 Opportunities for identified and targeted Aboriginal employment at the Meeting Place Precinct will be supported to enhance opportunities for increasing Aboriginal connection to and participation in all aspects of the planning, management and interpretation of the Meeting Place Precinct.
- 5.4.8 The significance of the Meeting Place Precinct to Aboriginal people will continue to evolve as they are able to rebuild connections to this place. Over time and as a result of this process of reconnection, other aspects of the significance of the Meeting Place Precinct and its setting may emerge.
- 5.4.9 The Aboriginal story of the 1770 encounter, and the time before and after, should be told at the Meeting Place Precinct. Where possible, Aboriginal people should be the tellers of these stories and the providers of a welcome to country.

Other associated communities

- 5.4.10 Associated communities will be encouraged to continue to visit the park and to participate in cultural activities and events that help maintain and strengthen their connection to this place.
- 5.4.11 The interests of associated communities will be considered, and consultation undertaken, where a proposed management action may impact on their ability to maintain a continuing association with the place.

- 5.4.12 Knowledge about the nature and extent of community associations with the Meeting Place Precinct will continue to be investigated over time. This will involve:
- documenting known associated communities, through on-site meetings, surveys and other methods
 - encouraging associated communities to contribute information held within the community regarding their associations with the Meeting Place Precinct
 - developing a research program into community associations, potentially through a partnership with a tertiary institution (see Policy 5.15), and involving oral history
 - creating a register of associated communities (and their representatives where appropriate); interested people should also be able to register their interest via the website (www.whereculturesmeet.com.au).

Kurnell community

- 5.4.13 Recognise the close connections of the Kurnell community with the park and the Meeting Place Precinct which form the backdrop to their daily lives as well as being a nationally recognised historic site that this community values.
- 5.4.14 Establish regular communication with the Kurnell community, and consult with them on proposed management actions which may affect their amenity (as neighbours of the park) or their associational connections to the place.

Access

- 5.4.15 Recognise that for some communities and cultural groups to maintain their special associations with this place, special provision may be required in terms of access, allocation of defined spaces or exclusive use for a defined period. Cultural traditions may also require flexibility in park management from time to time.

History-making

- 5.4.16 The Meeting Place Precinct will be a place where multiple perspectives on the history and meanings of this place will be actively encouraged through:
- programs
 - events
 - interpretation.
- 5.4.17 The Meeting Place Precinct will offer space to new, emerging and potentially controversial perspectives, within an environment of cultural sensitivity and where differing views are allowed to co-exist. Such perspectives will not be permitted if they will cause harm to other perspectives and cultures.

5.5 Landscape

Cultural landscape

The significant cultural landscape of the Meeting Place Precinct comprises its layout, circulation patterns, sea walls, relatively open commemorative and recreational spaces, enclosed areas of 'natural bushland', and the particular intersection of the two, and the broader physical setting.

Objectives

- To conserve all elements of the cultural landscape in accordance with their relative contribution to the significance of the Meeting Place Precinct as a whole, each element's contribution to its particular group value, and the individual significance of each element.
- To ensure the distinction between significant commemorative and recreational spaces and the areas of 'natural bushland' is conserved, and in a manner that respects and is consistent with other tangible and intangible heritage values of the Meeting Place Precinct.
- To manage the views and broader setting of the Meeting Place Precinct.
- To ensure the complex nature and layered values embodied by the cultural landscape are understood and interpreted.
- To avoid adverse impacts as a result of the introduction of new elements, including interpretation and visitor facilities.

Rationale

The cultural landscape of the Meeting Place Precinct embodies all of the five concepts of significance. While the complex values embodied by the cultural landscape are many and varied, their expression ranges from variously prominent and visually dominant, to subtle, dynamic, intangible, and invisible. For example, while **A place of history-making** and **A place for leisure** are expressed clearly, **The enduring landscape**, **A place of Aboriginal connections** and **A European settled landscape** are expressed less well. Policy therefore seeks to conserve those elements that currently contribute to understanding the key concepts, while providing space for those concepts that are less clearly expressed to emerge.

The Meeting Place Precinct as a whole and the groupings of elements that comprise the cultural landscape, are generally of higher relative significance than the individual physical elements they contain. Policy is therefore framed to enable and manage change to significant elements where it can be demonstrated that change would facilitate recovery of aspects of greater significance.

Policy

- 5.5.1 Significant stories evidenced by the cultural landscape of history-making and commemoration should be retained, conserved and interpreted within a context that allows other stories, associations and meanings to emerge.
- 5.5.2 The introduction of new elements in the landscape that obscure the existing key concepts of significance is not appropriate. The introduction of new elements that would have adverse impacts on the significance and appreciation of individual elements is also not appropriate.
- 5.5.3 Ad hoc and incremental change must be avoided.
- 5.5.4 Significant elements of the cultural landscape of history-making must be conserved, maintained, remain clearly legible in the landscape and be interpreted. This includes the following elements of exceptional and high significance:
 - the grassy open area (mown) of Commemoration Flat and its extension to the south into a grassy area (mown) with scattered trees
 - the shape of the land under Commemoration Flat
 - the levelled area on which the flagstaff was erected
 - the flagstaff and row of Norfolk Island Pines along the foreshore of Commemoration Flat
 - the avenue along the foreshore including the row of Norfolk Island Pines

- the mown grass area along the foreshore between and linking the Cook Obelisk and the Flagstaff
 - the open grassy setting (mown) of all monuments
 - the open grassy setting (mown) surrounding the Cook Obelisk and framed by the 'V' of pines
 - Inscription Path, stairs and lookout.
- 5.5.5 Significant elements of the cultural landscape that express the Meeting Place Precinct as **A place of leisure** should be conserved, maintained, interpreted and managed to enhance the understanding of this aspect of the place's significance. (See also Policy on Circulation Patterns, 5.5.11-5.5.18.) This includes the following elements of **exceptional and high significance**:
- stairs and lookout at Inscription Point
 - Inscription Path
 - Solander Path embankment
 - the Trust Wharf remains and Holt's Jetty remains
 - the coursed stone sea wall
 - the cricket ground
 - the Dam wall (refer also to Policy 5.6.61-69, Freshwater stream and specifically 5.6.68 regarding possible removal of the dam wall to reinstate the stream).
- 5.5.6 The cricket ground should remain an open area. The addition of new buildings or planting of trees or other vegetation is not appropriate.
- 5.5.7 Remaining physical evidence of **A European settled landscape** - should be conserved and maintained in accordance with its contribution to the significance of the place as a whole and its individual significance, or recorded *in situ* prior to removal, and interpreted. This includes:
- retaining a pair of pines (*Araucaria heterophylla*) in front of Alpha House
 - conserving and maintaining the African Olive to the west of the Cook Obelisk until it dies. Self-sown trees should be removed. It should be recorded in situ in its current condition. Once it dies it should not be replaced.
 - recording and removing of the flax plants (*Phormium tenax*) within areas of remnant vegetation to the east of Commemoration Flat (swamp forest and coastal scrub on sand) (Refer to Policy 5.6.44-60 Policy for removal of significant historic plantings, and Policy 5.6.74-82).
- 5.5.8 **A European settled landscape** is expressed by the siting of Alpha House, represented by the pair of Pines, and faintly expressed by the cleared landscape areas of Commemoration Flat and the loss of local native vegetation. The former use and extent of A European settled landscape, relative to the current Meeting Place Precinct should be interpreted.
- 5.5.9 The relationship of the original pair of *Araucaria heterophylla* associated with the earlier farm houses on the Alpha House site should be interpreted. Their continued presence and location in the landscape should be based on historic evidence and continue to provide framed views between the house and the bay.
- 5.5.10 Intangible and less visually prominent stories, meanings and associations deeply embedded in, or obscured by other aspects of the landscape should be respected

and acknowledged, encouraged to emerge and/or interpreted in accordance with significance and cultural appropriateness. (Refer to Policy 5.16, Interpretation)

Circulation patterns, pathways and tracks

The pathways and tracks discussed below are illustrated in Figure 2.3.

- 5.5.11 Management of circulation patterns and individual pathways and tracks should be in accordance with Policy 5.5.5 above, regarding tracks as evidence of **A place for leisure**.
- 5.5.12 Historic circulation patterns should be conserved, maintained and interpreted. This includes:
- the original road embankment and continuation of this route along the eastern side of the freshwater stream up to and including the northern bridge over the stream. The path leading south from the road embankment is consistent with the old Yena Track
 - Inscription Path, and the stairs and lookout at Inscription Point
 - the old Solander Path and Solander Path embankment
 - the Yena Track
 - the path following the foreshore from the Kurnell edge through the Captain Cook Drive Parkland to the Cook Obelisk, and the continuation of this route from the Cook Obelisk to the Dam (where it formerly intersected with the Yena Track, below Alpha House)
 - the Muru Track
 - Monument Track
- 5.5.13 Historic approaches, entry points to the Meeting Place Precinct and the different ways of getting to the site should be conserved and interpreted. This includes:
- conserving, maintaining and interpreting the physical remains of the Trust Wharf
 - interpreting the archaeological remains of the Holt Jetty
 - interpreting the change in approach from across the Bay to and via a new track through Kurnell and which later became the primary means of access to the Meeting Place Precinct.
- 5.5.14 Historic approaches to, and circulation patterns between, elements **within** the Meeting Place Precinct should be conserved, restored or reconstructed and interpreted. This includes:
- approaching the Cook Obelisk from the bay side
 - approaching Alpha House from the bay side
 - the ability to experience the group of the monuments from west to east; from the location of the Holt jetty remains and the Cook Obelisk to the flagstaff (and on towards the former Solander path and Inscription Point.
- 5.5.15 The visual prominence of the Tallowood avenue should be reduced.
- 5.5.16 The use of the old Trust Wharf abutment as part of a new entry point from the water would be appropriate and desirable. Such a use would only be appropriate if it is possible through minimal intervention on the physical remains of the Trust Wharf abutment.

- 5.5.17 Integration of the former path connecting the Dam crossing and the original road embankment (part of the Yena track) below Alpha House (shown in 1920 plans, Design 5 2006: 35) into new circulation patterns and access to Alpha House should be considered. Reconstruction should be based on historical plans and any archaeological evidence.
- 5.5.18 Proposals for new pathways should seek to re-use or link into historic pathways rather than creating new lines across the landscape (or intruding into the landscape).

Views and the broader setting

This section considers views from within and on approach to the Meeting Place Precinct. It also includes policy for the broader setting of the Meeting Place Precinct and its visual relationship to the Bay, La Perouse and the adjacent areas of suburban Kurnell.

Objective

- To conserve and maintain significant views from, within and towards the Meeting Place Precinct.
- To ensure that visual connections between the Meeting Place Precinct, Botany Bay and the La Perouse headland (areas beyond the boundary of the study area) are conserved and maintained and interpreted.
- To retain an appropriate setting for the Meeting Place Precinct.

Rationale

The Meeting Place Precinct is part of a wider landscape, and the setting of the Meeting Place Precinct – Botany Bay (including the northern headland and La Perouse) and the other parts of Botany Bay National Park (south) – contributes to its significance.

Policy

- 5.5.19 Significant views from, within and towards the Meeting Place Precinct should be retained and conserved. These include:
- the framed view from Alpha House to Botany Bay between the two pines and other views from Alpha House to Botany Bay
 - views and glimpses of Botany Bay from Commemoration Flat
 - the view axis from the Discovery Centre to the main flagstaff. Plantings within Commemoration Flat that intrude on this view should be removed. (Refer to Policy 5.6.44-60, Managing Change to Significant Historic Plantings).
 - views from Captain Cook Drive and the Kurnell edge into the Precinct and towards the Cook Obelisk and its mown grass and bay-side setting
 - views from suburban Kurnell towards the Precinct and the western dune.
- 5.5.20 Views of the Meeting Place Precinct as a whole from La Perouse and Botany Bay should be managed to:
- restore the approach experience from the bay
 - recover an understanding of the orientation of the midden, and the original siting and orientation of the monuments and Alpha House to the bay, to be seen 'on approach' through interpretation and/or recovery of access to the Meeting Place Precinct from the bay

- restore understanding of the original sense of place described by the dune morphology, land form profile and local native vegetation community. (Refer to Policy 5.6.27-5.6.43).

5.5.21 The sense of enclosure created by bushland to the south and east, the dune to the west and the sense of openness to the north; towards the bay and La Perouse on the opposite headland should be conserved and maintained.

Land form

Land form and underlying geomorphology comprise the elements of **The enduring landscape**, and include the land form profile, the western and eastern dunes, rocky cliffs and coastal edge, beaches, the shallow sandstone platforms, soil profiles, and the remnant hydrology of the freshwater stream.

Objective

- To retain and conserve the underlying geomorphology and land form, as enduring aspects of the landscape.
- To conserve and reveal aspects of the original land form profile of the Meeting Place Precinct, where its legibility has been obscured by cultural plantings, in particular the western dune.
- To interpret the underlying geomorphology and land form.
- To retain limited access to the rocky cliffs coastal edge.
- To retain and conserve the beaches along the foreshore edge of the Meeting Place Precinct and Botany Bay.
- To interpret these elements as enduring aspects of the Meeting Place Precinct.

Rationale

The underlying geomorphology and land form profile are relatively intact, and the most enduring and ancient physical elements of the Meeting Place Precinct. They are therefore of primary significance. As enduring elements of the Meeting Place Precinct, these elements of the place have the strongest potential to provide and be understood as a link between the original Aboriginal landscape, the landscape that formed the backdrop to the 1770s encounter between Aboriginal people and Cook and his party (including Banks and Solander), and the landscape of today.

Policy

5.5.22 Significant elements of the cultural landscape that express or have the potential to express **The enduring landscape** of the Meeting Place Precinct should be conserved, maintained, restored, interpreted and managed to enhance the understanding of this concept of the place's significance. This includes:

- the shape and profile of the western dune
- the eastern dune
- the shape of the land under Commemoration Flat
- the freshwater stream
- the beaches
- the rocky cliffs and coastal edge
- the shallow sandstone platforms and soil profiles.

- 5.5.23 The underlying geomorphology and land form of the western dune should be conserved and maintained. New structures on the western dune are not appropriate.
- 5.5.24 Removal of introduced cultural plantings of moderate or little significance, that obscure understanding of the western dune would be desirable, as their removal would help recover the original land form profile. Removal of introduced plantings to enable restoration and reinstatement of the original vegetation community on the western dune would also be appropriate and desirable. (Refer to Policy 5.6.27-5.6.43)
- 5.5.25 Removal of visually prominent, structural and historic introduced cultural plantings should be staged, and preceded by a thorough consultation with associated communities. (Refer to Policy 5.14).
- 5.5.26 Introduction of new elements including visitor facilities must consider and avoid impacts on the land form and on the potential for its understanding and interpretation.
- 5.5.27 Landscape treatments such as pathway surfaces must reflect the underlying land form and geomorphology.
- 5.5.28 The underlying geomorphology and enduring land forms should be interpreted.
- 5.5.29 Long term options for recovering the geology and hydrology of the southern end of the freshwater stream and locations where it is piped should be explored³⁴. (Refer to Policy 5.6.61-5.6.69).
- 5.5.30 Activities, uses, new buildings, landscaping and plantings which would result in adverse physical or visual impacts on the geomorphology and land form, and which hinder understandings of the enduring landscape would not be appropriate and must be avoided.

5.6 Vegetation

The heritage values associated with the vegetation are complex and multi-faceted. As a result, objectives have been developed for the conservation of those values which are both relevant to all aspects of the vegetation and which appear as overarching ‘General objectives’, and which are quite specific to each of the vegetation policy areas. These appear as ‘Specific objectives’ within each separate policy subsection.

Policy for the vegetation is organised into four groups (or subsections)

- commemorative plantings
- structural and historic plantings
- other introduced plantings
- local native plant communities.

General objectives

- To manage significant vegetation across the Meeting Place Precinct in a strategic, coordinated and holistic way.
- To manage significant vegetation in a way that conserves, maintains and enhances how the vegetation embodies and expresses the five key concepts of the significance of the Meeting Place Precinct, giving prominence to the concepts of primary significance preference, while ensuring that the concepts of secondary significance are also respected and represented.

³⁴ Archaeological test excavations in May-June 2007 have commenced this process of investigation (Irish 2007b).

Primary significance	The enduring landscape A place of Aboriginal connections A place of history-making
Secondary significance	A European settled landscape A place for leisure

- To establish decision-making processes for the conservation, maintenance, removal and/or replacement of significant historic plantings.
- To remove intrusive plantings.
- To maximise the way the landscape through the vegetation contributes to various experiences and a sense of place created by the Meeting Place Precinct, in contrast to the broader Sydney metropolitan context, the National Park typology, and local industrial and suburban contexts.
- To protect endangered plant communities and remnant vegetation.
- To recognise that plants and vegetation communities are, by nature, dynamic.
- To recognise that local native vegetation communities, and specific plants, are important to Aboriginal people as part of culture.

Policy

Commemorative plantings

‘Commemorative plantings’ refers to the row of pines on Commemoration Flat, the ‘V’ of pines behind the Cook Obelisk, and individual trees plus groups of plantings recorded in the Captain Cook Landing Place Trust tree register as commemorative or ceremonial plantings (i.e. planted on a particular date, for a particular commemorative or ceremonial purpose, by a particular person).

The Captain Cook Landing Place Trust records (largely file records, correspondence and Annual Reports) list over 9000 other non-commemorative plantings. Policy for these plantings is included in the relevant sub-sections below; in ‘Structural and historic plantings’ or ‘Other introduced plantings’.

Significance has not been investigated or defined for many of these trees, with the exception of those specifically listed in this report or the *Heritage Assessment*. Knowledge about these trees at the time of the *Heritage Assessment* (Design 5 2006) determined these trees were neither of moderate, high nor exceptional significance. However, there is potential through further investigation or new information that some of these trees may emerge as significant. If these trees are determined to be significant, the decision-making process for their conservation, management, removal and replacement outlined in Policy 5.6.44-5.6.60 would then apply.

Specific objectives for commemorative plantings

- To conserve and maintain commemorative plantings of exceptional and high significance, and manage them as permanent elements in the landscape.
- To prolong the life of existing individual and groups of commemorative plantings of exceptional and high significance, and to replace them when they die.
- To identify and record all commemorative plantings in the Meeting Place Precinct.

Rationale

Commemorative plantings are a significant element of the Meeting Place Precinct contributing to its significance as a place of history-making. Some commemorative plantings within the Meeting Place Precinct have been identified and reconciled to historic records of ceremonial planting events, but many others have not. Others have died. The row of Norfolk Island Pines on Commemoration Flat (1905) and the ‘V’ of Pines behind the Cook Obelisk are of exceptional significance for their contribution to the significance of the place as a whole. Their siting along the foreshore and visibility in a park-like setting are an important aspect of their significance, and reflect the original design intention to create a European park-like and ceremonial landscape that was clearly visible from the bay and contributed to a sense of anticipation on approach.

While making a lesser contribution to the significance of the place as a whole, other commemorative plantings also form important elements of the landscape as they represent long-standing processes of making and re-making of history at the Meeting Place Precinct.

Policy

- 5.6.1 Commemorative plantings should be identified in the landscape, reconciled with documentary records of the ceremonial event, located on a survey plan, tagged, and photographically recorded. (See 5.13.4-6 for detailed policies on recording of significant vegetation).
- 5.6.2 Commemorative plantings planted individually and as structural groups must be conserved and maintained as a group.
- 5.6.3 A detailed maintenance and management schedule should be developed for the care and conservation of commemorative plantings.
- 5.6.4 A detailed tree replacement strategy should be developed for commemorative plantings. The replacement strategy should consider:
- the contribution of each individual or structural group planting to the significance of the Meeting Place Precinct as a whole,
 - the contribution of individual trees to the value of structural commemorative planting groups and,
 - life expectancy information for each species based on estimates particular to individual species.³⁵) The tree replacement strategy should include a decision-making process that prioritises significance. (Refer Policy 5.6.44-60, Managing change to significant historic plantings)
- 5.6.5 Commemorative plantings of **exceptional significance** must be conserved and maintained in open, mown grass settings, as existing. This includes:
- the row of pines on Commemoration Flat
 - the ‘V’ of pines behind the Cook Obelisk.

³⁵ Some broad estimates of life expectancy of some plantings introduced to the Meeting Place Precinct are included at Appendix 4.

- 5.6.6 The row of Norfolk Island Pines on Commemoration Flat and the ‘V’ of pines behind the Cook Obelisk should be replaced like-with-like, and in accordance with managing change to significant historic plantings (Policy 5.6.44-60). Collection of seed to continue genetic types from the existing *Araucaria heterophylla* parent plants is not warranted.
- 5.6.7 Other individual and structural groups of commemorative plantings listed in the CCLPT register and identified as being of **high significance** must be conserved and maintained.
- 5.6.8 Structural groups of commemorative plantings of high significance should be managed in accordance with policy for managing change to significant historic plantings (Policy 5.6.44-60).
- 5.6.9 Other individual and groups of commemorative plantings listed in the CCLPT register and identified as being of moderate significance should be conserved, but may be removed where this would allow the recovery of aspects or elements of greater significance. Removal and replacement should be in accordance with policy for managing change to significant historic plantings (Policy 5.6.44-60).
- 5.6.10 The spatial and ceremonial qualities of the landscape created by commemorative plantings, their setting and placement in relation to the bay and other structural plantings that express the original design intent for the ceremonial and commemorative function of the place should be conserved and maintained.
- 5.6.11 The commemorative plantings should be understood and interpreted in the broader context of other stories embodied by the Meeting Place Precinct, as a part of the continuing processes of history-making.

Structural and historic plantings

Structural and historic plantings means:

- 2 pine trees in front of Alpha House
- foreshore avenue including turf drive and row of Norfolk Island Pines
- plantings groups with known associations with Maiden and the Royal Botanic Gardens
- row of pines along ridge of western dune
- Tallowood avenue
- plantings from the early farm use (or progeny of), such as African Olive or New Zealand Flax
- other historic plantings, including plantings with likely associations with Maiden and the Royal Botanic Gardens, and non-commemorative plantings noted in the CCLPT records (largely file records, correspondence and Annual Reports).*

(*In addition to the tree register of commemorative plantings, many other trees were planted by the CCLP Trust as structural plantings, beautification plantings, replacements for those damaged by storms, gales or fire, and to display specimens of Australian plants, for example. The locations of some of these plantings are known, but for others only an approximate site is known. Policy is therefore included below for plantings that date from 1899-1912, 1912-c1930, from the 1930s, and from 1939 to the present.)

Significance has not been investigated or defined for many of these trees, with the exception of those specifically listed in this report or the *Heritage Assessment*. Knowledge about these trees at the time of the *Heritage Assessment* (Design 5 2006) determined these trees were neither of moderate, high nor exceptional significance. However, there is potential through further investigation or new information that some of these trees may emerge as significant. If these

trees are determined to be significant, the decision-making process for their conservation, management, removal and replacement outlined in Policy 5.6.44-5.6.60 would then apply.

Rationale

The two pines in front of Alpha House are important elements representing evidence of **A European settled landscape**.

The structural and historic plantings form important structural elements of the Meeting Place Precinct, and specifically **A place of history-making** and **A place for leisure**. The foreshore avenue of pines and trees on either side are important historic and structural plantings of the Meeting Place Precinct that reflect the place of history-making and the place for leisure significance concepts. (The Melaleuca trees, however, are not significant).

Some, like the foreshore avenue and turf drive, also help to define a processional and ceremonial space between the Cook Obelisk and the main flagstaff. The siting of the pine trees along the foreshore and visibility in a park-like setting is also an important aspect of their significance, and reflects the original design intention to create a European park-like and ceremonial sense of place, clearly visible from the bay, contributing to a sense of anticipation on approach.

The associations of the Meeting Place Precinct with Maiden, an important and influential Sydney figure, and the RBG also form an important part of the place's history, in particular for how this association represents well-intentioned contemporary park management (in spite of many of these plantings proving to be ecologically inappropriate to this site).

Policy

- 5.6.12 Structural and historic plantings of **exceptional significance** should be conserved and maintained. This includes:
- a pair of pines in front of Alpha House.
- 5.6.13 The two pines in front of Alpha House should be removed and replaced with two (a pair) of Norfolk Island Pines (*Araucaria heterophylla*) with a good form. A pair of *Araucaria heterophylla* should then be conserved and maintained in this location, and replaced like-with-like when they senesce and die, or if they are damaged.
- 5.6.14 Structural and historic plantings of **high significance** should be conserved and maintained. This includes:
- the turf drive and foreshore avenue including the row of Norfolk Island Pines (Refer Figure 2.2)
 - the row of figs in the parkland adjacent to Captain Cook Drive.
- 5.6.15 The row of Norfolk Island Pines along the northern (bay) side of the foreshore avenue should be replaced like-with-like, and in accordance with policy for managing change to significant historic plantings (Policy 5.6.44-60). Collection of seed to continue genetic types from the existing *Araucaria heterophylla* parent plants is not warranted.
- 5.6.16 The broad expanse of mown turf of the foreshore avenue must be conserved and maintained, as existing so that it continues to be read and understood in the landscape as a processional space linking the Cook Obelisk to Commemoration Flat. The row of pines that define the foreshore side of the avenue should be conserved and maintained. An opposing edge to the avenue (the dune side) should also be conserved and maintained. The dune-side edge should be as close as possible to the existing dune edge of the foreshore avenue. An edge that ensures the dune is visible would be preferable (i.e. mown grass) or other low vegetation.
- 5.6.17 The row of Melaleucas along the (dune) side of the foreshore avenue should be maintained, but may be removed where this would allow the recovery, appreciation

and interpretation of aspects or elements of greater significance (for example, the restoration of the 1770s vegetation community on the western dune). If these trees are not replaced, definition of the dune side of the avenue should be provided in another way, which is in accordance with the significance of the place.

- 5.6.18 The spatial and ceremonial qualities of the landscape created by structural and historic plantings of high significance and that express the ceremonial and commemorative function of the place should be conserved and maintained.
- 5.6.19 The group of plantings associated with Maiden and the RBG to the west of Alpha House should be conserved, managed and interpreted as a group or collection. They should be photographically recorded and their locations marked on a survey plan. An assessment of condition and life expectancy of each specimen should be prepared by a qualified arborist. Self-sown vegetation from the original plantings in this area should be removed. Once the existing trees senesce and die they should not be replaced. (See Policy 5.6.44-60, Managing change to significant historic plantings)
- 5.6.20 Other individual and groups of historic plantings identified as being of **moderate significance** should be conserved, but may be removed where this would allow the recovery of aspects or elements of greater significance (or for health and safety reasons). This includes:
- the Tallowwood avenue
 - plantings with known associations with Maiden and the Royal Botanic Gardens (Refer Figure 2.2)
 - the group of Maiden plantings between the western side of Alpha House and the stream
 - historic (non-commemorative) plantings recorded in the CCLPT records.
- 5.6.21 Historic (non-commemorative) plantings recorded in the CCLPT records should be identified in the landscape, reconciled with documentary records of their planting event, located on a survey plan, tagged and photographically recorded. Where individual specimens or groups cannot be reconciled exactly, an approximation of their location should be recorded.
- 5.6.22 Other historic plantings of **little significance** may be removed. This includes:
- the row of pines along the ridge of the western dune
 - other plantings associated with Maiden and the RBG
 - plantings from the early farm use (or progeny of).

Other introduced plantings

Other introduced plantings include the scattered trees on Commemoration Flat. This definition also includes two identified intrusive elements: the trees between Alpha House and Commemoration Flat, and the vegetation that obscures the view axis between the main flagstaff and the Discovery Centre.

Policy

- 5.6.23 Other introduced plantings identified as being of **moderate significance** should be conserved, but may be removed where this would allow the recovery of aspects or elements of greater significance. This includes:
- the scattered trees on Commemoration Flat that obscure views between Alpha House and Commemoration Flat.

- 5.6.24 The scattered trees in Commemoration Flat and in the picnic ground at the rear of Commemoration Flat should be retained and conserved for visitor amenity. Replacement of these trees should use local species from native vegetation communities present in the vicinity. Additional trees and understorey plantings are not appropriate where this would obscure views towards and the visual relationship between this recreational space and the bay.
- 5.6.25 The replacement of non-local species in this area with trees native to the local area would be appropriate.
- 5.6.26 **Intrusive** elements should be removed. This includes:
- the trees between Alpha House and Commemoration Flat
 - the understorey planting that currently obscures the view axis between the main flagstaff and the Discovery Centre.

Local native vegetation communities

This section refers to local native vegetation within the Meeting Place Precinct, namely remnant vegetation consistent with the Threatened Species Conservation Act (1995) listed endangered ecological communities (EEC) *Swamp Sclerophyll Forest on coastal flood plains*, and *Kurnell Dune Forest*. It also refers to the remnant casuarinas at the foreshore edge of Commemoration Flat and the eight identified remnant plant communities from pre-settlement (i.e. 1770s vegetation):

- Foreshore Scrub on Sandstone
- Coastal Scrub on Sand
- Dune Woodland
- Sedge Swamp
- Swamp Forest
- Foreshore Scrub on Sand
- Scrub on Sandstone
- Littoral Rainforest.

Specific objectives for the 1770s vegetation

- To conserve and maintain rare, endangered and significant remnant vegetation communities.
- To restore and reinstate vegetation that reflects the distinctive character of each vegetation community.
- To restore and reinstate the 1770s Coastal Scrub on Sand vegetation community on the western dune.
- To recognise that restoring and reinstating 1770s dune vegetation may enhance Aboriginal connections and cultural associations with the Meeting Place Precinct.
- To achieve a satisfactory balance between:
 - establishment and maintenance costs, and
 - the desired outcomes for vegetation.

Rationale

The pre-European settlement 1770s vegetation is part of the Aboriginal landscape and history of this region and formed the backdrop to the encounter between Aboriginal people and the Cook party, the experiences of Cook and his party, and the collections of Banks and Solander. It is part of **The enduring landscape** and **A place of Aboriginal connections** and history. It has continuing cultural importance for Aboriginal people. Its restoration would assist visitors in understanding, through their own experience, what this landscape looked and felt like at this time.

Recovering the scale of the original vegetation community on the western dune would assist in visitors in understanding the underlying dune morphology and original land form profile, currently confused by the higher canopies of introduced plantings.

The lack of local native vegetation and local sense of place has been identified as a limitation to establishing connections with the landscape for local Aboriginal communities/people (Harrington in *Heritage Assessment 2006*: Appendix G).

The restoration and reinstatement of 1770s vegetation on the western dune is potentially a large scale, complex and long-term project, requiring the removal of a number of structural and historic plantings in order to recover the significance of the original vegetation community and land form profile (as enduring landscape elements). The western dune is highly visible from the bay and from the Kurnell. The process is also likely to be subject to public interest and scrutiny and the realisation of desired outcomes slow. Therefore, a process that involves the community from development through implementation to ongoing maintenance stages in a clear and inclusive way is recommended.

It should be recognised throughout this process that the re-creation of this landscape as it was in 1770 is part of the history making process at this site.

Policy for rare, endangered and remnant 1770s vegetation communities

5.6.27 Rare and endangered plant communities and remnant plant communities from pre-European settlement of **exceptional significance** must be retained and conserved. This includes:

- vegetation communities consistent with Swamp Sclerophyll Forest on coastal flood plains Endangered Ecological Community
- the Kurnell Dune Forest Endangered Ecological Community
- the eight identified remnant vegetation communities within the Meeting Place Precinct
- other remnant vegetation, such as the remnant casuarinas on the foreshore edge of Commemoration Flat

5.6.28 Rare, endangered and remnant plant communities from pre-European settlement should be interpreted.

Policy for restoration and reinstatement of the 1770s vegetation community on the western dune

5.6.29 Clear management objectives should be established and communicated prior to any works associated with restoration and reinstatement of the 1770s vegetation community on the western dune, in a 1770s vegetation restoration and reinstatement strategy.

- 5.6.30 Objectives for restoration and reinstatement of the 1770s vegetation community that fall within the following parameters would be appropriate³⁶. (Options range in relative ease of attainment, from the least difficult to very difficult.)
- 1) To restore legibility of the original underlying land form.
 - 2) To evoke a sense of the original landscape.
 - 3) To re-establish and perpetuate the visually dominant Coastal Scrub on Sand vegetation community (*Banksia integrifolia* and *Monotoca elliptica*).
 - 4) To re-establish and maintain typical structural diversity.
 - 5) To facilitate adequate rates of seedling and other forms of recruitment and regeneration of local native species to provide a stable, self-perpetuating Coastal Scrub on Sand vegetation community.
 - 6) To re-establish and maintain adequate genetic diversity and a large enough population of species to allow regeneration by natural (ecological) processes and characteristics.
 - 7) To enable use of native vegetation resources by Aboriginal people for cultural purposes.
- 5.6.31 A community engagement strategy should precede and inform the finalisation of management objectives. (Section 5.14 Consultation and participation)
- 5.6.32 The 1770s vegetation restoration and reinstatement strategy should recognise:
- successful outcomes will require a long term process and regular monitoring, review and adjustment of the strategy will be required
 - that the current environment has changed since 1770 (from the macro level of regional rainfall, to the micro level of surrounding and overshadowing vegetation, atmospheric pollution, human impacts, fauna, etc)
 - that limitations on the restoration and reinstatement could range from factors as broad as environmental change (at the macro and micro levels), to adequate resources, the length of time required before results are seen, to a lack of community support
 - the potential that some plantings may fail, and that this should be factored into management
 - that while the main canopy species and some ground species are known, the full extent of the community is not known
 - that other plants will be able to grow on the dune that may not have been there in 1770, and will need to be managed
 - the need for strategic removal of those canopy trees that will hamper establishment of ground layer and understorey species. New canopy species should be established with ground layer species, or in accordance with a restoration strategy and as required for successful establishment of the overall community.
- 5.6.33 The 1770s vegetation restoration and reinstatement strategy should also:
- ensure opportunities to enhance community connections are factored into decisions about and processes for restoring the 1770s vegetation community on the western dune

³⁶ Adapted from Hitchmough, J., 'The management of semi-natural and natural vegetation' in Hitchmough, James, *Urban Landscape Management*, Inkata Press, Australia, 1994, pp. 391-417.

- determine acceptable limits for the presence of vegetation not known to have existed as part of the 1770s vegetation community
 - identify plant species known to Aboriginal people to have occurred within the Meeting Place Precinct but no longer present so that their reinstatement can be considered
 - address the use of fire as a regeneration method (in particular for *Banksia integrifolia*).
- 5.6.34 A small-scale pilot program for restoration and reinstatement of the 1770s vegetation community on a part of the western dune should precede and inform larger-scale restoration and reinstatement programs. This would also allow assessment and refinement of approaches as necessary, and to best ensure community understanding and support for the project, and, as well as ultimately successful planting outcomes.
- Objectives for a pilot restoration program may be different to those for longer-term and larger scale restoration and reinstatement of the 1770s vegetation community. Therefore, a separate strategy (based on different but clear and transparent objectives) may be required and would be appropriate where they formed part of a longer-term strategy for the conservation of natural and cultural heritage values of the 1770s vegetation and the Meeting Place Precinct as a whole.
- 5.6.35 The location for the pilot program (and the extent of the final area to be restored) should be selected on the basis of having reasonable species diversity and good potential for effective rehabilitation.
- 5.6.36 Management objectives for the restoration and reinstatement of the 1770s vegetation should be reviewed and amended as necessary following review of the planting and establishment successes and failures from a pilot and/or subsequent restoration and reinstatement programs. New plantings should be reviewed and assessed at 5-10 year intervals and strategies and approaches for subsequent vegetation restoration and reinstatement amended in light of findings.
- 5.6.37 The extent of the final area for restoration should be based on the capacity to maintain the designated area.

Aboriginal use and collection of plant materials

- 5.6.38 Aboriginal use and collection of plant materials for cultural purposes should be supported except where it poses an unacceptable risk to the vegetation community or specific species.

Interpretation

- 5.6.39 Rare, endangered and remnant vegetation communities should be interpreted as enduring elements of the landscape.
- 5.6.40 Connections between the pre-European settlement vegetation and the scientific collections made by Banks and Solander should be interpreted.

Provenance of replacement species

- 5.6.41 Provenance of all local species must be local, unless species can no longer be found locally and the use of non-local seed source can be justified. Provenance for local species must be prioritised to be sought firstly from within the immediate native plant community, then within Botany Bay National Park (south), then from the Kurnell Peninsula.
- 5.6.42 Any commercially grown plants from local seed stock should be traceable and sourced from certified growers or suppliers to ensure healthy specimens,

uncontaminated soil and to minimise risks of introducing weeds, pests or pathogens (i.e. *Phytophthora* sp.).

Regeneration

- 5.6.43 The use of fire as a regeneration mechanism for the Coastal Scrub on Sand vegetation community should be considered.

Managing change to significant historic plantings

Objectives

- To manage change to significant historic plantings within the Meeting Place Precinct in accordance their contribution to the significance of the place as a whole, their group value, and value as individual specimens.
- To conserve and maintain the pattern, form and bulk of the structural groups collectively, and the landscape experience created by each structural group.
- To recognise and respect that mature and statuesque trees and structural groups of mature trees can be highly emotive entities in their own right.
- To manage visual impacts caused by the loss of mature trees (and structural groups of trees) on the landscape experience.
- To recognise that plants and plant communities are dynamic, and that the environment is also dynamic.

Rationale

The historic tree population within the Meeting Place Precinct was planted at different times with species of different life spans. Therefore, decisions about removing and/or replacing significant individual trees and significant structural groups of trees will arise at different times.

Replacing introduced trees planted in structural groups needs to be undertaken within the context of a whole-of-landscape approach for the Meeting Place Precinct. A suitable whole-of-landscape approach recognises the contribution made by the mature form and bulk of each structural group to the pattern of cultural plantings within the Meeting Place Precinct.

Collectively, the pattern, form and bulk of the mature plantings, both individual trees and structural groups, are an integral part of the experience of being in the landscape of the Meeting Place Precinct.

Recognising that values and approaches to conservation may change over time, that a single approach may not be appropriate for all plantings, that a policy for removal and replacement of significant historic plantings needs to have currency in the longer-term, and that vegetation by nature is dynamic, this Conservation Management Plan recommends:

- decisions should be made on a case-by-case basis
- decisions about removal are firmly grounded in significance, and that the condition of values is confirmed prior to making a decision
- decisions about replacement have currency in the longer-term.

The policy for removal (below) acknowledges there are some historic and structural plantings that are weed species or are causing environmental problems (for example the Tallowoods).

Policy

5.6.44 Removal of historic plantings would only be contemplated where it is accordance with the contribution of the planting to the significance of the Meeting Place Precinct as a whole, the contribution of the planting to the significance of a group (if relevant) and its individual value. Thresholds for consideration of removal are shown in the following diagram.

Relative contrib. to significance of the MPP as a whole	Individual or group value		
	National	State / regional	Local
Exceptional	Must not	Must not	Must not
High	Must not	Must not	Removal considered where...
Moderate	n/a	Removal considered where...(see Policy 5.6.47)	May remove
Little	n/a	n/a	May remove
Intrusive	n/a	n/a	Should remove

5.6.45 Significant historic plantings of **exceptional and high significance** must be conserved and maintained. Their removal would only be considered where:

- they are identified by an arborist as structurally unsound
- they are senescent or dead
- they are inconsistent with native vegetation community establishment, in locations where this is a more important objective
- it would enhance key concepts of significance.

5.6.46 Replacement of historic plantings of **exceptional and high significance** should be determined through the decision-making process outlined in Flowchart Part 1 and Flowchart Part 2.

5.6.47 Significant historic plantings of **moderate significance** should be retained or removed where removal would recover an aspect of greater significance. Removal would otherwise only be considered where:

- they are identified by an arborist as structurally unsound
- they are senescent or dead
- they are not identified as individually significant (this should be confirmed in decision-making process below)
- they obscure or detract from the major concepts of significance the expression of those concepts in the landscape
- they are inconsistent with native vegetation community establishment, in locations where this is a more important objective

- they have spread and are becoming weedy or a strain on resources (not justified by their relative contribution to the significance of the place as a whole) that could be better utilised elsewhere (i.e. on conserving and maintaining aspects of the place of greater significance).
- 5.6.48 A community engagement strategy should precede removal of mature trees, historic plantings or substantial areas of vegetation. (Reference to Policy 5.14, Consultation and participation).
- 5.6.49 Trees which are not significant for cultural or natural heritage reasons could be retained in the medium term if they provide screening of intrusive elements, or benefits to visitor and staff amenity (shade and shelter, for example).
- 5.6.50 Replacement of historic plantings of **moderate significance** could be considered only
- where replacement would provide screening of intrusive elements or provide other benefits such as visitor and staff amenity (shade, shelter, etc)
 - where replacement would not prevent recovery of aspects of greater significance.

Decision-making factors

- 5.6.51 Within the context of the whole of the Meeting Place Precinct, the replacement of structural plantings should
- be undertaken in a co-ordinated manner across the site (consider the life expectancy of other structural groups and likely time span for their replacement)
 - be staggered over time
 - minimise visual impacts of tree loss.
- 5.6.52 For each structural plantings, replacement should
- maintain planting integrity
 - address health and structural issues
 - address sudden unexpected losses
 - minimise visual impacts of tree loss
 - be consistent with horticultural and environmental best practice within the constraints of heritage principles and obligations.
- 5.6.53 Other factors to consider when making a decision about how and when to replace structural groups include:
- Can the element still be experienced in the landscape as an architectural element as originally intended (or previously experienced prior to loss of integrity)?
 - Is uniformity of each individual tree an important factor contributing to the group's value as an architectural element?
 - Is symmetry of the overall element an important factor contributing to the group's value as an architectural element?
 - What will the visual impact be if one structural group is removed?

- What will be the combined visual impact of removal of this structural group on the landscape experience and patterns created by the structural plantings collectively?
- Is there potential to disturb sub-surface historical archaeological relics?
- Is there potential to disturb Aboriginal burials or archaeological sites?

Options for replacement

5.6.54 Decisions to replace significant historic plantings should be made with the guidance of the flowcharts opposite (see Decision-making Flowchart Part 1 and Flowchart Part 2). Some branches of Flowchart Part 2 lead to particular options (Options 1 to 4). These options are:

- **Option 1** – Removal and replacement of individual species as they senesce and die, using the same species if significance is species dependent or an alternate species if significance is not species dependent
- **Option 2** – Removal of entire structural group and like-with-like replacement in the same location
- **Option 3** – Removal of alternate trees and inter-plant like-with-like in the same location
- **Option 4** – Retain remaining trees and replant a new structural group (a row or 'V' for e.g.) using the same species but planted adjacent to the original element.

5.6.55 **Option 1** might be considered if:

- uniformity or symmetry is not an important aspect of the structural group
AND
- there is no potential to disturb Aboriginal burials or sites or historical archaeological sites.

5.6.56 **Option 2** might be considered if:

- uniformity or symmetry are important aspects of the structural group
AND
- visual impacts on the landscape experience resulting from the loss of one entire structural group could be lessened by the mature bulk and form of other structural groups.

5.6.57 **Option 3** might be considered if:

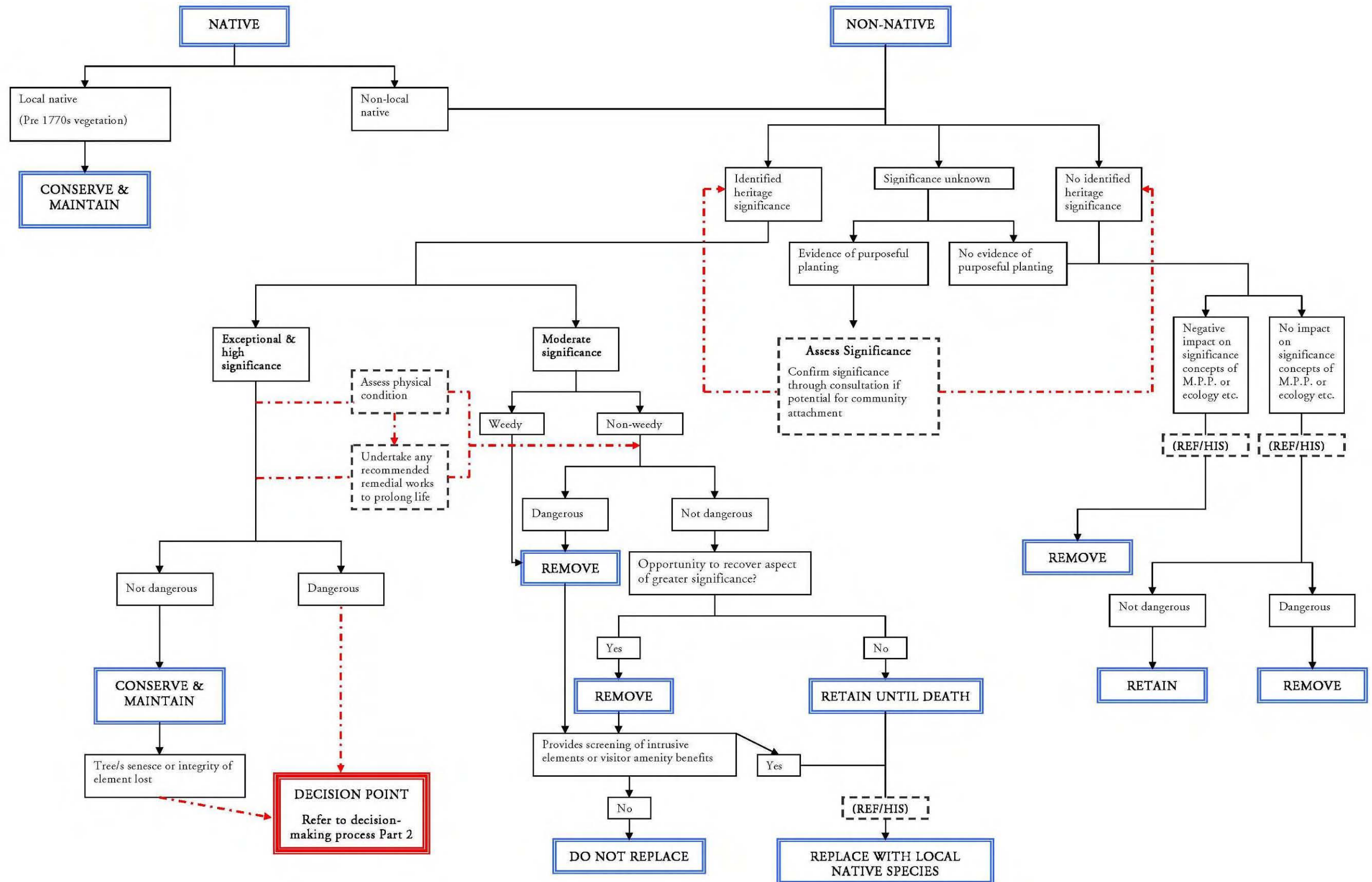
- uniformity or symmetry are important aspects of the structural group
- other structural groups are more depleted, closer to the end of their life span, or recently replaced and yet to recover their contribution to the landscape experience of the Meeting Place Precinct
- there is potential to disturb surface Aboriginal burials or sites, or historic archaeological sites.

5.6.58 **Option 4** might be considered if:

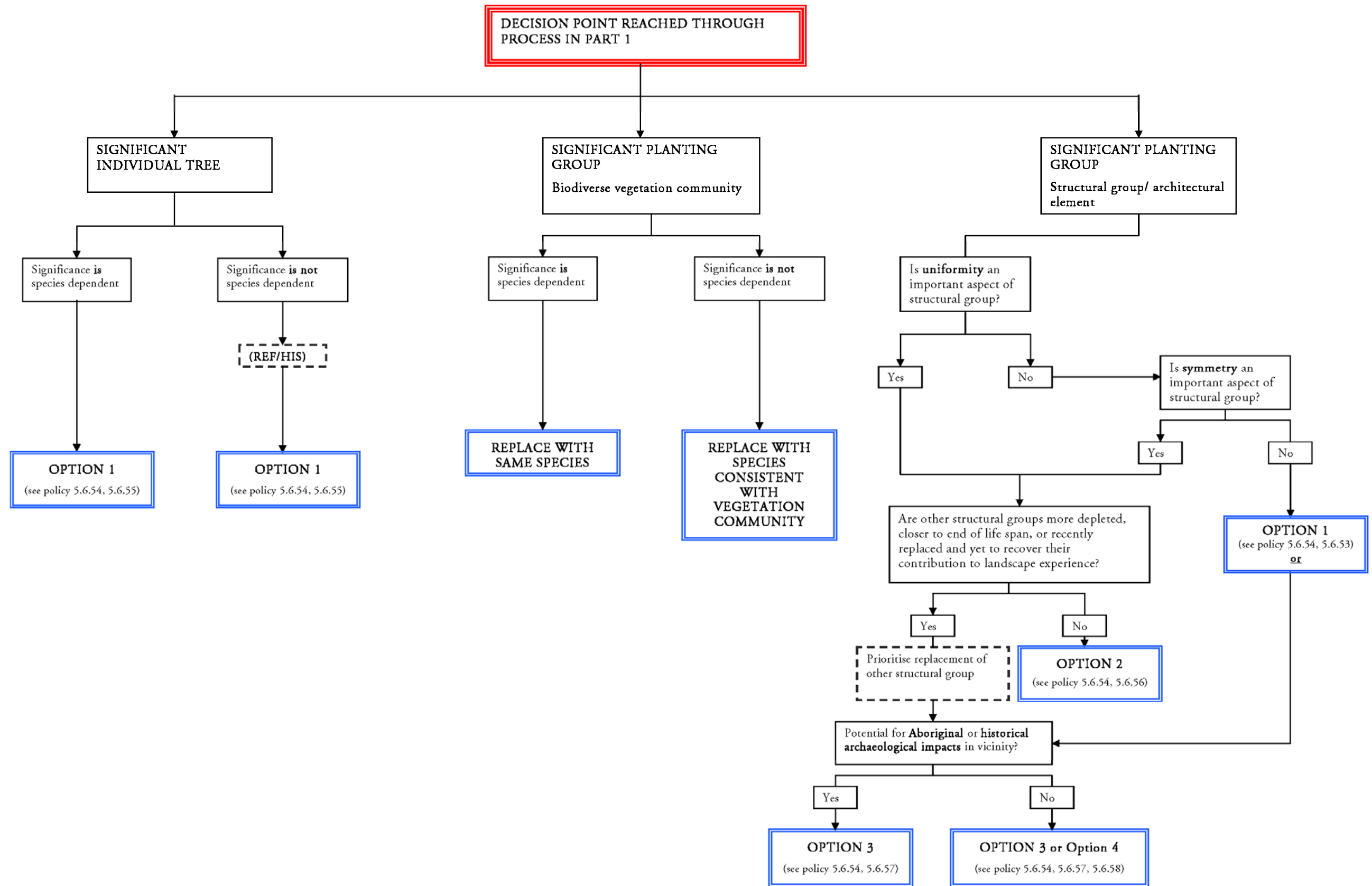
- uniformity or symmetry are important aspects of the structural group
- the exact location of the tree/s is not important

- other structural groups are more depleted, closer to the end of their life span, or recently replaced and yet to recover their contribution to the landscape experience of the Meeting Place Precinct
 - there is no potential to disturb Aboriginal burials or sites or historical archaeological sites.
- 5.6.59 A vegetation strategy should be prepared that clearly articulates objectives and strategies for long, medium and short-term changes to the cultural landscape and vegetation. This should be developed in consultation with the community. (The use of photomontages showing the objectives as outcomes in a 10 and 15 year timeframes could be a good tool for communicating short term changes required to achieve medium to long term goals.)
- 5.6.60 The development of proposals involving the removal of mature trees or large areas of vegetation (significant or not) should allow for community consultation in the decision-making processes. The need for community consultation should be developed on a proposal by proposal basis, and gauged by the level and nature of community interest arising from public exhibition of particular proposals.

Decision-making process for managing change to significant historic vegetation – Part 1



Decision-making process for managing change to significant historic vegetation – Part 2



Freshwater stream

This policy applies to the vegetation and hydrology of the stream.

Objectives

- To restore a sense of the littoral rainforest that originally enclosed the stream (at its northern end), as a clue to a stream, even during dry periods.
- To reconnect the stream to the bay.
- To recover the original hydrology, ponding and channel morphology of the freshwater stream.

Rationale

The natural riparian vegetation originally associated with the freshwater stream and the stream's hydrology have been substantially modified. Little is known about the form and composition of the original vegetation community as a basis for restoration, or reconstruction. The existing vegetation retains a sense of enclosure and is evocative of a littoral rainforest.

The exact location of the stream between the dam and the bay, and the extent of the hydrology of the swamp at the southern end of the stream, the ponding and channel morphology are also not certain. These are essential for the regulation and flow of a natural and healthy stream.

The reconnection of the stream to the bay may impact upon important archaeological deposits and remains. It may also require the removal of one or two of the Norfolk Island Pines (at the eastern end) that constitute the foreshore avenue.

Policy

- 5.6.61 The remnant of the freshwater stream should be retained and the sense of a stream in the landscape evoked by existing riparian-style vegetation should be conserved and maintained. Its spiritual connections and meanings for Aboriginal people, the resources provided by the stream and its connection to the sea, and its historical association with the Cook expedition should be interpreted.
- 5.6.62 Selective removal of some introduced species and introduction of local native species to maintain this sense of place would be appropriate. Mature species which are not consistent with typical littoral rainforest vegetation communities (in the local area) but which contribute to this sense of place should be retained in the short to medium term.
- 5.6.63 The reinstatement of riparian vegetation consistent with littoral rainforest vegetation of the local area would be a desirable medium-term goal.
- 5.6.64 In the long-term, as trees senesce and die and need to be replaced, replacement species should be more consistent with current knowledge of the form and composition of local littoral rainforest vegetation and other relevant communities further upstream. In the absence of site specific data, species selection should be based on the composition and form of other similar vegetation communities in the local area. Knowledge of the composition of the original vegetation community could be boosted by soil and pollen analyses.
- 5.6.65 A strategy for the recovery of the hydrology, ponding and channel morphology of the original stream should be developed. This would ideally include the former swamp area at the southern end of the stream (altered by existing car park and earlier road works). The *Cook's Stream, Botany Bay National Park: Research, assessment and rehabilitation strategy* (June 1999) and the archaeological test excavation results (Irish 2007b) should be used as a starting point for developing a restoration strategy for the stream. It should be supplemented by additional investigations.

- 5.6.66 If restoration of the original stream's hydrology and flow is not possible in the short to medium term, reconnection of the stream to the bay for interpretive and symbolic purposes would be appropriate.
- 5.6.67 Reconstruction of the original stream between the dam and the bay should be determined by historical and archaeological information, and supplemented by remote sensing technologies. These services should be provided by suitably qualified and experienced geotechnical engineers. Additional archaeological surveys (core sampling) could also be used to accurately locate the original stream.
- 5.6.68 Removal of the dam so that the stream can be reconnected to the bay would result in the reinstatement of an aspect of greater significance. In these circumstances, the dam wall may be removed. Prior to removal, the dam should be photographically recorded and its location accurately plotted on a survey plan. The stone may be re-used elsewhere on the site, and the locations of reuse should be recorded on a survey plan.
- 5.6.69 Removal of one or more of the three Norfolk Island Pines at the eastern-most end of row would only be considered appropriate where it is essential for accurately locating and reconnecting the original stream with the bay, and where their removal would recover an aspect of greater significance (for example, the symbolic value associated with reconnecting the stream to the bay). They should otherwise be conserved and maintained as part of the foreshore avenue, in spite of their later planting date.

Kurnell edge

Objectives

- To create a sense of the history and significance of the Meeting Place Precinct's at its interface with Kurnell.
- To recognise and respect visual connections between Kurnell and the Meeting Place Precinct and the bay valued by the local community.

Rationale

The existing character of Botany Bay National Park at the Kurnell edge does not create or contribute to a sense of what lies within, and could better provide an experience of transition from industrial and suburban Kurnell to a place of national importance as **The enduring landscape, A place of Aboriginal connections, and A place of history-making.**

Policy

- 5.6.70 As a space of transition between the industrial and suburban contexts of Kurnell, new landscaping to the Kurnell edge would be appropriate where:
- views from Captain Cook Drive and the Kurnell edge to the Cook Obelisk and the water of the Bay are retained
 - plantings used are consistent with identified 1770 native vegetation community
 - a foreshore pathway is retained for community use
 - it would not create a fire risk to property and residents in Kurnell. The fire risk should be formally assessed according to the (draft) Fire Management Strategy for the southern part of Botany Bay National Park (December 2006), Department of Environment and Conservation NSW.
- 5.6.71 Loss of the prominent vertical forms of the Norfolk Island Pines along ridge of the western dune would be appropriate where this enables recovery of the 1770s

vegetation community. Their removal should be managed in consultation with the local community as part of a community engagement strategy developed for the 1770s vegetation restoration and reinstatement.

- 5.6.72 Replacement of the figs (*Ficus rubiginosa*) associated with Maiden and the Royal Botanic Gardens would be appropriate and a priority, as the existing trees appear to be in poor condition. The condition of these trees should be confirmed by an arborist prior to a final decision on their removal. They should be replaced with the same species.
- 5.6.73 Additional vegetation in this area would be appropriate where it would not have an adverse impact on views into the Meeting Place Precinct. This should be determined by considering the heights of new tree canopies or understorey plantings at maturity. New plantings should not obscure significant views, which might mean retaining or enhancing existing views through vertical or horizontal framing devices (for example, between two trees or below the canopies of mature trees and above new understorey plantings).

Weeds and other environmental threats

Objectives

- Develop a weed management strategy.
- Consider the cultural heritage values of some weed species.
- Integrate heritage values of the Meeting Place Precinct into fire management and policy procedures.

Rationale

The strategic removal of weeds, and weedy species, would aim to manage minor problems (at little cost) before they become major and costly issues.

Some weedy species have cultural heritage value and are associated with key concepts of the significance of the place. However, their management or unchecked proliferation could have adverse impacts on the conservation of other significant values that their individual significance does not warrant.

Policy

- 5.6.74 A strategy identifying and recommending control methods for key problem weeds within the Meeting Place Precinct should be developed. This strategy should identify specific control methods that would not damage significant spaces and elements, or have adverse impacts on significant and desired vegetation or vegetation communities. This strategy should also include a schedule for ongoing monitoring to ensure weeds are managed in the early stages of their life span, to prevent increasing costs associated with their removal as they become established and mature. (This applies in particular to early management of proliferations of large woody introduced species.)
- 5.6.75 The heritage values of some weed species within the Meeting Place Precinct should be incorporated into the weed management strategy. It may be possible through careful management to retain and contain the spread of known and potentially invasive species in locations where they contribute to the integrity and expression of significance in the cultural landscape (the collection of plantings associated with Maiden and the RBG, for example).
- 5.6.76 Weed species of moderate or little cultural significance should be removed where they are assessed to pose unacceptable risks to the conservation of other significant values.

- 5.6.77 The weed management strategy should formalise protocols for sourcing plant stock, top soil and mulch to minimise potential for introduction of weeds, pests or pathogens.
- 5.6.78 Provenance of all local species must be local, unless species can no longer be found locally and the use of non-local seed source can be justified. Provenance for local species must be prioritised to be sought firstly from within the immediate native plant community, then within Botany Bay National Park (south), then from the Kurnell Peninsula.
- 5.6.79 Any commercially grown plants from local seed stock and introduced plants (local and non-local native and exotic species) should be traceable and sourced from certified growers or suppliers to ensure healthy specimens, uncontaminated soil and mulch, and to minimise risks of introducing weeds, pests or pathogens (i.e. *Phytophthora cinnamomi*).
- 5.6.80 Individuals regenerating from introduced trees species should be removed. Seeding/parent trees should also be removed unless identified that they must be conserved and maintained in accordance with their contribution to the significance of the Meeting Place Precinct as a whole.
- 5.6.81 The use of fire or steam as weed management methods should be explored.
- 5.6.82 A fire management policy should be prepared that is consistent with DECC fire management policy and procedures, provides public safety as well as protection of the significant physical landscape and fabric of the Meeting Place Precinct. It should include specific procedures for:
- protection of significant vegetation communities, cultural plantings, and significant aspects of the cultural landscape
 - public safety and evacuation areas and/or routes
 - burning regimes for vegetation management
 - weed control after fires.

5.7 Aboriginal cultural heritage

Objectives

- To recognise and protect the tangible Aboriginal cultural heritage embodied in the Meeting Place Precinct landscape and the intangible heritage that gives this site meaning.

Rationale

The Meeting Place Precinct retains many of the qualities of the pre-colonisation landscape in which Aboriginal people lived for generations. Consultation with Aboriginal community representatives has identified that these qualities include:

- land and water, and the relationship between the two
- fresh water and salt water, and the importance of places where the two meet (within the Meeting Place Precinct this relationship has been impacted by the damming of the freshwater stream)
- remnants of the plants and animals, valued for totemic and resource reasons
- knowledge of the place (for example, knowledge of the names of plants and how they can be used)
- traditions associated with the use of plants and animals for cultural purposes

- the visual connection across Botany Bay in all directions
- a landscape known to contain the burial places of many Aboriginal people.

The pre-colonisation landscape also contains rich evidence of Aboriginal history and people, in the extensive areas of midden deposit and in the rock engravings.

Even though the impacts of colonisation were severe, Aboriginal people did not leave the area. There is a rich body of oral history, knowledge and memory held within the Aboriginal community/people and by individuals that tells of this history.

Policy

- 5.7.1 Conserve the tangible and intangible Aboriginal cultural heritage elements and values of the Meeting Place Precinct that are of **exceptional** and **high** significance, recognising the fundamental rights and interests of Aboriginal people in all aspects of this place.
- 5.7.2 Recognise that Aboriginal knowledge of this place and the environment is part of their culture and heritage and seek ways to bring this knowledge into park management.
- 5.7.3 Involve Aboriginal people in the assessment of the significance of Aboriginal heritage, including consideration of the assessments contained in this Conservation Management Plan. It is expected that new understandings of the significance of this place for Aboriginal people will emerge and into the future. Allowing for the emergence of these understandings and adapting the associated policies is to be encouraged.
- 5.7.4 Work with Aboriginal people with traditional or long-standing associations with the site to document:
- Aboriginal cultural evidence (such as a ceremonial ground and marker tree mentioned in a recent oral history interview)
 - culturally sensitive sites or areas that may need special protection or limitations on access
 - sources of materials and food on the site and within the park used by Aboriginal people in living memory (many Aboriginal people have visited and collected resources from this landscape during the last 50-70 years)
 - traditions, memories and stories.
- 5.7.5 Involve Aboriginal people with traditional or long-standing associations with the site in the development of protocols for the protection and interpretation of Aboriginal cultural heritage, tangible and intangible.
- 5.7.6 Establish ways in which Aboriginal people can enact and pass on their custodial responsibilities for country, including participating in interpretation, environmental management and protection.
- 5.7.7 Enable Aboriginal use of the park's natural and cultural resources for cultural purposes, within the constraints of the sustainability of the natural environment and the potential fragility of these resources, by establishing a clear process for consent.
- 5.7.8 Engage Aboriginal people in the planning and management of a program of local native vegetation restoration, recognising that reinstatement of these areas will help Aboriginal people reconnect to the Meeting Place Precinct.

- 5.7.9 Bring Aboriginal history, meanings and stories into the Meeting Place Precinct interpretation, recognising that people's stories and associations are their own³⁷.
- 5.7.10 Support Aboriginal involvement in the Meeting Place Precinct, recognising the extent of involvement desired by Aboriginal people and that this may change over time, and seek to achieve long-term outcomes for the Aboriginal community/people and for the conservation of the place and its values as a whole.

5.8 Archaeology

The archaeological potential of the Meeting Place Precinct is assessed in the *Heritage Assessment* (Design 5 2006: Section 5.6.6, 5.6.7 and Appendix E) and summarised in Table 3, Section 2, noting where subsequent investigation of Aboriginal sites (Irish 2007) has resulted revisions to the earlier assessment.

Objectives

- To recognise and conserve archaeological resources in situ, adopting a precautionary approach.
- To avoid impacts on archaeological resources.
- To establish a soundly based archaeological sensitivity zoning plan for the site.

Rationale

The extent of Aboriginal cultural evidence identified through past disturbance and archaeological investigations indicates that the site is a rich repository of Aboriginal cultural materials. Further, it is likely the site contains additional Aboriginal burials.

All of the Meeting Place Precinct should be considered to be of high Aboriginal archaeological potential, and the areas identified in the *Heritage Assessment* (Design 5 2006: Section 5.5.6 and Appendix E) as of interface, low or nil potential need to be treated with caution.

The historical development of the site is relatively well documented, and it appears that the location of most past structures is known. Defining an area of archaeological sensitivity is therefore relatively easy, although a cautious approach is always advised, recognising that unrecorded features may be exposed unexpectedly.

The greatest risk to all archaeological resources is through activities that result in ground disturbance including: construction of new structures; installation of infrastructure; demolition of structures; tree removal; planting; erosion. Given the location of the site close to the coast, the consequences of climate change may mean changes in the pattern and intensity of storm events, resulting in a higher risk of coastal erosion.

PWG/DECC has established processes for archaeological investigations:

- For non-Aboriginal heritage, archaeological investigations require approval under the *Heritage Act* and the Executive Director Cultural and Heritage has delegation under the *Heritage Act* to approve applications under Section 140 of the Act
- For Aboriginal heritage, archaeological investigations require approval under the *NPW Act*. The Park Management Policy Manual (2007: 414) advises that such approvals should go through EPRG.

Recent archaeological test excavations (May-June 2007) offer an excellent example of the effective application of these processes (Irish 2007b, 2007c; Tuck 2007).

³⁷ DEC (2006) *Guideline to Aboriginal Intellectual Property*, DEC.

Policy

- 5.8.1 Recognise and respect the archaeological sensitivity of the whole of the Meeting Place Precinct.
- 5.8.2 Recognise the capacity of archaeological resources and methods of inquiry to add to an understanding of the history of this site, and consider establishing a framework to guide and set limits on any such research.
- 5.8.3 Establish a more refined archaeological sensitivity zoning plan as a basis for future site design and development.
- 5.8.4 As part of a heritage impact assessment process, establish pre-design planning processes to help avoid impacts on archaeological resources from intentional ground disturbance by:
 - early consideration of archaeological potential
 - development of design alternatives
 - prioritising archaeological protection.
- 5.8.5 Establish protocols for archaeological monitoring of ground disturbing activities, including agreements on Aboriginal community roles and responsibilities.

5.9 Built environment

The section introduces general objectives (and rationale) followed by specific policies for each individual built element.

General objectives

- To manage the significance of built elements in the context of all the values of the Meeting Place Precinct as a whole.
- To retain and conserve the significance of built elements and their settings within the Meeting Place Precinct.
- To remove intrusive elements.
- To provide guidance for alterations and restorations to, and re-use of, existing buildings.
- To develop a managerial environment where decisions regarding the future of places in the Meeting Place Precinct can be made which recognised and balance the individual merits of each site in the context of the values and significance of the Meeting Place Precinct as a whole.

General rationale

This Conservation Management Plan recognises the significant built elements of the Meeting Place Precinct and recommends the retention and conservation of these elements, and their associated spaces and meanings. This policy allows for the restoration of damaged elements, the reconstruction of missing elements, and the removal of intrusive elements, subject to specific guidelines. Provision is also made within policy for the adaptation of existing elements for new uses, also subject to specific guidelines.

All activities are to adopt a 'precautionary approach'. The reconstruction, restoration, removal or adaptation of significant elements should not be undertaken without thorough evaluation of heritage impacts to ensure works are in accordance with significance and conservation policy. Reasons of visitor amenity or improved interpretation are not sufficient justification for these actions.

Alpha House and site

'Alpha Farm' refers to the entire site of Alpha House within the curtilage described in the *Heritage Assessment* (Design 5 2006: 5.10 – Heritage Curtilages) – 'the area of the site that was historically associated with Alpha Farm and includes the cleared land to the northeast of the building, and the foreshore area and bay'.

References to 'Alpha House' refer only to the existing building as it stands today. The structure that predated the current building is not included in this description.

Note to policy for Alpha House and site

This policy for Alpha House and site was prepared following a review of the University of Sydney (Masters of Conservation students) 1999 *Conservation Management Plan for the Alpha Farm site including the Kurnell Accommodation House* (unendorsed draft).

This policy is supplemented by the 1999 draft Conservation Management Plan. In the case of any inconsistencies between the two policy, however, the policy in this report will take precedence.

In the case of new research that resolves issues of the boundary definition for the original extent of Alpha Farm or further aspects of the place's history, a revised statement of significance should be prepared for Alpha Farm and conservation policy updated accordingly.

Objectives

- To retain and conserve all fabric, openings and spaces of Alpha House in accordance with their relative significance, and in accordance with the significance of the Meeting Place Precinct as a whole.
- To encourage actions that would recover original fabric, openings and spaces.
- To identify, retain and conserve the significant aspects of the site of Alpha Farm, within its heritage curtilage.
- To identify, retain and conserve significant relationships between Alpha House, the Alpha Farm site, and the wider landscape setting of the Meeting Place Precinct.
- To ensure that all layers of the history of the place receive a balanced expression according to their individual significance, relative to the significance of the place as a whole.

Rationale

Alpha Farm is of exceptional significance to the Meeting Place Precinct, and of regional³⁸ significance in the context of NSW, for its historic, aesthetic, scientific, and rarity values. The visually prominent site has a direct visual relationship with Commemoration Flat and Botany Bay. It is a central feature of the Meeting Place Precinct.

Alpha House, an Edwardian weatherboard building, retains most of its original features, with later additions restricted largely to the rear. The existing Alpha House was completed in 1902 as an accommodation house, with significant additions in the original style in 1908. Further modifications took place in the 1950s and 1960s. Alpha House was built on the remains of two previous dwellings, of which the cellar, part of the first house, remains intact. Alpha House and Farm are located in close proximity to an Aboriginal midden.

The use of Alpha House as an accommodation and guest house over the past century obscures its other histories, particularly that of the first house, related to the first land granted in Australia for agricultural development. Retaining evidence of and interpreting these histories to visitors is an important and challenging aspect of the conservation of the site.

³⁸ Regional significance was defined in Volume 1, *Heritage Assessment* (Design 5 2006), however this term is no longer used by the NSW Heritage Office, and a reassessment will be required to determine if this element is of State or local significance.

In addition, the resumption of the land of Alpha Farm in 1899, with the formation of the Captain Cook Landing Place Trust Reserve, dissolved the earlier boundaries of Alpha Farm, which related it to a wider area of farm land. Clarifying the rationale behind the area described by the heritage curtilage and shown on the map (Design 5 2006: Section 5.10 – Heritage Curtilages; 159, 163), and verifying the relationship of this area to the boundaries of the original land grant, is an important step towards the formation of sound policy.

Establishing guidelines to assist in determining new uses for Alpha Farm is also a priority for its ongoing conservation and management.

Policy

- 5.9.1 Original fabric, spaces and openings in areas of exceptional significance must be conserved and maintained.
- 5.9.2 Fabric of no significance should be retained in sound condition and, if necessary, removed. Openings of no significance may be closed.
- 5.9.3 Intrusive fabric should be removed.
- 5.9.4 In areas of exceptional and high significance, damaged elements should be replaced to match existing in detail and material.
- 5.9.5 In areas of exceptional and high significance, missing details should be reinstated, based on existing physical evidence.
- 5.9.6 All new works should be identifiable as new, on inspection.
- 5.9.7 The use of new hardware, fittings, and door and window furniture, which is not identical to the original, is acceptable, but these should be of an appearance and design that is sympathetic to the original.
- 5.9.8 Existing kitchen and bathroom fitouts, while not significant, tell a story in relation to the Meeting Place Precinct's growth as a place of leisure in the 1950s. These fitouts should be maintained. Modifications / upgrades would only be appropriate if they are integral to ensuring a sympathetic and viable reuse of the property. Modifications / upgrades should only occur where this process would not have adverse physical or visual impacts on significance.
- 5.9.9 Existing roof cladding should be retained as long as it is in good condition. Upon deterioration, it should be replaced with a new corrugated zincalume roof with traditional fixing, flashing and ridge capping elements. The chimneys and chimney pots must be conserved and maintained, and the kitchen chimney pots reinstated.

Spatial arrangements

- 5.9.10 Original space of exceptional significance must be conserved and maintained.
- 5.9.11 Existing internal spatial arrangements should be retained or returned to original internal arrangements.

Painting

- 5.9.12 Elements that were originally painted should be repainted on a regular basis. Elements that have not previously been painted, such as brickwork, concrete, metal or tiled surfaces, must not be painted.
- 5.9.13 Original colour schemes of originally painted elements should be replicated where possible, as determined by paint scrapes.
- 5.9.14 New elements introduced to existing areas of heritage significance, should be subtly differentiated from non-original elements through the use of colour and detail.

- 5.9.15 Appropriate colouring schemes for new structures introduced to the site are addressed in Policy 5.9.29, New Structures.

Services

- 5.9.16 Services, information fixtures and related items should be located in a sympathetic manner, where their introduction does not have an adverse visual or physical impact on the significance of Alpha House or its fabric, or on significant visual linkages between Alpha House and other elements / spaces, or on the significance of the site as a whole.
- 5.9.17 Installation of services and related items should use existing openings and trenches where possible; new penetrations should be confined to areas not publicly visible. New services should not be installed if they will have an adverse impact (physical or visual) on significance.
- 5.9.18 Any existing obsolete services should be removed and original fabric made good.

Use

- 5.9.19 Existing and future uses of Alpha House should be consistent with its significance and history as a publicly accessible building for visitor accommodation and amenity.
- 5.9.20 Recognising that reinstating the original use of Alpha House as a place of accommodation may not be possible, other uses may be considered appropriate where they:
- allow for continued public access, particularly to the original refreshment room and other spaces that were originally intended for public use (guestrooms and verandahs, for example);
 - make minimal interventions to significant fabric; and
 - do not impact upon the significance of Alpha House, as determined by Statement of Heritage Impact.
- 5.9.21 Appropriate uses for Alpha House could include:
- A gallery, exhibition and/or museum space that interprets the history of Alpha House in relation to the broader site, or of the site in general. This function might also seek to encourage reflections and studies on the continuing process of history making that is embodied by the Meeting Place Precinct.
 - An education centre, potentially related to the above, for use by visiting school and/or university groups.
 - Mixed use, where the majority of the building is used as a gallery or education centre, and a limited part of the building is used in a residential capacity (for a caretaker, for example).
 - Mixed use, where majority of spaces are retained for public use programs and/or access, and a limited part of the building is used by PWG staff as office / administrative spaces.
 - Returning the refreshment room to its original use would be desirable, but only where it would not involve major works related to BCA and OHS requirements for commercial kitchens and related issues.
- 5.9.22 Access to the cellar should be retained, but restricted for maintenance or educational purposes only. The cellar should not be used for any habitable purpose or as a storage area.

- 5.9.23 The original use of Alpha House, and of the structures which preceded it (including the cellar), should be interpreted through educational strategies and other means.

Building Code of Australia (BCA) Compliance Recommendations

- 5.9.24 Once a new use for the site has been determined, a BCA compliance report should be carried out. If BCA requirements for a particular use would result in an adverse heritage impact, that use should be avoided or reassessed to minimise or avoid these impacts.

Physical alterations and interventions

- 5.9.25 Physical alterations and interventions must not occur in areas of exceptional significance. If works are necessary for essential operational and safety reasons, changes must be undertaken with care and must be reversible.
- 5.9.26 The location of any new facilities and services should be sited in areas of no significance, and where they would not have adverse physical or visual impacts on the significance of Alpha farm or of the Meeting Place Precinct as a whole.
- 5.9.27 Physical alterations and interventions to interior fabric or interior spaces should not have adverse physical or visual impacts on original fabric or original spatial configuration. Alterations that reinstate original spaces or openings would be desirable and should be encouraged.
- 5.9.28 Physical alterations and interventions should be of a form, scale, detail and colour that is sympathetic to the original.

New structures

- 5.9.29 New additions or free-standing structures within the Alpha Farm site would only be permitted where they:
- are carefully and unobtrusively located within the site, and do not adversely impact on the significance of Alpha House, or on significant visual linkages within, to and from the Alpha Farm site
 - are located to the rear of Alpha House
 - are sympathetic to the design, fabric, roof forms and materials of the existing 1902-1908 house
 - feature good-quality contemporary design
 - respect the history of the Meeting Place Precinct, and comply with other policies in this Conservation Management Plan.
- 5.9.30 The use of temporary structures is preferable to permanent constructions, unless the design of the temporary structure adversely impacts, or is inconsistent with, sustaining the values of the place even in a temporary capacity. In the context of the Meeting Place Precinct, appropriate temporary structures include:
- structures whose sole purpose relates to and supports the significance of the place
 - structures related to temporary activities of a short duration, i.e. for public activities or events, no longer than 4-6 weeks. Temporary structures may also be needed for management purposes. These structures should be removed after 12 months

- structures that do not require foundations or supports of any kind that will cause surface disturbance and/or result in substantial re-grassing or resurfacing of areas following the removal of the structure.
- 5.9.31 The use of a small temporary structure to offer refreshment services (i.e. a coffee cart) may be desirable and appropriate in minimising potential impacts of food preparation facilities within the original building.
- 5.9.32 For new structures requiring excavation works, see Policy 5.8 – Archaeological Resources.

Archaeological resources

- 5.9.33 Future works involving ground disturbance should minimise physical disturbance within the Alpha Farm curtilage (the Alpha House and garages are within an area assessed as being of high historical archaeological potential, and the land within the Alpha Farm curtilage is considered to be of high Aboriginal archaeological potential).
- 5.9.34 Future works involving below ground disturbance should be preceded by thorough research which takes into account previous studies and guidelines in relation to historical archaeological potential and Aboriginal sites and values. (See also Policy 5.4, 5.7, 5.8).

Setting, landscape and curtilage

- 5.9.35 The curtilage which forms the setting for Alpha House must be left clear and undisturbed (as existing). No new landscaping works, paths, plantings or buildings should be introduced to the north of Alpha House, or where they would obscure an understanding of Alpha House as a building on an uninterrupted grassy knoll.
- 5.9.36 New works on the site the east and west of Alpha House should not impede a general visual appreciation of Alpha House.
- 5.9.37 New works on the site (including landscaping or structures) should not impede on or alter views of the front (north) façade.
- 5.9.38 Views within, to and from Alpha Farm, including those from Botany Bay, should be retained. This includes the framed vista between the pair of pines looking north from Alpha House to Botany Bay.
- 5.9.39 Significant cultural plantings associated with Alpha House (as identified in the *Heritage Assessment* and Section 2.0 of this report) should be retained for their identified heritage value, and in accordance with their relative significance.
- 5.9.40 The free-standing garages, considered as of neutral significance, may be removed or adaptively re-used.

Access

- 5.9.41 Pedestrian access to Alpha House should be from the front, rather than from the rear. Any new access ways must relate to historical patterns of use and access. The current access road to Alpha House from the Discovery Centre could be retained for occasional vehicular access, but should not form part of a major pedestrian route or interpretative walk around the site.
- 5.9.42 Ways to sensitively install disabled access to BCA standards should be investigated to facilitate public access where this is part of a desired future use of Alpha House.
- 5.9.43 The direct connection between Alpha House and the Trust Wharf remains should be restored and supported by interpretation.

Monitoring, emergency and ongoing maintenance

- 5.9.44 As a priority, all fabric should be surveyed by an accredited heritage buildings surveyor and a schedule of urgent and ongoing maintenance works prepared. A schedule of emergency and ongoing maintenance works should also provide for regular monitoring of the building's condition.

Archival recording

- 5.9.45 A photographic record should be made before, during, and on completion of any significant conservation, alteration or refurbishment works. Photographic recording should not be considered as an alternative to the conservation and maintenance of significant fabric. (See Policy 5.13)

Discovery Centre**Objectives**

- To ensure decision-making in the short-term respects the design intent and the relative significance of the original building, recognising that the long-term retention of the building, while uncertain, is a likely outcome.
- To recover the integrity of the original building design.
- To conserve the building's significance.
- To enhance the significant axial relationships of the building to the main flagstaff.

Rationale

The Discovery Centre, built in 1967 as a Museum and Information Centre, was designed to respond to Commemoration Flat which it overlooks, with its central axis aligned with the main flagstaff on the Flat.

Significant works undertaken in the 1990s reversed the orientation of the building from the north to the south. The northern porch was closed, and public access restricted through a new extension to the south. The stone stair to the north of the building that links the Discovery Centre to Commemoration Flat was removed and a grassed amphitheatre with a central sand area formed for traditional Aboriginal dance and ceremony,, and a copse of trees and understorey planting created along the main axis. The new understorey planting diminishes the designed visual relationship between the building and the flagstaff. These additions, however, largely respect the rectilinear form and massing of the original design.

The building was designed with steel portal frames, creating open internal space divided into two main adaptable areas along a central axial corridor. However, subsequent installation of partitions for office spaces and displays for the museum have reduced this internal division, as well as the relationship between the interior and exterior spaces.

Policy*Conservation*

- 5.9.46 Elements of high significance should be conserved and maintained. This includes original fabric, spaces and openings. In areas of high significance, lost or damaged elements should be replaced to match existing in detail and material.
- 5.9.47 Elements of moderate significance should also be conserved. This includes fabric, spaces and openings.
- 5.9.48 Elements of moderate significance should only be modified if it obscures the fabric of high significance, and removal should only be undertaken following the provision of heritage advice.

- 5.9.49 Elements of no significance could be retained (and maintained in sound condition) or removed.
- 5.9.50 Intrusive elements should be removed.
- 5.9.51 The original exterior colour scheme of the 1967 section should be recovered. Removal of the painted fascia and metal roof sheeting to expose original stained timber fascia would be desirable. The original colour scheme should be reinstated, based on historic photographs and/or paint scrapes.
- 5.9.52 All new works should be identifiable as such, on inspection.
- 5.9.53 Public access through the northern entrance to the building should be reinstated, as part of works restoring the physical and visual relationships between the Discovery Centre and the flagstaff on Commemoration Flat.
- 5.9.54 The use of new hardware, fittings, and door and window furniture, which is not identical to the original, is acceptable, but these should be of an appearance and design that is sympathetic to the original, and should not replace original fabric.
- 5.9.55 Removal of the Discovery Centre would only be considered where it would recover or enhance an aspect of the Meeting Place Precinct of greater significance. If the Discovery Centre is removed, the location of the building, its purpose, and axial relationship between the Discovery Centre site and the main flagstaff should be interpreted.
- 5.9.56 The original open and adaptable spatial qualities of the main building should be recovered. Internal partitions, false ceilings, and window obstructions should be removed.

Use

- 5.9.57 The use of the Discovery Centre should respect and enhance original design intentions, maximising open internal space and solar access.
- 5.9.58 The Discovery Centre should be publicly accessible, including for disabled persons.

Setting

- 5.9.59 Significant connections, both physical and visual, between the Discovery Centre and Commemoration Flat (and public picnic areas) should be recovered by reinstating the original formal staircase between these areas. Restoring public access through the northern entrance to the building would also be desirable.
- 5.9.60 The visual relationship between the interior space of the Discovery Centre and the exterior setting of the Meeting Place Precinct should be recovered.

Monitoring, emergency and ongoing maintenance

- 5.9.61 As a priority, all fabric should be surveyed by an accredited heritage building surveyor and a schedule of urgent and ongoing maintenance works prepared. The schedule of emergency and ongoing maintenance works should also address regular monitoring of the building's condition.

Archival recording

- 5.9.62 A photographic record should be made before, during, and on completion of any significant conservation, alteration or refurbishment works. Photographic recording should not be considered as an alternative to the conservation and maintenance of significant fabric. (See Policy 5.13)

Education Centre

Objectives

- To enable decisions about the future of the Education Centre which may recover aspects of the Meeting Place Precinct that are of greater significance.
- To record and interpret the history of the Education Centre relative to the history and development of the Meeting Place Precinct as a place of leisure during the 1950s and 1960s.

Rationale

The Education Centre, a small weatherboard building, was constructed in the 1950s as a refreshment room and kiosk. The building has been modified and altered over time since the 1960s, with a significant phase of alterations in 1994 to accommodate its use as an education centre. These changes have resulted in a loss of integrity, with no known evidence remaining of the former kiosk fitout.

Intact evidence of 1950s development of refreshment and toilet facilities within the Meeting Place Precinct, can be found in the additions to the rear of Alpha House and their interior fitout. The Education Centre has been identified in the *Heritage Assessment* as being moderate significance, and 'of little architectural merit'.

As the management of the Meeting Place Precinct seeks to remove accretions within the Precinct which do not contribute to key understandings of the place, the opportunity exists to remove the Education Centre, should its removal allow the recovery of elements of greater significance, or facilitate a better appreciation of those elements.

Policy

- 5.9.63 Removal of the Education Centre would be appropriate if it allowed the recovery of aspects of greater significance within its environs. The paths and turning circle could be removed if desired.

Monitoring, emergency and ongoing maintenance

- 5.9.64 Should the building be retained, all fabric should be surveyed by an accredited heritage buildings surveyor and a schedule of urgent and ongoing maintenance works prepared. The above schedule of emergency and ongoing maintenance works should also provide for regular monitoring of the building's condition.
- 5.9.65 Should the building be removed, its state and condition should be photographically recorded prior to its removal. See Section 5.13.
- 5.9.66 Whether the building is retained or removed, the building's use as a kiosk and then an Education Centre should be interpreted in relation to the key concepts of significance: **A place for leisure** and **A place of history-making**.

Ferry shelter shed

Objectives

- To conserve the Ferry shelter shed as a structurally sound and usable building, regardless of the future use of the ferry wharf.

Rationale

The Ferry shelter shed was one of several sheds constructed in the park in c1910-12. It has an axial alignment to the Trust wharf remains which it is connected to by a path. It provided shelter to waiting ferry passengers.

Originally the structure had half height walls of vertical poles with a horizontal rail on top. Rustic knee brackets braced the building. Internally the shed had seats attached to the face of the inside walls. It had a gable roof covered in smaller roofing units than existing cladding (e.g.

shingles). The concrete floor is not original but is laid above rough sandstone pads that originally supported the posts. While not original, voids in the concrete floor provide evidence of the former internal seating layout. The original floor fabric is unconfirmed.

The extant shed that remains is representative of other similar shed structures within the park that have been removed. As a rare item of unusual construction, the shed is considered of local significance.

A recent condition assessment, prepared by the Government Architects Office (GAO) in March 2006, provides a series of recommendations for the conservation of the Ferry shelter shed.

Policy

- 5.9.67 The Ferry shelter shed should be conserved and maintained.
- 5.9.68 Conservation works should be consistent with its significance.
- 5.9.69 Works to stabilise and repair the Ferry shelter shed should be undertaken as a priority.
- 5.9.70 Fabric of no significance, and intrusive fabric, should be removed, unless its removal threatens the structural integrity of the Ferry shelter shed.
- 5.9.71 The Ferry shelter shed should be maintained as a useable shelter for public visitors to the park, regardless of the future of the ferry wharf.
- 5.9.72 Should the ferry wharf be reinstated, the path connecting the wharf and shed should be restored.
- 5.9.73 Public access to the Ferry shelter shed should be ensured as soon as it is made structurally sound.
- 5.9.74 Stories about the use of the Ferry shelter shed in its original function should be sought, and recorded to inform interpretation of the shed, and form part of the historical records for the Meeting Place Precinct in general.

Cave dwellings

Objective

- To record the material remains of the cave dwellings and interpret their heritage significance.

Rationale

Some caves and rocky overhangs along the northern foreshore of the Meeting Place Precinct were used as semi-permanent dwellings for fishermen. Use of the caves as habitation began from the early 1930s; similarly, economic conditions in the Depression also resulted in people establishing permanent camps in grassed foreshore areas nearby.

It is unknown how long the caves were inhabited or used. It is possible, however, that this area of the Meeting Place Precinct was used as occasional shelter until the early 1950s, when campers were evicted from the entire park. The use of the caves for dwellings and shelter for 20-30 years, while of secondary importance relative to the general history of the Meeting Place Precinct, nonetheless forms an interesting and important addition to the history of the site.

The significance of the caves and rocky overhangs is derived primarily from its use for habitation, and the material evidence for this use provided by the material remains themselves. However, given that physical conditions prevent effective material conservation, interpretation of the site is therefore the best conservation outcome.

Access to the cave dwellings is via Inscription Path, recognised to be of high significance in relation to the Meeting Place Precinct, and of local significance in the context of NSW's

cultural heritage. Inscription Path comprises both formal sections of hewn sandstone, and informal 'areas' where the path is less distinct.

Policy

- 5.9.75 Material evidence of the dwellings should be retained and recorded through measured drawings and archival photographs to NSW Heritage Office standards for archival recording, as a priority in view of their continued and inevitable physical degradation. (See Policy 5.13)
- 5.9.76 The history and significance of the cave dwellings should be interpreted. The installation of interpretive signage installed in the vicinity of the cave dwellings or along the rocky foreshore is not appropriate.
- 5.9.77 Conservation and management decisions concerning the cliff areas and Inscription Path should take into account the significance of the former cave dwellings and their surrounds.
- 5.9.78 Access to the cave dwellings should be monitored and potentially restricted during periods of high visitation, in order to slow the process of physical degradation.
- 5.9.79 The path to the cave dwellings should be retained in its current state. The path should be kept cleared, and the sections of path with irregular coursing conserved and maintained as existing.
- 5.9.80 Members of the public who recall living in, visiting, or knowing residents of the site should be sought out and interviewed, and their stories recorded to inform future interpretation of the cave dwellings and part of the historical records for the Meeting Place Precinct in general. (See also Policy 5.15 Research; 5.16 Interpretation).

Entry booth, anchor and flagpoles at entry

Objective

- To create an entry experience commensurate with the values of the Meeting Place Precinct.

Rationale

The entry booth makes little contribution to the Meeting Place Precinct and is of no significance (in its own right). The present entrance to the Botany Bay National Park and the Meeting Place Precinct, does not add to, or assist in understanding the significance of the place. The potential exists, therefore, through removal of the elements, to enhance the sense of arrival and entry to the place, and to emphasise the significance of the Meeting Place Precinct.

The anchor and flagpoles have been assessed as having no significance. Considering that the anchor is a replica, the flagpoles are no longer used, the anchor's associated plaque is missing, and the wall in which the flagpoles are mounted has been painted a different colour to the original, no impediment exists to the removal of the anchor, flagpoles, and wall.

Policy

- 5.9.81 The entry booth may be removed. However it should be kept in safe working order until it is removed. Prior to removal the entry booth should be photographically recorded and its location recorded on a survey plan. (See Policy 5.13)
- 5.9.82 The anchor and flagpoles may be removed. They should be recorded and their location noted on a survey plan prior to removal. (See Policy 5.13)
- 5.9.83 An entry point will be created that will be consistent with and sympathetic to the identified values of Botany Bay National Park.

5.10 Monuments

The *Heritage Assessment* (Design 5 2006), considers the monuments (with the exception of the Inscription Plate) as a group set within a commemorative landscape, and as such, having a defined heritage curtilage (Design 5: 159, 161).

The general policies set out below apply to the area within this curtilage and to all monuments within it. Specific policies have also been developed to accommodate the individual significance and nature of each monument.

General Objectives

- To preserve the fabric, setting and significance of the monuments in the Meeting Place Precinct, through appropriate material conservation (and physical intervention as required); conservation of the mown lawn setting; thorough research and recording of inscriptions; effective interpretation; and sensitive landscape design.
- To establish a decision-making framework by which proposals that seek to change the fabric or setting of the monuments, or that consider the addition of new monuments, may be assessed according to their impact on the heritage significance of the individual monuments, on the items as a group, and on the Meeting Place Precinct as a whole.

General Rationale

The monuments within the Meeting Place Precinct, created, installed and modified throughout the evolution of the place's history, are a critical part of its heritage significance, as A place of history making. Each recalls a particular event, person, or story, and their individual histories describe the formation of the commemorative landscape of the wider place and its importance to Australians.

Conserving the physical material of the monuments in their open setting is vital to the conservation of their significance. Of equal importance is the conservation of their intangible values, as the markers of history-making, an outcome which relies on effective interpretation.

Conserving the fabric, setting and significance of the monuments is the overarching objective in their conservation. However, it must be recognised that one of the core aspects of the Meeting Place Precinct is its role as A place of history-making, a place where it is understood, and recognised, that as our interpretation of history changes over time, the ways in which we remember, interpret and memorialise that history also change. In this respect, a degree of change must be permitted to the monuments – indeed, changes have already occurred. Proposed alterations to existing monuments, or proposals to erect new monuments, may be permitted, but they must be thoroughly assessed in terms of their potential impact on the values of existing monuments; as individual items, as a group, and in the context of the Meeting Place Precinct as a whole.

Taken as a group, the monuments are considered of exceptional significance to the Meeting Place Precinct. However, given the alterations that have occurred to some, not all parts of all monuments are equally significant, and this is reflected in policies for the individual monuments.

General Policies

- 5.10.1 Original fabric and setting of all monuments and memorials should be conserved and maintained, in situ. Change to the monuments should be minimised, and ad-hoc, piecemeal change must be avoided.
- 5.10.2 Proposals seeking to restore or reconstruct the elements and setting of monuments to their original state, should be encouraged. The potential heritage impact of these proposals should be assessed according to NSW Department of Planning Heritage Branch standards and criteria for items of State heritage significance.

- 5.10.3 Modifications to existing monuments (including their setting), or to erect new monuments within the Meeting Place Precinct, should be assessed according to NSW Department of Planning Heritage Branche standards and criteria for items of State heritage significance. Potential impacts on the significance of the Meeting Place Precinct as a whole, on the values of the monument group and individual monuments should be assessed.
- 5.10.4 Where specific elements are degraded and/or causing damage to significant fabric, they should be removed and be replaced. Replacements should be like for like, and date-stamped to identify them as new fabric.
- 5.10.5 The construction of new fences or barriers around, or shelters over monuments, where originally there was none, is not appropriate and must be avoided.

Setting, landscape and curtilage

- 5.10.6 The visibility of individual monuments in their open landscape setting must be conserved and maintained.
- 5.10.7 New works, including landscaping or structures, would only be permitted within the monuments curtilage (Design 5: 161), if they do not have adverse visual impacts on the setting or views of monuments, including the view of the Cook Obelisk from Botany Bay and from the Kurnell edge.
- 5.10.8 Views within, to and from the heritage curtilage of the monument group, especially those from Botany Bay, should be retained and enhanced.
- 5.10.9 The landscape setting of each monument should be left clear and undisturbed. A mown lawn setting should be maintained around each monument, unless other use constraints, such as wear patterns etc, dictate otherwise.

Monitoring, emergency and ongoing maintenance

- 5.10.10 Monuments and plaques should be regularly inspected, cleaned and repaired as necessary. Schedules for these actions have been developed (as part of the *Conservation Treatment Report on Commemorative Plaques associated with the Monuments at Kurnell within Botany Bay National Park* by A. Cummins for NPWS, May 2002) and should be implemented as a priority.
- 5.10.11 A detailed review of the physical conditions of each of the monuments and plaques, and relevant documentation (such as condition reports³⁹), should be undertaken every five years.

Interpretation

- 5.10.12 Interviews should be sought and recorded with people who were present at the unveiling of each monument, and their stories recorded as part of the historical research on the Meeting Place Precinct. (See also Policy 5.15 Research; 5.16 Interpretation)
- 5.10.13 No physical interpretive structures or signs should be installed within the setting of individual monuments (See also Policy 5.16 Interpretation). Appropriate interpretation could include hand-held leaflets or walking guides that make use of the monuments as stopping points to promote various aspects of the place's history, in particular its significance as **A place of history-making**.

³⁹ In particular, see Cummins, A., 'Conservation Condition Report on Commemorative Plaques associated with the Monuments at Kurnell with Botany Bay National Park', report produced by Sydney Artefacts Conservation for NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, November 2001; and Cummins, A., 'Conservation Treatment Report on Commemorative Plaques ...' (as above), May 2002.

Ongoing commemoration

- 5.10.14 Visitors, Aboriginal people and community groups should be permitted to continue to commemorate events associated with the significance of the Meeting Place Precinct through appropriate events, festivals and ceremonies.
- 5.10.15 Commemorative activities must not have permanent or physical impacts upon the fabric, setting or significance of the monuments nor on the significance of intangible values of the Meeting Place Precinct.
- 5.10.16 New activities designed to mark the history and importance of the Meeting Place Precinct will be assessed in relation to the policy contained in 5.4 Living connections and 5.12 Use, access and visitors. Ephemeral and non-permanent ways of marking or commemorating are preferred over new permanent physical structures.
- 5.10.17 New monuments intended as permanent structures should be assessed in accordance with the process outlined in policy 5.17 Managing change.
- 5.10.18 Consideration should be given to ways of marking or revealing the long Aboriginal connections with the Meeting Place Precinct, and their enduring presence before and after the arrival of Cook.

Access

- 5.10.19 All monuments should be visually accessible by all members of the public (with the exception of the Inscription Plate). Taking into account that some monuments are more difficult to access than others, physical access should be permitted and facilitated, where it would not adversely impact on the fabric, or the aesthetic and historic significance of individual monuments, their setting, and the monument group.

Individual Monument Policies***Inscription Plate***

Inscription Plate consists of a copper plate set into the upper cliff face to the east of Point Sutherland, above Inscription Path.

- 5.10.20 The fabric of Inscription Plate should be conserved and maintained in situ.

Cook Obelisk

The Cook Obelisk consists of an obelisk on a plinth surrounded by a low wall, all of sandstone, with several plaques set on the plinth. The flat sandstone outcrop, visible to the front of the monument is also an important part of this monument. The setting of the monument, a key part of its aesthetic qualities, includes its open, mown lawn setting, the 'V' of pines behind it, and the open space between the monument and these pines, and between the monument and the bay.

- 5.10.21 The Cook Obelisk should be conserved and maintained, in situ.
- 5.10.22 Failing sandstone elements of the monument should be consolidated, if their condition allows, or replaced like-for-like with date-stamped material. An experienced heritage stone mason or other experienced heritage professional should be appointed to carry out this work.
- 5.10.23 As part of regular maintenance, concrete pointing should be removed and re-pointed with lime mortar appropriate to the age and condition of the monument. An experienced heritage stone mason or other experienced heritage professional should be appointed to carry out this work.

- 5.10.24 New structures or other elements (including signage) must not be placed within the grassed area within the low wall or within the monument's mown lawn setting. They should be conserved and maintained as existing.
- 5.10.25 Reconstruction of missing original elements would be appropriate where sufficient evidence survives to ensure the monument will be returned to a known earlier state.

Solander Monument

The Solander Monument consists of a vertical granite cairn with two copper plaques on a raised and flattened turf platform, with a timber flagpole beside the cairn, in a mown lawn setting.

- 5.10.26 The Solander Monument and its setting should be conserved and maintained in situ
- 5.10.27 Failing granite elements and pointing should be consolidated or repaired, if their condition allows, or replaced like-for-like with date-stamped material. An experienced heritage stone mason or other experienced heritage professional should be appointed to carry out this work.
- 5.10.28 The flagstaff fabric is not significant and could be replaced when required with a similar (date stamped) flagstaff in that location.
- 5.10.29 The mown lawn setting and turf platform are an important part of the monument's setting and should not be impacted upon. The setting should be maintained and managed as existing.
- 5.10.30 Later accretions to the Solander Monument, including the crazy paving around the monument, should be removed in accordance with significance.
- 5.10.31 Reconstruction of missing original elements would be appropriate where sufficient evidence survives to ensure the monument will be returned to a known earlier state.

Banks Memorial Seat

The Banks Memorial Seat consists of a stone seat and two stone plinths of varying size (incorporating several copper plaques) set on a curved concrete base with three steps at the front, and a small stair and path leading to the rear of the seat, within a mown grass setting. It has an area of later (c1960s) sandstone crazy paving in front of it.

- 5.10.32 The Banks Memorial Seat should be conserved and maintained in situ; this includes the stair and narrow concrete path to the rear of the monument.
- 5.10.33 Failing stone elements of the monument should be consolidated, if their condition allows, or replaced like-for-like with date-stamped material. An experienced heritage stone mason or other experienced heritage professional should be appointed to carry out this work.
- 5.10.34 Later accretions to the Banks Memorial Seat, including the crazy paving around the monument, should be removed in accordance with significance.
- 5.10.35 The mown lawn surrounds form an important part of the monument's setting and should be maintained and managed as existing.

Main Flagstaff

The main flagstaff comprises an aluminium flagstaff set on a broad, raised and level area or platform that has a mown lawn surface. The platform is known to contain midden material.

- 5.10.36 The flagstaff fabric is not significant but the presence of a flagstaff in its existing location is. The flagstaff could be replaced as required by a similar (date-stamped) flagstaff in the same location.

- 5.10.37 The profile of the landscaped platform should be conserved and maintained. Any subsurface works within and surrounding the flagstaff's setting should be consistent with processes outlined in policy 5.7 Aboriginal cultural heritage and 5.8 Archaeology.
- 5.10.38 The mown lawn platform and surrounds form an important part of the flagstaff's setting and should be conserved and maintained as existing.

Forby Sutherland Memorial

The Forby Sutherland Memorial consists of a marble plaque set on sandstone blocks with a nearby flagstaff, with an area of later sandstone paving in front of it, the whole within a mown grass setting.

- 5.10.39 The Forby Sutherland Memorial and its setting should be conserved and maintained in situ.
- 5.10.40 Failing stone elements should be consolidated, if their condition allows, or replaced like-for-like with date-stamped material. An experienced heritage stone mason or other experienced heritage professional should be appointed to carry out this work.
- 5.10.41 As part of regular maintenance, concrete pointing should be removed and re-pointed with a mortar appropriate to the age and condition of the monument. An experienced heritage stone mason or other experienced heritage professional should be appointed to carry out this work.
- 5.10.42 The flagstaff fabric is not significant but the presence of a flagstaff in this location is. The flagstaff should be replaced when required by a similar (date-stamped) flagstaff in the same location.
- 5.10.43 The mown lawn surrounds form an important part of the monument's setting and should be maintained and managed as existing.
- 5.10.44 Later accretions to the Forby Sutherland Memorial, including the crazy paving, should be removed.

Isaac Smith Memorial

The Isaac Smith Memorial comprises three trachyte stones set on a flattened concreted area off-shore on a rock platform, some 40 metres from the Cook Obelisk.

- 5.10.45 The Isaac Smith Memorial should be conserved and maintained in situ.
- 5.10.46 Failing stone elements of the monument should be consolidated, if condition allows, or replaced like-for-like with date-stamped material. An experienced heritage stone mason or other experienced heritage professional should be appointed to carry out this work.
- 5.10.47 As part of regular maintenance, non-original concrete pointing should be removed and re-pointed with a mortar appropriate to the age and condition of the monument. An experienced heritage stone mason or other experienced heritage professional should be appointed to carry out this work.

Cook's Well

Cook's Well is marked by an area of crazy paving with a copper plaque mounted in the centre of a sandstone block. A pipe-rail barrier is set into the crazy paving, around the sandstone block. The whole monument sits within a mown grass setting. A 1950s photograph of the monument shows a square hole in the centre of the area with a timber lid and the same plaque mounted on a timber post next to the site.

The original plaque and both monuments commemorated the digging of a well by Cook's party, and are unlikely to relate to the original well.

- 5.10.48 The original plaque of Cook's Well should be conserved and maintained and continue to interpret and commemorate the digging of a well by Cook's party.
- 5.10.49 The mown lawn surrounds are an important part of the monuments setting. They should be maintained and managed as existing.
- 5.10.50 The pipe rail barrier, crazy paving and sandstone block are not significant and could be removed.

Freshwater stream plaque

Freshwater stream plaque is a bronze plaque (post-1900). It is set into a sandstone boulder that cantilevers over the water on the east side of the freshwater stream, where the stream passes under a post and rail fence along the foreshore road. The rock, and the stream and road in its immediate vicinity, may be considered as part of the monument's setting.

The significance of the plaque was not assessed as part of the *Heritage Assessment* (Design 5 2006).

- 5.10.51 Freshwater stream plaque should be conserved and maintained in situ.

Landing Place Memorial

The Landing Place Memorial consists of a copper plaque mounted on a sandstone block surrounded by a later pipe rail fence, the whole adjacent to the shore and within a mown lawn setting.

- 5.10.52 The Landing Place Memorial should be conserved and maintained in situ.
- 5.10.53 The mown lawn surrounds form an important part of the monument's setting and should be maintained and managed as existing.
- 5.10.54 Later accretions, such as the pipe rail barrier, are not significant and could be removed.

Prince's Tree Memorial

The Prince's Tree Memorial consists of a copper plaque mounted on a sandstone boulder, within an area of crazy paving, the whole within the mown lawn setting of the Cook Obelisk. The memorial commemorates the 1881 Royal visit and the planting of a Cook Island Pine on this site. The tree chosen was an *Araucaria cookii*, first identified by Cook as a separate species. It was removed in 1981 due to vandalism (ring-barking).

- 5.10.55 The Prince's Tree Memorial plaque should be conserved and maintained.
- 5.10.56 The stone that the plaque is mounted on and later accretions, including crazy paving, are not significant and could be removed.
- 5.10.57 Should the memorial be removed and not replaced, the plaque should be placed within the Meeting Place Precinct moveable heritage collection, and interpretation should note the existence of the plaque, its original location and purpose. The existing memorial should be recorded prior to removal.
- 5.10.58 A replacement tree that interprets the original commemoration of the 1881 event and planting could be considered but only if
- the replacement is an *Araucaria cookii*
 - the replacement tree is planted as close as possible to the original location
 - the link between the plaque, the event and the tree is retained and interpreted.
- 5.10.59 The mown lawn setting should be maintained and managed as existing.

Captain Cook Buoy Plaque

The Captain Cook Buoy plaque is a brass plaque located on a red navigational buoy in the bay off Commemoration Flat. The buoy and plaque are outside the boundary of the National Park. (It should be noted that it is the plaque that is significant, not the buoy on which it is mounted.)

- 5.10.60 The Captain Cook Buoy plaque should be conserved and maintained. Should the buoy be replaced, the plaque should be transferred to the new buoy.
- 5.10.61 Should the buoy be removed and not replaced, the plaque should be placed within the Meeting Place Precinct moveable heritage collection, and interpretation should note the existence of the plaque and its original location.

5.11 Objects, collections and records**Objectives**

- To manage the objects, collections and records associated with the Meeting Place Precinct in accordance with relevant NPWS policy, NSW Heritage Office guidelines, and Museums Australia Policy Guidelines.
- To develop a management plan for the objects, collections and records associated with the Meeting Place Precinct, in the ownership and management of PWG/DECC and held at the Meeting Place Precinct, Botany Bay National Park.
- To establish management structures for objects, collections and records that include Indigenous representatives of the groups associated with the area, and enable these representatives to determine issues of access, viewing and presentation in relation to Indigenous items.
- To confirm the provenance of all objects, collections and records held at the Meeting Place Precinct, and to ensure the deaccessioning and return of items inappropriately included in the collection or not related to the significance of the Meeting Place Precinct.

Rationale

The Meeting Place Precinct contains a large and highly significant group of moveable objects, collections and records that are of particular value to the place, the State, and the nation as a whole. The group of items is large and contributes to the significance of the place, and especially to our understanding of that significance. There are also important objects and records held elsewhere.

This policy relates to both the Captain Cook's Landing Place (CCLP) Collection, which includes objects actively collected or acquired and donations accepted by the CCLPT during their management of the place (up until 1967). It also relates to other records associated with the park's management, from 1899, such as working management systems, the CCLP Tree Register, maps and survey plans of the area now defined as the Meeting Place Precinct and other park management records such as file records, correspondence and Annual Reports.

The conservation and management needs of moveable heritage items are detailed in separate reports, notably the Stage 1 Assessment of CCLP Collection within the Moveable Heritage Collection of Botany Bay National Park Kurnell, undertaken by DECC in July 2006.

Additional detailed conservation policy is currently being developed by PWG. Consequently, this section seeks only to provide overarching policies for the conservation of records, collections and objects of the Meeting Place Precinct, in both the CCLP collection and other park management records.

Policy

- 5.11.1 Conservation and management of the objects, collections and records within the Meeting Place Precinct should be consistent with the policies contained in this document, and those expressed in the following documents:
- DEC Stage 1 Assessment of Captain Cook's Landing Place (CCLP) Collection, Meeting Place, within the Moveable Heritage Collection of Botany Bay National Park, Kurnell (July 2006), Draft report
 - *Objects in their Place: An Introduction to Movable Heritage*, NSW Heritage Office, 1994
 - *Movable Heritage Principles*, NSW Heritage Office, 2000
 - *Previous Possessions, New Obligations: Policies for Museums in Australia and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Peoples*, Museums Australia⁴⁰
 - Forthcoming policies for the moveable heritage of Botany Bay National Park, Kurnell, in development by PWG.

Research, management and recognition

- 5.11.2 Relevant policy documentation for the management of objects, collections and records should be reviewed and updated at regular intervals.⁴¹
- 5.11.3 A special study, including community consultation, should be commissioned to examine the significance of the Aboriginal artefacts in the CCLP and NPWS collections, and others related to the site. In relation to these items, management should acknowledge that Aboriginal people retain primary responsibility for determining decisions on these issues.
- 5.11.4 Research should be undertaken to verify and assess the significance of items of unproven provenance.
- 5.11.5 A management plan should be produced to guide the ongoing management of all objects, collections and records. The Plan should detail the conservation, storage and curatorial requirements of the collection, and the resources needed to sustain those activities. Particular reference should be made to the DECC CCLP Collection, Meeting Place, Stage 1 Assessment (DEC 2006, Draft report).
- 5.11.6 All significant objects, records and collections should be placed on the PWG/DECC S170 Heritage and Conservation Register.
- 5.11.7 Those individual items that are judged to meet the threshold for State heritage significance should be listed on the State Heritage Register. Formal applications should only be made when cataloguing is complete.

Acquisition and refusal of items offered to the collections

- 5.11.8 Items offered to the collection that are of potential heritage significance, and which relate directly to the history of the site, or assist in understanding the site's history or significance, should be provisionally accepted pending further study to confirm their provenance, significance, contribution, etc.
- 5.11.9 In relation to items that are of historic and/or thematic interest to the site, but are not of sufficient value to form part of the permanent collection, details of the

⁴⁰ Available at <http://www.amonline.net.au/pdf/matcon/policy.pdf>

⁴¹ NSW Heritage Office, *Objects in their Place: An Introduction to Movable Heritage*, 1994, and *Movable Heritage Principles*, 2000; Museums Australia Policy Guidelines; 'Stage 1 Assessment of Captain Cook's Landing Place Collection within the Moveable Heritage Collection of Botany Bay National Park Kurnell', DEC, July 2006.

item's owner(s) and location should be recorded for reference towards potential future exhibitions.

- 5.11.10 Items offered to the collection, which are unrelated to the site, its history and significance, should be refused.

Conservation and cataloguing

- 5.11.11 All objects, collections and records within the grounds of the Meeting Place Precinct should be correctly catalogued and valued, with reference to the management of the CCLP and NPWS collections.
- 5.11.12 The catalogue of objects, collections and records should, where possible, record information on the provenance and history of the items, and their comparative assessment to similar items in other collections, in order to determine the significance and conservation requirements and priorities of the items.
- 5.11.13 The catalogue should also identify which items have been removed from one place and survive in others, or are located in collections elsewhere.
- 5.11.14 Items should be stored in a manner appropriate to their condition, with environmental monitoring and controls where necessary. If possible, movable items should generally be retained in situ unless they are to be considered of such rarity or in such poor material condition, that their removal and storage in a secure environment is necessary (in some cases, construction of a shelter for the items may be more appropriate).

Disposal of items

- 5.11.15 Objects, collections or records within the grounds of the Meeting Place Precinct that **are directly related** to the place and its significance should be kept.
- 5.11.16 Objects, collections or records within the grounds of the Meeting Place Precinct that **are not directly related** to the place and its significance should be assessed. This would involve a detailed assessment of the item's heritage significance and relevance to the Meeting Place Precinct.
- 5.11.17 Items assessed as having significance but to another place or people, should be returned or repatriated to a more suitable place. If the return of an item is not possible, the item should be kept.
- 5.11.18 Items assessed as not significant could be disposed of.
- 5.11.19 Issues of deaccessioning and repatriation of objects, collections and records from the Meeting Place Precinct should be addressed in the detailed policies currently under development by Park Management.

Interpretation

- 5.11.20 An assessment of the nature of the objects, collections and records of the Meeting Place Precinct should be undertaken to determine the potential for items to assist in interpretive programs at the Meeting Place Precinct.

5.12 Use, access and visitors

Objectives

- To ensure uses of the Meeting Place Precinct are in accordance with or contribute to the significance of the Meeting Place Precinct.
- To encourage associated communities to visit the Meeting Place Precinct and the broader park, and to participate in cultural activities and events that help maintain and strengthen their connection to the Meeting Place Precinct (See Section 5.4).

- To encourage appropriate use of and access to the Meeting Place Precinct while ensuring any adverse impacts on the place and its values are minimised.
- To avoid adverse impacts through the introduction of new elements associated with use, access and visitors, including interpretation and visitor facilities.

Rationale

Public use of and access to the Meeting Place Precinct for a range of social, recreational, leisure and community purposes is important and relates to key concepts of the place's significance. Furthermore, continued public access and recreational use connects with the significant historic use of the Meeting Place Precinct as a place for leisure.

As well, for some communities to maintain their special associations with this place, special provision may be required in terms of access, allocation of defined spaces or exclusive use for a defined period. Cultural traditions may also require flexibility in park management from time to time.

Botany Bay National Park is a public place that is subject to peak visitor seasons, during public holidays, on weekends, and during the whale watching season, for example, and these uses are encouraged. However, where use exceeds the capacity of available visitor facilities, would have adverse physical impacts on the Meeting Place Precinct, a level of acceptable impact needs to be determined.

The highest visitor numbers and therefore the greatest threat to significance is associated with whale watching, a use of the park that occurs outside of the Meeting Place Precinct, but which increases parking, congregating, picnicking etc, within the Meeting Place Precinct in association with this activity.

The park, and the Meeting Place Precinct, is also an attractive place for a variety of commercial uses; examples could range from food stalls through to commercial filming. Some of these uses may be acceptable if they have no impact on the significance of the place and its intangible values and support its public use.

New uses or changes to existing uses require assessment in terms of the requirements under policies 5.17.1 and 5.17.2.

Policy

Use and access

- 5.12.1 Public use of and access to the Meeting Place Precinct for a range of social, recreational, leisure and community purposes should continue. Appropriate uses are those that:
- respect the cultural significance of the Meeting Place Precinct
 - respect and assist the continuation of significant associations, connections and meanings
 - are assessed as being culturally appropriate, recognising that the has place multiple values and associations
 - involve no permanent physical or visual impacts on the significance of the Meeting Place Precinct as a whole
 - will not have physical or visual impacts on individually significant cultural landscape, buildings and structures, monuments and memorials, and their settings, subsurface archaeological deposits and remains
 - will not have permanent physical impacts on vegetation or the underlying land form

- enable the continued use of the precinct for leisure, walking, swimming, diving, Christmas picnics and other cultural celebrations and events, whale watching, simultaneously by individuals and large community groups.
- 5.12.2 Major events, festivals etc should occur in the Commemoration Flat area, unless other factors determine a more appropriate location. The Cricket Ground could also be used for large gatherings.
- 5.12.3 The impacts of noise on equitable use of the Meeting Place Precinct should also be a consideration in determining appropriate uses.
- 5.12.4 The use of the Meeting Place Precinct for special community events (regular or one-off events) should be allowed, while not reducing general public access.
- 5.12.5 In line with NPWS policy on access there will be public access to and use of the Meeting Place Precinct for a range of social, recreational, leisure and community purposes.
- 5.12.6 Commercial activities may be allowed within the Meeting Place Precinct only if they can be demonstrated to make a positive contribution to the achievement of the objectives of the Meeting Place Precinct, do not impact on the cultural values of the place and have no adverse long or short term impact. Such activities would require assessment under policy 5.17.

Visitor facilities

Visitor facilities refers to toilets, BBQs, shade, parking, site furniture, seating and tables, lighting, bins and interpretation.

- 5.12.7 Introduction of new elements including visitor facilities must consider and avoid potential impacts on the significance of the Meeting Place Precinct as a whole, and on individually significant elements – including landscape, the setting of significant buildings, monuments and memorials – its understanding and its interpretation
- 5.12.8 Adaptations to the site required for events and activities and peak seasonal use of the Meeting Place Precinct would only be considered appropriate where:
- they would not have adverse physical impacts
 - they would not have an adverse visual or other impacts on the significance of the Meeting Place Precinct.
- 5.12.9 Adaptations to the Meeting Place Precinct for visitor facilities required for large events or peak seasonal use of Botany Bay National Park (that is, outside of the Meeting Place Precinct) are not appropriate. This includes but is not limited to additional car parking, bus parking, set-down and drop-off areas, toilets, etc. These should be located outside of the Meeting Place Precinct.
- 5.12.10 The impacts of any new visitor facilities proposed for the Meeting Place Precinct should be assessed in accordance with the process outlined in the NSW Heritage Office guidelines for preparing Statements of Heritage Impact.
- 5.12.11 Car parking beyond the existing three car parks within the Meeting Place Precinct must not be allowed to overflow onto Commemoration Flat, at any time.
- 5.12.12 Car parking beyond the existing three car parks within the Meeting Place Precinct could be allowed to overflow onto the cricket ground, but only where overflow car parking is required to support large events and activities held within and that are consistent with the significance of the Meeting Place Precinct.

- 5.12.13 Physical impacts associated with high visitor numbers should be monitored and appropriate measures taken to discontinue an action where adverse and irreversible impacts are observed.

5.13 Archival recording

Objectives

- To record all significant vegetation, built elements, and other items of significance within the Meeting Place Precinct for the purpose of creating a record of the significant aspects of these elements and to assist in current and future understanding of their heritage significance. Recording should be in a format suitable for archival storage.

Rationale

The purpose of archival recording is to make a record of the present state of an item of known or potential heritage significance, in order to increase and preserve our knowledge of that item, particularly prior to any changes being made.

Given the inherently physical character of archival recording, policies set out below address general standards of recording, and vegetation and built elements in particular.

Policy

General policies

- 5.13.1 Archival records should be made to standards required for items of State heritage significance as detailed by the NSW Heritage Office publication, *How to prepare archival records of heritage items*, Heritage Information Series.⁴²
- 5.13.2 For each item, the records should detail, where possible or relevant, its current state and condition, location, evidence of change, significant features, information on relationships to people and place, history of ownership, and map location and/or floor plans, site plans and spatial relationships.
- 5.13.3 Each set of records should be produced in three copies, with one copy retained by Park Management, one copy sent to the State Library of NSW, and one copy to the Heritage Council of NSW.

Vegetation

The following policies summarise the detailed information presented in Section 5.6.

- 5.13.4 A graphic inventory and survey should be prepared by a qualified arborist **as a priority**. It should document the following:
- commemorative plantings
 - historic, non-commemorative plantings recorded in the CCLPT records
 - the group of plantings associated with Maiden and the Royal Botanic Garden to the west of Alpha House.
- 5.13.5 The graphic inventory and survey should include the following information:
- formal plant identification
 - physical condition
 - life expectancy

⁴² http://www.heritage.nsw.gov.au/docs/info_archivalrecords.pdf

- significance
 - photographic recording
 - GPS coordinates, and location clearly marked on survey plan (even if given an approximate area location).
- 5.13.6 All plantings of exceptional, high and moderate significance should also be tagged.

Built Elements

- 5.13.7 As standard conservation practice, archival recording should be undertaken for all built elements in the following scenarios:
- before making decisions on the management of the item (e.g. when preparing a conservation plan)
 - when developing or carrying out a maintenance and monitoring program for the item (e.g. for annual maintenance inspections)
 - before and during work to the item (e.g. alterations and additions)
 - before full or partial demolition of the item
 - before and during archaeological investigations.
- 5.13.8 Archival recording should not be considered as an alternative to the conservation and maintenance of significant fabric. Copies of the archival records should be held on-site, by the PWG/DECC, and lodged with the State Library of NSW.
- 5.13.9 Archival recordings should be undertaken according to standards set out in the NSW Heritage Office Guidelines *How to Prepare Archival Records of Heritage Items* (1998).

5.14 Consultation and participation

Objectives

- To engage with the wider community of people with an interest in the Meeting Place Precinct
- To achieve support from the local community for conservation processes and management decisions.

Rationale

Managing the multiple and intangible values of the Meeting Place Precinct requires a considered approach on how to engage the wide variety of stakeholders with an interest in the way the site is used, developed, changed and interpreted.

Some of these stakeholders are also 'associated communities' and policies in Section 5.4 and 5.7 will also be relevant.

PWG/DECC recognises the importance of community consultation and participation in the management of parks, and in certain aspects of decision-making. Existing structures – for example consultative forums, volunteer programs, memoranda of understanding, community access provisions - offer opportunities for stakeholder involvement. The policies below are therefore built on the foundations contained in the *Park Management Policy Manual* (2007) Section 16.

Policy

5.14.1 Develop and implement a community engagement plan for the Meeting Place Precinct that recognises:

- the diversity of interests and perspectives
- the need for different types of engagement depending on the issues involved
- the different needs, resources and interests of particular stakeholders
- the importance of ongoing rather than ad hoc community engagement in creating an atmosphere of trust and respect

The community engagement plan should seek to communicate the principles on which it is founded including the importance of the concept of co-existence.

5.15 Research**Objectives**

- To establish an ongoing program of research for the Meeting Place Precinct to support understanding and interpretation of its multiple significances.

Rationale

The Meeting Place Precinct is of outstanding interest because of its history and the meanings of this place that have arisen within and across different communities regarding this place. The diversity of meanings is of great interest to researchers and academics.

The Meeting Place Precinct has long community associations and many people have memories of the place going back many years. Recording these memories and engaging with those who have lived, worked or visited the site in the past will help deepen an understanding of community associations as well as enriching interpretation.

The Meeting Place Precinct contains physical evidence that could also enrich understandings of Aboriginal history, the 1770 encounter, the European view of the landscape and no doubt much more. This evidence is enriched by collections held elsewhere (associated with the 1770 encounter) and the wider landscape of Aboriginal knowledge, story and tradition.

Finally, there are opportunities to undertake research and documentation that will assist in the management of the Meeting Place Precinct. Some aspects of site recording are also covered in Section 5.13 Archival recording.

For example, environmental knowledge of the past is not the same as knowledge and understanding of the environment today. Indeed, part of the significance of the Meeting Place Precinct is the evidence it provides about past management practices. Knowledge and understandings of the environmental aspects of the Meeting Place Precinct should be a focus for research.

Policy

5.15.1 Establish a research framework for the Meeting Place Precinct that:

- is founded on the significance of the place
- enables research undertaken on the site to contribute to wider questions of importance
- sets appropriate limits on research that may impact on the significance of the place

- contributes to and helps frame an interpretation plan for the site (to ensure the interpretation plan is based on important questions and perspectives about the site).
- 5.15.2 New research and understandings of the Meeting Place Precinct and broader understandings of its environment and environmental change should be recognised and should inform decision-making.
- 5.15.3 Continue and develop an oral history program for the Meeting Place Precinct including components on:
- communities that have used the site for events and community gatherings
 - people with associations with the camp settlements
 - Aboriginal associations
 - people involved in site management (works crews, supervisors, managers, contractors) prior to and during NPWS/PWG period.
- Ensure that information on community associations arising from this work is considered in management actions where consultation with associated communities is required. This work will also contribute to future reviews of the assessed significance of the Meeting Place Precinct. (See also Policy 5.4.12)
- 5.15.4 Continue to support development of Aboriginal oral history skills through the training of and support for community members, and ensure that this work can be drawn on for the wider oral history program.

5.16 Interpretation

Objectives

- To tell the stories of the Meeting Place Precinct in all of their complexity.
- To enhance the understanding and enjoyment of the Meeting Place Precinct.
- To respect associations, meanings and other information related to the Meeting Place Precinct, and ensure cultural appropriateness.
- To create authentic experiences of the Meeting Place Precinct.

Rationale

Explaining the significance of the Meeting Place Precinct as a whole, as well as the meanings and associations of the place to local and broader communities, will form a key part of the conservation of the Meeting Place Precinct.

The significance of the Meeting Place Precinct is synthesised above (Section 2) as five key concepts: **The enduring landscape; A place of Aboriginal connections; A place of history-making; A European settled landscape; and A place for leisure.** This significance of the Meeting Place Precinct is embodied in a range of tangible and intangible elements, some of which are readily apparent across the site and easily understood, and others which are not.

The meanings and associations of the Meeting Place Precinct are multi-layered and complex, based on long and direct associations and connections to the place, as well as having symbolic meaning, as an imagined place for the broader Australian community, for example.

Policy

- 5.16.1 Interpretation should assist understanding all of the stories and meanings of the place in all their complexity.

-
- 5.16.2 Interpretation should encourage multiple perspectives on the history and meanings of the Meeting Place Precinct.
- 5.16.3 The principal focus for interpretation should be the significance of the Meeting Place Precinct as a whole, as:
- The enduring landscape
 - A place of Aboriginal connections
 - A place of history-making
 - A European settled landscape
 - A place for leisure.
- 5.16.4 Interpretation should recognise the meanings of the Meeting Place Precinct to all Australians (as a symbolic and imagined place), and to the communities who have strong and direct associations with the place.
- 5.16.5 Interpretation should enhance community connections to the Meeting Place Precinct. It should assist understanding of the significance of the Meeting Place Precinct by Aboriginal people/community, the local Kurnell community and by visitors in an equitable manner.
- 5.16.6 Effective and sensitive interpretation of the history and significance of the Meeting Place Precinct as a whole, and of individual elements of significance must form a part of the conservation and ongoing management of the Meeting Place Precinct.
- 5.16.7 Interpretation should acknowledge that the meanings of the Meeting Place Precinct will change over time. Therefore interpretation should form an ongoing part of the management of the Meeting Place Precinct.
- 5.16.8 Appropriate forms of interpretation should include but not be limited to signs. It may also encompass a wide range of actions including temporary signs in visually sensitive locations, brochures, guided tours, exhibitions, education programs, artworks, activities, performance, naming, events (and the wider promotion of activities, events) and publications.
- 5.16.9 Signage should sensitively designed and sited. It must not have:
- adverse physical impacts on The enduring landscape
 - adverse physical impacts on the fabric of significant buildings or structures
 - adverse physical or visual impacts on elements of the cultural landscape or vegetation
 - adverse visual impacts on the appreciation and setting of the bushland setting of the Meeting Place Precinct
 - adverse visual impacts on significant views, and the setting and appreciation of significant buildings, monuments and memorials and ceremonial spaces
 - adverse visual or physical impacts on the wider bushland and coastal setting
 - adverse cumulative impacts on the significance of the Meeting Place Precinct as a whole.
- 5.16.10 The use of the Meeting Place Precinct for activities or events that would enhance and assist interpretation of the significance of the Meeting Place Precinct as a whole should be allowed and encouraged.
- 5.16.11 The content of interpretative media should respect the many meanings and associations the place and be culturally appropriate.
-

- 5.16.12 Culturally appropriate means of telling stories of the place of Aboriginal connections should be developed in consultation with the Aboriginal community/people.
- 5.16.13 Interpretation should consider using the local Aboriginal language and names, subject to Aboriginal input, cultural appropriateness and protocols⁴³.
- 5.16.14 Interpretation should acknowledge that the communities who use the Meeting Place Precinct represent diverse ethnicities and consider the need for multi-lingual signage and other interpretative media (tours, brochures, exhibitions, for example).
- 5.16.15 Conservation actions and changes to the Meeting Place Precinct should also be interpreted, before, during and on completion of works.

5.17 Managing change

Objectives

- To manage change to the Meeting Place Precinct in accordance with adopted policy.
- To take a precautionary approach to all proposed changes, recognising that there is potential for change to impact on intangible elements and values as well as on tangible elements.
- To recognise and manage for changing values.

Rationale

Managing change is the most challenging aspect of managing places with heritage values. Proposals for change arise in many ways: changing environmental or social circumstances; new or changing visitors' needs; external threats; emergencies; changing appreciation of values. The nature of the Meeting Place Precinct and its significance also means that future desires to 'mark' the history of this place are likely to be one of the major sources of proposals for change.

Decisions which may damage elements or aspects of the heritage values of items and places of significance, either immediately or over time, should be approached with great caution.

Existing policies and procedures – namely Heritage Impact Statements (HIS) and the Reviews of Environmental Factors (REF) – provide a framework for considering the impacts of proposed changes. The policies in the Conservation Management Plan are therefore built on this foundation.

For policies on recording a place and its values prior to change see Policy 5.13, Archival recording.

Policy

- 5.17.1 Establish a clear process for the consideration of heritage impacts associated with proposals including:
 - the use of this Conservation Management Plan to assess impacts (Appendix 7)
 - how and when the HIS and REF processes will be applied
 - how impacts on intangible elements and values will be considered
 - how associated communities will be consulted

⁴³ DECC is developing an Aboriginal Languages Policy which is currently in a draft form (DECC 2008).

- how the proposed change complies with or helps achieve the conservation objectives of this Plan.
- 5.17.2 Proposals for change addressed under this policy should include:
- changes associated with use, activities and events, visitor needs and interpretation (including the introduction of new uses, activities, events, facilities, interpretation etc)
 - changes associated with management and resourcing
 - changes designed to reveal or enhance as aspect of significance
 - all other changes that may impact on significance.
- 5.17.3 Proposals for change should always include consideration of alternatives.

5.18 Management and decision-making processes

Objectives

- To make sound management decisions, in accordance with best practice heritage management principles and practices.
- To adopt a consultative approach to management decision-making to ensure that those with a significant association with the place are informed and enabled to participate in decisions that affect their heritage.
- To be aware of and accord with external legislation and approvals processes.

Rationale

The primary aim of the Conservation Management Plan is to provide ‘best-practice’ heritage management and excellence in conservation for the Meeting Place Precinct. This means that management decisions should:

- be based on the identified values of the place (recognising that these values will change over time)
- recognise and respect community associations and meanings.

PWG/DECC has a strong framework of principles and policies to assist in the management of significant cultural heritage, with the *Park Management Policy Manual* (January 2007) the primary resource.

The historical and community connections between the two parts of the Botany Bay National Park – La Perouse and Kurnell – indicates the importance of co-ordinated approaches to management.

The Meeting Place Precinct is not listed on the State Heritage Register, however if it is listed in the future, the following will apply:

- a CMP is required for items listed on the State Heritage Register
- endorsement of that CMP is delegated under the Heritage Act to the Executive Director of Culture and Heritage (DECC)
- approval powers under the *Heritage Act* for parks, including approvals under section 60, delegated to the Executive Director of Culture and Heritage (DECC), who has been delegated certain authority by the Heritage Council (DEC 2007: 142).

The Meeting Place Precinct is listed on the National Heritage List, and must be managed in accordance with the National Heritage Management Principles (see Appendix 6). Management must be undertaken such that it does not adversely impact on national heritage values for

which the place is listed. A management plan must be prepared for the place in accordance with the National Heritage Management Principles. The *Park Management Policy Manual* describes DECC's responsibilities.

Policy

- 5.18.1 Management of cultural heritage should always be guided by the processes contained in *The Burra Charter*, namely first understand significance, and then consider how significant values are to be managed in the immediate and long-term. These processes are considered best practice.
- 5.18.2 To ensure there is an accurate understanding of the heritage values of the Meeting Place Precinct. The Plan of Management should be reviewed and updated to reflect the understanding of significance contained in this Conservation Management Plan. The AHIMS and HHIMS databases should also be updated to reflect the understanding of significance contained in this Conservation Management Plan.
- 5.18.3 The Conservation Management Plan provides a thorough consideration of heritage values based on current knowledge about the Meeting Place Precinct. Some values are less defined than others, and require further investigation (See Policy 5.15 Research). Until this is done, a precautionary approach should always be adopted.
- 5.18.4 Values associated with cultural heritage should be expected to change over time. Management decisions should be based on a current understanding of the significance of the place or of elements within that place, especially where those management decisions may adversely affect the significance of a place.
- 5.18.5 Heritage management at the Meeting Place Precinct should make use of available expertise and knowledge, including previous studies. Recourse to appropriately qualified heritage advisers is recommended at all times.

5.19 Monitoring

Objectives

- To provide sounds and up-to-date information on key factors affecting the decision-making in relation to the conservation of the tangible and intangible elements and values of the Meeting Place Precinct.

Rationale

Monitoring provides a sound basis for management decision-making by measuring the state of conservation of a place and the implementation of objectives, primarily through quantitative indicators. The Meeting Place Precinct is a complex place with multiple values.

Some of the actions arising from the policies contained in this Conservation Management Plan are challenging and the outcomes will need to be carefully monitored.

PWG/DECC has an obligation to monitor:

- the physical state of conservation of the place, the tangible values
- the authenticity and integrity of the place
- the intangible values of the place
- the impact of management on the significance and values of the Meeting Place Precinct
- the implementation of these policies
- changes to external circumstances which may affect the Meeting Place Precinct (for example, environmental issues, community concerns, changes in legislation etc).

Policy

- 5.19.1 Monitoring will be based on verifiable identifiable indicators that are effective and practical.
- 5.19.2 Verifiable identifiable indicators will be developed for the Meeting Place Precinct to measure the state of conservation of its values. These will be based on best practice guidelines.
- 5.19.3 A program of monitoring will be established and continued during the life of this conservation management plan.
- 5.19.4 The scope of monitoring will include:
 - the physical state of the place both natural and cultural, the tangible values
 - the community and social values, the intangible values.

5.20 Adoption, implementation and review**Objectives**

- To provide a sound basis for the adoption, implementation and review of the Conservation Management Plan.

Rationale

This plan results from and is founded on the *Botany Bay National Park Plan of Management* and the Meeting Place Precinct project.

This plan needs to be adopted by PWG/DECC to provide a sound basis for management of the place and its values. Adoption also provides PWG/DECC with exemptions under the *Heritage Act* that are designed to assist in day-to-day management as well as overall planning.

An Implementation Strategy for this Conservation Management Plan is contained in Section 6 of this document. Primary responsibility for implementation rests with park management (PWG/DECC), however some management actions may occur in partnership with other stakeholders, other government agencies or with associated communities.

Given that this Conservation Management Plan sits within a complex set of organisational policies and government legislation, a process for resolving conflicts between the policies in this Conservation Management Plan and other policies is proposed.

Policy

- 5.20.1 PWG/DECC will be responsible for planning and managing in accordance with the policies contained in the Conservation Management Plan.
- 5.20.2 Specific responsibilities for implementation will be defined and linked to internal annual plans, individual roles and performance expectations to ensure that important actions are not overlooked.
- 5.20.3 Adequate resources will be allocated for the implementation of the plan.
- 5.20.4 Responsibility for monitoring the achievement of actions undertaken in partnership with others or delegated fully to others will remain the responsibility of PWG/DECC.
- 5.20.5 Conflicts between the policies contained in this plan and other policies will be resolved through a process that identifies the consequences of the conflicting policies in terms of:
 - impacts on the significance of the place

- impacts on park management
 - impacts on the values attributed to the place by associated communities
 - visitor and staff health and safety.
- 5.20.6 Alternative ways to address the conflict should then be considered, seeking a solution that minimises impacts on significance. Where the values of associated communities may be impacted, a process of consultation will be undertaken with these communities.
- 5.20.7 This Plan will be reviewed after five years, and revised as required.
- 5.20.8 Any major new understandings of the significance of the place may require an earlier, limited review.
- 5.20.9 This plan, once adopted, will remain in force until a new or revised Conservation Management Plan is adopted.

6 IMPLEMENTATION

6.1 Introduction

The vision for the Meeting Place Precinct in relation to conserving its significance into the future is:

The Meeting Place Precinct, as the primary historic core of the site, will be the place where the stories of the encounter between Dharawal people and the Cook expedition will be told through experiencing and understanding the land, the peoples who have come here, their cultures and the ways in which they have understood that moment of encounter.

Within the Meeting Place Precinct, the tangible and intangible heritage values will be recognised and respected, and allowed to co-exist. Both conservation and change will seek to reveal the significance of the place in all its complexity.

The six implementation strategies outlined below, give effect to the policies contained in Section 5 and seek to achieve this vision. Each implementation strategy comprises a strategic direction, a series of actions and priorities, a list of the policy areas addressed under that strategy, and the desired outcome.

6.2 Implementation Strategies

Six implementation strategies are proposed and each is detailed below. They are:

Strategy 1: Best practice heritage management

The outstanding national significance of the Meeting Place Precinct means that DECC and Botany Bay National Park management practices need to be aligned with best practice heritage conservation principles and practice. DECC's *Park Management Policy Manual* (January 2007) provides a sound basis. Programs should be established and resources provided to enable achievement of these standards, including training of park staff, access to expert skills and monitoring of implementation.

Strategy 2: Recognising and conserving heritage values

The heritage values of the Meeting Place Precinct will be recognised, conserved and interpreted, respecting the symbolic importance and multiple associations of this place for Australians and communities, and its continuing role as a place where changing understandings of history can be explored.

Strategy 3: Shaping the landscape

The landscape of the Meeting Place Precinct will be subtly reshaped to better reveal its significance and to evoke the landscape known to Aboriginal people, experienced by the Cook party in 1770 and by subsequent European arrivals.

Strategy 4: Building connections

People with connections to the Meeting Place Precinct will be encouraged to visit, to engage with the place and its management and to contribute their knowledge and stories for the benefits of park managers, visitors and the wider community. PWG/DECC will actively support the building of strong and ongoing community connections.

Strategy 5: Communicating and consulting

The importance of communication and consultation will be recognised by park management as a key to successful conservation, community involvement and visitor experiences.

Strategy 6: The visitor experience

Visitors to the Meeting Place Precinct will have the opportunity to engage with the place, its history and its multiple meanings through experiencing the place, participating in activities and through other forms of interpretation. Visitors will be encouraged to respect and help care for its heritage values.

6.3 Priorities

Each strategy contains actions and priorities. Many factors will influence the relative priority of an action, including:

- significance, including the contribution of an element to the place as a whole
- the importance of each action for achieving the desired outcome
- condition of heritage values
- sequencing, where one action should happen before another
- the reality of resourcing for PWG/DECC
- community and political pressures
- opportunities that arise through funding programs, community interests, government policy etc.

All of these factors may result in changes to priorities during the life of this plan.

Priorities for action

To provide a sound basis for action, the plan considers the relative priority of each of the actions within the six strategies using the following:

- in accordance with relative significance (see Appendix 5)
- in relation to the importance of the action in helping achieve the outcome: the relative importance is indicated by:
 - 1 – critical
 - 2 – important
 - 3 – contributory.
- in relation to a timeframe within the plan:
 - Year 1: take action in Year 1 of the plan; action may continue beyond Year 1 if required
 - Year 1-2: take action in Years 1 or 2 of the plan, as resources permit; action may continue beyond Year 2 if required
 - Year 1-5: take action within the life of the plan.
 - Ongoing: actions that need to be started in Year 1 or 2 and continued throughout the life of the plan. Where an action is critical, it should be started in Year 1.

Critical actions always take priority.

A table of priority actions follows the six strategies, and forms Section 6.4.

Strategy 1: Best practice heritage management

The outstanding national significance of the Meeting Place Precinct means that DECC and Botany Bay National Park management practices need to be aligned with best practice heritage conservation principles and practice. DECC's *Park Management Policy Manual* (January 2007) provides a sound basis.

Programs should be established and resources provided to enable achievement of these standards, including training of park staff, access to expert skills and monitoring of implementation.

Actions

- 1.1 Manage the Meeting Place Precinct giving primacy to the conservation of heritage values.
- 1.2 Adopt the final Conservation Management Plan⁴⁴ as the basis for the identification and management of the heritage values of the Meeting Place Precinct.
- 1.3 Adopt and use accepted conservation principles and guidelines as the basis for ongoing management of the Meeting Place Precinct: specifically the *Burra Charter* (1999), the *Code on the ethics of co-existence in conserving significant places* (1998), the *UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage* and the *Natural Heritage Charter*.
- 1.4 Review management practices, and associated plans, policies and procedures, to align with the conservation obligations in the Conservation Management Plan. Resolve policy conflicts as they arise (policies 5.20.5, 5.20.6).
- 1.5 Build the knowledge of park management staff and contractors about conservation management principles, the heritage values of the Meeting Place Precinct and the contents of this Conservation Management Plan (and other relevant conservation documents) through ongoing training and information sharing. For new staff and contractors, communicate this through a formal induction process.
- 1.6 Establish an annual implementation action plan, and a process for monitoring the implementation of the policies and actions in this CMP and evaluating their effectiveness. In designing this process, consider whether required actions have been started, are underway or completed, and the outcomes achieved and the overall effectiveness of the actions. Record the results and use in future reviews of this plan.
- 1.7 Resource the provision of conservation expertise to support park management and managers.
- 1.8 Recognise that 'best practice' will change, and ensure that park staff and decision-makers keep up-to-date with best practice through training, professional development and information sharing.

Policies

This strategy and the actions required to implement it relate to the following policies in Section 5.

- | | |
|---|--|
| 5.3 Place as a whole | 5.19 Monitoring |
| 5.18 Management & decision-making processes | 5.20 Adoption, implementation and review |

Outcome

The Meeting Place Precinct will offer an example of best practice heritage management, building pride in the park and confidence within the management organisation and team.

⁴⁴ Following exhibition of the draft Conservation Management Plan.

Strategy 2: Recognising and conserving heritage values

The heritage values of the Meeting Place Precinct will be recognised, conserved and interpreted, respecting the symbolic importance and multiple associations of this place for Australians and communities, and its continuing role as a place where changing understandings of history can be explored.

Actions

- 2.1 Conserve the tangible and intangible heritage values of the Meeting Place Precinct through a conservation and recording program.
- 2.2 Test all management actions, including proposals for change (including change of use or activity permanent or non permanent) on significance prior to a decision being made. This will be achieved using existing heritage impact assessment process within DECC.
- 2.3 Recognise that not all aspects of significance are equally well understood and that values will change over time. Establish an ongoing program of research and documentation to add to the understanding of significance.
- 2.4 Where there is a limited understanding of the significance of a tangible or intangible element of the place, and where there may be an impact on that element, always undertake a significance assessment prior to any decisions that result in an impact.
- 2.5 Where adverse impacts on heritage values occur inadvertently, take all actions necessary to reverse or minimise further impacts.
- 2.6 Develop and implement a methodology for undertaking monitoring of the condition and values of the place.,
- 2.7 Expand HHIMS/AHIMS records to cover all the heritage elements of the Meeting Place Precinct and to contain all key information required to manage each elements and its values, including (at least): history, condition, links to historical and contemporary images, condition, significance, other sources of information (including oral sources); actions planned and undertaken (etc). Maintain and update HHIMS/AHIMS regularly as new data comes available.
- 2.8 Establish a register of records and objects that contribute to an understanding of the significance of the Meeting Place Precinct. The register should include records related to past planning, management and development decisions, and objects and artefacts associated with the place, including those held elsewhere.

Policies

This strategy and the actions required to implement it relate to the following policies in Section 5.

5.3 Place as a whole	5.7 Aboriginal heritage	5.11 Objects, collections and records
5.4 Living connections	5.8 Archaeology	5.13 Archival recording
5.5 Landscape	5.9 Built environment	5.17 Managing change
5.6 Vegetation	5.10 Monuments	5.19 Monitoring

Outcome

The heritage values of the Meeting Place Precinct will be conserved, and increasingly well understood. Practical tools will be established to assist management achieve this goal.

Strategy 3: Shaping the landscape

The landscape of the Meeting Place Precinct will be subtly reshaped to better reveal its significance and to evoke the landscape known to Aboriginal people, experienced by the Cook party in 1770 and by subsequent European arrivals.

Actions

- 3.1 Develop and implement a detailed revegetation plan to restore and reinstate local native vegetation communities and reveal the original land form within defined areas, and by so doing reveal the 'enduring landscape' of the Meeting Place Precinct.
- 3.2 Develop and implement a detailed plan for the conservation and, where necessary, the replacement of significant structural and other historic plantings so as to retain their landscape prominence, the landscape character and meanings into the future.
- 3.3 Assess the feasibility and processes that would be involved in reinstate the freshwater stream flowing to the sea, restoring this connection of fresh and salt water and recreating a further section of an earlier landscape. Consider the potential to harvest water from buildings and other structures to restore stream flow.
- 3.4 Establish a comprehensive graphic inventory and survey of commemorative plantings, other historic plantings and the plantings associated with Maiden and the Royal Botanic Gardens (policy 5.13.4 – 5.13.6).
- 3.5 Develop an electronic decision-making tool to assist park managers assess options and record decisions in relation to making changes to significant vegetation communities, groups and individual trees. Use the *Decision-making* flow chart for managing change to significant vegetation (Section 5.6).
- 3.6 Develop and implement a removal program for cultural plantings and weed species that are impacting on the significance of the Meeting Place Precinct using the decision-making framework provided in policy 5.6. Align and coordinate weed management and revegetation activities.
- 3.7 Communicate how the plans for changes to vegetation and vegetation management will help reveal the significance of the place and ensure that important patterns of cultural plantings are retained. Encourage feedback on and participation in decision-making about the implementation of these plans.
- 3.8 Create opportunities for people to be involved 'hands on' in the revegetation program. In particular provide opportunities for:
 - the volunteer involvement of people living in Kurnell
 - contribution of knowledge and participation by Aboriginal community/people, including opportunities for paid employment, further developing the work/training program underway in Botany Bay National Park
 - establishing links with tertiary institutions and the Royal Botanic Gardens.

Policies

This strategy and the actions required to implement it relate to the following policies in Section 5.

5.4 Living connections
5.5 Landscape

5.6 Vegetation

Outcome

The enduring landscape is revealed through revegetation in defined areas, and the important patterns of cultural plantings are retained. The impact of weedy plants on the significance of the place have been reduced, and the community understands and is involved in vegetation management.

Strategy 4: Building connections

People with connections to the Meeting Place Precinct will be encouraged to visit, to engage with the place and its management and to contribute their knowledge and stories for the benefits of park managers, visitors and the wider community. PWG/DECC will actively support the building of strong and ongoing community connections.

Actions

- 4.1 Actively engage people and communities with strong and enduring associations in planning, managing, interpreting and visiting the park and the Meeting Place Precinct, especially Aboriginal people.
- 4.2 Consult with associated communities prior to taking management actions or decisions that may impact on the heritage values arising from these associations.
- 4.3 Establish a community awareness and education program designed to build mutual respect and acknowledgement of the values of all associated cultural groups, within those groups and the wider community.
- 4.4 Use and promote the *Code on the ethics of co-existence in conserving significant places* to associated communities and the wider community.
- 4.5 Establish a database of stakeholders and associated communities (including community groups that use the Meeting Place Precinct regularly) to assist park management engage with these people and organisations. Use the database to track significant communications and engagements.
- 4.6 Establish protocols for stakeholder and community engagement, including how and when associated communities will be consulted.
- 4.7 Continue a program of research to better understand the range of community connections with the Meeting Place Precinct, including through:
 - oral history interviews and training
 - on-site interviews or surveys
 - links with tertiary institutions, such as UTS⁴⁵, that share this research interest.
- 4.8 Recognise and protect Aboriginal heritage values through active Aboriginal participation in planning, management and interpretation. Support re-establishment of traditional, cultural and personal links with the Meeting Place Precinct and the wider park landscape.
- 4.9 Build relationships with the local Kurnell community, seeking opportunities to engage them more actively with the park through regular communication and consultation.

Policies

This strategy and the actions required to implement it relate to the following policies in Section 5.

- | | |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 5.4 Living connections | 5.14 Consultation and participation |
| 5.7 Aboriginal cultural heritage | 5.15 Research |
| 5.12 Use, access and visitors | |

⁴⁵ UTS has an active research program on community associations with place, with a current focus on the Georges River and ethnic communities.

Outcome

Community connections will be strengthened as evidenced by active participation and engagement with the place and park management.

Strategy 5: Communicating and consulting

The importance of communication and consultation will be recognised by park management as a key to successful conservation, community involvement and visitor experiences.

Actions

- 5.1 Develop and implement a proactive approach to communication and consultation via a community engagement plan for the Meeting Place Precinct. This plan should include:
 - principles and guidelines for effective communication and consultation
 - an understanding of the audiences – that is, who is interested, what involvement will they want and when
 - the level of transparency and openness
 - mechanisms for regular communication with stakeholders, especially associated communities and the local Kurnell community.
- 5.2 Be proactive in promoting the heritage values of the place to the wider community, recognising that the diversity of values and potential for conflict requires a defined and well-resourced approach to managing the public profile of the Meeting Place Precinct.
- 5.3 Develop and agree on communication protocols with particular groups so as to facilitate effective two-way communications.
- 5.4 Evaluate the communications plan after the first year with representatives of the stakeholder and associated communities, and revise or refine as needed. Thereafter refine the communication plan every two years (or more frequently should the need arise).
- 5.5 Be flexible and responsive to communications and consultation opportunities and issues as they arise.

Policies

This strategy and the actions required to implement it relate to the following policies in Section 5.

- 5.14 Consultation and participation

Outcome

The vision for the Meeting Place Precinct will be well known, and those interested in the park will be able to stay well informed and be actively involved.

Strategy 6: The visitor experience

Visitors to the Meeting Place Precinct will have the opportunity to engage with the place, its history and its multiple meanings through experiencing the place, participating in activities and through other forms of interpretation. Visitors will be encouraged to respect and help care for its heritage values.

Actions

- 6.1 Interpret the Meeting Place Precinct as a place with a complex history, multiple values and strong associations by implementing the interpretation plan.
- 6.2 Promote the Meeting Place Precinct to new audiences as a place to experience, to understand history and to appreciate the multiple meanings it holds for people.
- 6.3 Communicate the heritage values of the Meeting Place Precinct to all visitors and establish and promote a code of responsible behavior. The code should specifically address protection of natural and coastal values, respect for Aboriginal connections, and appreciation of the diversity of viewpoints about the history of the place.
- 6.4 Create new opportunities to build mutual respect and appreciation of multiple values through on-site activities designed with this goal in mind.
- 6.5 Seek to establish a program or process of Aboriginal welcome, sharing of knowledge and stories for the Meeting Place Precinct.
- 6.6 Explore opportunities to reconnect the Meeting Place Precinct/Kurnell side to La Perouse by water to re-introduce this traditional connection and to increase accessibility for all potential visitors, especially the Aboriginal community/people.
- 6.7 Plan and design any new visitor facilities, uses and activities with a focus on the primary use of the Meeting Place Precinct being for the 'understanding of the place, its history and the multiple meanings it holds for people' (Policy 5.3.10). All new facilities, uses and activities will be subject to a formal heritage impact assessment process (Action 2.2).
- 6.8 Consult with community groups and organisations that use the Meeting Place Precinct on a regular basis on visitor needs, perceptions about the significance of the place and codes of behaviour.
- 6.9 Seek feedback from other visitors on a regular basis. Develop a suite of standard visitor feedback 'tools' and implement a rolling program that seeks feedback through: surveys of community groups that regularly use the Meeting Place Precinct (see 6.8 above); special events; sample surveys of visitors; response to changes to the Meeting Place Precinct (eg. installation of new interpretation materials).
- 6.10 Use the results of user and visitor feedback to continually refine the ways the heritage values of the place are communicated.

Policies

This strategy and the actions required to implement it relate to the following policies in Section 5.

5.5 Landscape

5.16 Interpretation

5.12 Use, access and visitors

Outcome

The Meeting Place Precinct will offer a unique opportunity for visitors to engage with important national stories and contribute to caring for the place, through their actions and opportunities to give feedback.

6.4 Priority Actions table

The Priority Actions table below identifies the priorities for all of the Lead Actions required to achieve the six strategies. The policies relevant to each Action are shown, and implementation of each Action requires consideration of these policies.

Where the policies define more specific actions that need to be taken, these are shown as Detailed Actions, and the relative importance of the action and its recommended timing is shown.

No.	Lead Actions	Policies	Detailed Actions	Importance	Years
Strategy 1: Best Practice heritage management					
1.1	Manage in accordance with heritage values.	5.3.1, 5.3.10		1	Ongoing
1.2	Adopt and use the final Conservation Management Plan.	5.20.1, 5.20.3, 5.20.7, 5.20.8, 5.20.9		1	Year 1
			Review the CMP after 5 years (5.20.7) or earlier if necessary (5.20.8).	2	Year 5
			Resource the implementation of the CMP (5.20.3).	1	Year 1-5
1.3	Adopt and use accepted conservation principles and guidelines in management.	5.18.1		1	Ongoing
1.4	Review management practices, policies and procedures to align with conservation obligations in the CMP.	5.6.33, 5.6.43, 5.6.81-82, 5.18.2, 5.20.5, 5.20.6		1	Year 1
			Review the Botany Bay National Park Plan of Management in relation to the understandings of significance and the policies contained in the CMP (5.18.2).	2	Year 1-2
			Establish a process to resolve conflicts between the CMP and other policies (5.6.33, 5.6.43, 5.6.81-82, 5.20.5, 5.20.6).	2	Year 1-2

No.	Lead Actions	Policies	Detailed Actions	Importance	Years
1.5	Build heritage and conservation knowledge of park staff and contractors.			2	Ongoing
1.6	Establish an annual implementation action plan; monitor the implementation of policies and actions.	5.5.4-5, 5.5.7-10, 5.5.28, 5.20.2, 5.20.4	Use the Priority Actions Table (section 6.4) as the framework for the annual action plan.	1	Year 1-5
			Allocate responsibility for implementation of the action plan (Action 1.6) and specific components to park management staff (5.20.2).	1	Year 1-5
1.7	Resource the provision of conservation expertise.	5.18.5, 5.20.3		1	Ongoing
1.8	Provide training to keep park staff up to date on best practice.	5.18.1		2	Ongoing
Strategy 2: Recognising and conserving heritage values					
2.1	Conserve the intangible and tangible heritage values of the Meeting Place Precinct as a whole through a conservation and recording program.	5.3.1, 5.3.2, 5.3.3, 5.3.4, 5.3.5, 5.3.7, 5.3.9, 5.3.13, 5.5.1-7, 5.5.11-18, 5.5.19-21, 5.5.22-30, 5.7.1, 5.9.1-44, 5.9.61, 5.9.63-64, 5.9.67-74, 5.9.75-80, 5.9.81-2, 5.10, 5.11, 5.16.15	Establish an annual conservation program as part of the annual implementation action plan (Action 1.6).	1	Year 1
			Prepare a survey plan of early paths and circulation patterns (5.5.11-18).	1	Year 1

No.	Lead Actions	Policies	Detailed Actions	Importance	Years
			Record the plantings associated with Maiden and the RBG (5.6.19).	1	Year 1
			Establish protocols for archaeological monitoring of ground disturbing activities (5.8.5).	1	Year 1-2
			Establish an archaeological sensitivity zoning plan (5.8.1, 5.8.3).	1	Year 1-2
			Prepare a schedule of conservation works for Alpha House (5.9.1-43, 5.9.44).	1	Year 1
			Prepare a schedule of conservation works for the Discovery Centre (5.9.61).	2	Year 1
			Prepare a schedule of works for the Education Centre (5.9.64).	3	Year 1-5
			Prepare and implement a schedule of conservation works for the Ferry shelter shed (5.9.67-70).	1	Year 1
			Record the cave dwellings in their current condition (5.9.75).	2	Year 1-2
			Record and remove the entry booth, anchor, flagpoles at entry to Botany Bay National Park (5.9.81-82).	3	Year 1-5
			Prepare and implement a schedule of conservation works for the monuments (5.10).	1	Year 1-2
2.2	Use existing heritage impact assessment process for all management actions including proposals for change.	5.5.2-3, 5.5.18, 5.5.26-7, 5.5.30, 5.6.73, 5.8.4, 5.9.19-34, 5.9.54-55, 5.9.57, 5.9.63, 5.9.77, 5.10.2-3, 5.1.5, 5.10.14, 5.12, 5.16.9, 5.17.1,		1	Year 1

No.	Lead Actions	Policies	Detailed Actions	Importance	Years
		5.17.2, 5.17.3			
			Establish a guideline on the assessment of new uses, including activities and events, and use it to guide decision-making (5.12.1-6, 5.17.2).	2	Year 1-5
			Establish a policy on cultural enterprises ⁴⁶ conducted by Aboriginal people within the Meeting Place Precinct. (5.12.6)	2	Year 1-5
2.3	Establish an ongoing program of research on significance and values.	5.3.6, 5.4.8, 5.4.12, 5.5.10-12, 5.8.2, 5.8.3, 5.9.1-18, 5.9.74, 5.9.80, 5.11.4, 5.15.1-4, 5.18.4,		2	Year 2
			Establish a research partnership with a tertiary institution on community associations (5.4.12).	2	Year 1-5
			Revise statement of significance and update conservation policy for Alpha House and site as new information updates existing understandings of significance (5.9.1-18).	2	Year 1-5
			Establish a research framework (5.15.1).	2	Ongoing
2.4	Where there is limited understanding of significance, assess before taking any decisions that may impact on significance.	5.5.10, 5.18.3		1	Ongoing
2.5	Act to minimise unanticipated impacts on heritage values.	5.3.13		1	Ongoing

⁴⁶ A cultural enterprise is defined, for the purposes of this document, as a business designed to achieve cultural as well as financial outcomes for Aboriginal people/community, and that will help achieve the objectives of the Meeting Place Precinct.

No.	Lead Actions	Policies	Detailed Actions	Importance	Years
2.6	Establish and implement a methodology for monitoring condition and values.	5.6.19, 5.9.44, 5.9.61, 5.9.64, 5.9.69, 5.9.78, 5.10, 5.12.13, 5.19.1, 5.19.2, 5.19.3, 5.19.4		1	Year 1
			Undertake initial monitoring as soon as possible, and update every two years.	1	Year 1
			Establish a program of regular maintenance.	1	Year 1-5
2.7	Expand and regularly update the HHIMS/AHIMS records on heritage elements to cover all the information required for management.	5.5, 5.6, 5.9, 5.10, 5.13, 5.18.2		2	Year 1
2.8	Establish a register of objects, collections and records.	5.9.75, 5.10, 5.11		2	Year 1-2
			Prepare a management plan for the ongoing management of all objects, collections and records related to the Meeting Place Precinct (5.11).	1	Year 1-2
Strategy 3: Shaping the landscape					
3.1	Develop and implement a plan for revealing the underlying land form and a revegetation plan for native vegetation.	5.3.11, 5.5.21, 5.5.22-30, 5.6.27-28, 5.6.29-43, 5.6.70-73, 5.7.8, 5.9.50-57, 5.9.59-60		1	Year 1-5
			Develop vegetation management strategy (5.6.29-43, 5.6.59) (also for 3.2, 3.3 and 3.6).	1	Year 1-5
			Establish a pilot program for the revegetation of the western dune (5.6.34-36).	2	Year 1
3.2	Plan for the retention and replacement of significant plantings.	5.5.4-7, 5.5.21, 5.6.2-11, 5.6.12-16, 5.6.18-20, 5.6.23-25, 5.6.44-60,		1	Year 1-5

No.	Lead Actions	Policies	Detailed Actions	Importance	Years
		5.6.70-73	Replace the pair of pines in front of Alpha House with a pair of healthy <i>Araucaria heterophylla</i> (5.5.7).	1	Year 1
			Establish the condition and life expectancy of significant historic plantings (for use as a decision-making tool) (5.6.44-60).	1	Year 1
			Identify trees important for visitor amenity (5.6.24).	3	Year 1-5
3.3	Reinstate the hydrology of the freshwater stream starting with a feasibility study.	5.5.5, 5.5.29, 5.6.61-69		1	Year 1-2
3.4	Create an inventory of historic, commemorative and other plantings.	5.6.1, 5.6.19, 5.6.21, 5.13.4-6		3	Year 1-5
			Record the African Olive and New Zealand Flax in situ (5.6.12-13).	2	Year 1
3.5	Develop an e-tool to aid decision-making on vegetation issues.	5.6.8, 5.6.44-60		2	Year 1-5
			Use and further develop the decision-making flowchart (Section 5.6) for managing change to significant vegetation (5.6 in particular 5.6.44-60).	1	Year 1-5
3.6	Establish a program to remove plants that have become weeds or are obscuring significance.	5.5.7, 5.5.15, 5.5.24, 5.6.12-13, 5.6.17, 5.6.22-26, 5.6.44-60, 5.6.71, 5.6.74-82		1	Year 1
			Remove the New Zealand Flax and its progeny. Remove self-sown introduced plantings (5.6.12-13, 5.6.44-60).	2	Year 1-2

No.	Lead Actions	Policies	Detailed Actions	Importance	Years
3.7	Communicate and consult on the plans for vegetation management.	5.5.25, 5.6.29, 5.6.31-33, 5.6.48, 5.6.59-60, 5.14.1-2		1	Year 1
3.8	Help people get involved 'hands on' in revegetation programs.	5.6.33, 5.14.1-2		1	Year 1-5
			Establish a program for community involvement in revegetation programs (5.6.33, Strategy 3.8).	1	Year 1-5
Strategy 4: Building connections					
4.1	Engaging people and communities with strong and enduring connections in caring for this place, especially Aboriginal people.	5.3.8, 5.4.1, 5.4.4, 5.4.5, 5.4.7, 5.4.10, 5.4.15, 5.16.13		1	Year 1-5
			Establish a program to build Aboriginal association with the park, including considering opportunities for identified and targeted Aboriginal employment (5.4.1, 5.4.4, 5.4.5, 5.4.7).	1	Year 1-5
			Establish a policy on access and exclusive use for associated communities (5.4.15, 5.4.10).	1	Year 1-2
			Develop a consent process designed to provide Aboriginal people with access to land and sea resources for cultural purposes (5.4.5).	1	Year 1-2
			Develop an implementation plan to support community revitalisation of Aboriginal language using opportunities at the Meeting Place Precinct (5.4.6, 5.16.13)	1	Year 1-2
4.2	Consult with associated communities prior to taking	5.4.11, 5.20.6		1	Year 1-5

No.	Lead Actions	Policies	Detailed Actions	Importance	Years
	management actions or decisions that may impact them.				
4.3	Establish a community awareness and education program.			2	Year 1-5
4.4	Promote mutual respect and use the <i>Code of ethics on co-existence</i> .	5.3.7, 5.14.1		1	Year 1-5
4.5	Establish a database of stakeholders and associated communities.	5.4.12		1	Year 1
4.6	Establish protocols for stakeholder and community engagement.			1	Year 1
4.7	Continuing research into community connections.	5.4.12, 5.6.39, 5.9.74, 5.9.80, 5.10.13, 5.15.3	<i>See also Action 2.3 and 4.7.</i>	2	Year 1-5
			Investigate spiritual connection and meaning of the stream for Aboriginal people (5.6.39).	2	Year 1-3
			Continue the oral history program and expand its scope (5.9.74, 5.9.80, 5.10.13, 5.15.3).	2	Year 1-5
4.8	Recognise and protect Aboriginal heritage values and support re-establishment of traditional, cultural and community connections.	5.6.38, 5.6.61, 5.7.1, 5.7.2, 5.7.3, 5.7.4, 5.7.5, 5.7.6, 5.7.7, 5.7.8, 5.7.10, 5.12.1, 5.12.4, 5.15.4		1	Year 1-5
			Involve Aboriginal community/people in identifying, documenting and assessing Aboriginal heritage values and undertaking custodial roles (5.7.4, 5.7.6).	1	Ongoing
			Develop protocols for the protection and interpretation of Aboriginal cultural heritage (5.7.5).	1	Year 1-2

No.	Lead Actions	Policies	Detailed Actions	Importance	Years
4.9	Communicate with and consult the Kurnell community.	5.4.13, 5.4.14	Involve Aboriginal people in revegetation (5.7.8) under Action 3.1.	1	Year 1-5
			Continue Aboriginal oral history training as a component of an oral history program (5.15.4).	1	Year 1-5
			Establish regular communication with the Kurnell community as part of the community engagement plan (Action 5.1).	1	Year 1-5
				1	Year 1-5
Strategy 5: Communicating and consulting					
5.1	Develop a community engagement plan.	5.5.25, 5.6.33, 5.14.1		2	Year 1-2
5.2	Promote the diverse heritage values of this place.			2	Year 1-5
5.3	Develop communications protocols with key stakeholders and associated communities.	5.4.3		1	Year 1-2
			Establish ongoing consultative processes with Aboriginal community/people (5.4.3).	1	Ongoing
5.4	Evaluate the communications plan.			2	Year 1-5
5.5	Be flexible and responsive to communications opportunities.			1	Ongoing
Strategy 6: The visitor experience					
6.1	Interpret the complex history, layered values and strong associations by implementing the interpretation plan.	5.3.12, 5.4.16, 5.4.17, 5.5.4, 5.5.7-10, 5.5.12-14, 5.5.28, 5.6.11, 5.6.28, 5.6.39-40, 5.7.9, 5.9.23, 5.9.41, 5.9.43, 5.9.66, 5.9.74, 5.9.76, 5.9.80, 5.10, 5.11.20,		1	Year 1-2

No.	Lead Actions	Policies	Detailed Actions	Importance	Years
		5.15.1, 5.16	Implement the interpretation plan.	1	Year 1
6.2	Promote the Meeting Place Precinct to new audiences.			2	Year 1-5
6.3	Communicate the heritage values to all visitors. Establish a code of responsible behaviour.			2	Year 1-2
6.4	Use on-site activities to help build mutual respect.	5.3.7, 5.12.1-6		2	Year 1-5
6.5	Establish Aboriginal welcome, and sharing of knowledge and stories.	5.4.2, 5.4.6, 5.4.7, 5.4.9, 5.7.9		1	Year 1-5
			Work with the Aboriginal community/people to develop an Aboriginal guides program (5.4.9).	1	Year 1-5
6.6	Explore opportunities to reconnect Kurnell to La Perouse by water transport.	5.5.16, 5.5.20		1	Year 1-5
			Undertake a feasibility study examining potential providers and funding requirements.	2	Year 1-2
6.7	Plan and design any new visitor facilities, uses and activities to respect significance and associations.	5.3.10, 5.5.30, 5.6.24, 5.9.19-32, 5.9.35-37, 5.9.42, 5.9.57-58, 5.9.78, 5.12.1-5		1	Ongoing
			Establish a process for identifying and restricting uses and activities in culturally and physically sensitive areas (5.9.78, 5.12.1-5).	1	Year 1-5
6.8	Consult with and seek feedback from groups that use the Meeting Place Precinct regularly.	5.12.4-5		1	Year 1-2
			Establish a regular feedback process and review results annually.	2	Year 1-5

No.	Lead Actions	Policies	Detailed Actions	Import ance	Years
6.9	Seek feedback from visitors.	5.12.1-8		1	Year 1-2
			Establish a regular visitor feedback process and review results at least every two years.	2	Year 1-5
6.10	Continually refine the ways the heritage values of the site are communicated.	5.16.7		1	Year 1-5

7 REFERENCES

- Australia ICOMOS 1998, *Code on the Ethics of Co-existence in conserving significant places*, Australia ICOMOS Inc.
- Australia ICOMOS 1999, *The Burra Charter: The Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance*, Australia ICOMOS Inc.
- Batten, B. 2005, *From prehistory to history: Shared perspectives in Australian heritage interpretation*, PhD Thesis, Macquarie University, Sydney.
- Benson, D. and Eldershaw, G. 2005, 'Naturalising non-local native trees at Botany Bay: the long-term impact of historical plantings', *Ecological Management and Restoration*, vol 6 (3).
- Benson, D. and Eldershaw, G. 2007, 'Backdrop to encounter: the 1770 landscape of Botany Bay, the plants collected by Banks and Solander and rehabilitation of natural vegetation at Kurnell', *Cunninghamia*, vol 10 (1) pp. 113-137
- Byrne, D., H. Goodall, S. Wearing and A. Cadzow 2006, 'Enchanted Parklands', *Australian Geographer* 37 (1): 103 – 115.
- Cairnes, L. 2004, 'Chapter 20 Condition', in *Assessment of the values of Kosciuszko National Park* pp. 253-264.
- Commonwealth of Australia 2002, *The Australian Natural Heritage Charter for the conservation of places of natural heritage significance* (Second Edition), Australian Heritage Commission in association with the Australian Committee for the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (ACIUCN), Canberra.
- Context Pty Ltd 2007, *Preliminary Heritage Impact Assessment: Meeting Place Precinct CMP*, prepared for the Department of Commerce: State Property and DECC.
- Cummins, A. 2001, 'Conservation Condition Report on Commemorative Plaques associated with the Monuments at Kurnell with Botany Bay National Park', report produced by Sydney Artefacts Conservation for NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, November 2001.
- Cummins, A. 2002, 'Conservation Treatment Report on Commemorative Plaques associated with the Monuments at Kurnell with Botany Bay National Park' report produced by Sydney Artefacts Conservation for NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, May 2002.
- DEC 2004, *Guidelines for Works: Cultural Heritage Buildings and Structures*, Version 1.6.
- DEC 2005, *NPWS Visitor Data System Parks Visitor Survey 2004 / 2005*.
- DEC 2006, *Guidelines for Approvals: Cultural heritage places, buildings, landscapes and heritage items on DEC estate*, revised edition.
- DEC 2006, *Two Ways Together DEC Action Plan*.
- DEC 2006, *Stage 1 Assessment of Captain Cook's Landing Place (CCLP) Collection, Meeting Place, within the Moveable Heritage Collection of Botany Bay National Park, Kurnell* (Draft report July 2006).
- DEC 2006, *DEC Policy: Identified and Targeted Positions*, DEC.
- DEC 2007, *Park Management Policy Manual*, Park Management Program, NSW.
- DECC 2008 (draft), *Aboriginal Languages Policy*, DECC.
- DEH 2004, *National Heritage Management Principles*, DEH Fact Sheet 18, Department of the Environment and Heritage, Canberra.
- Department of Commerce and the Government Architect's Office 2006, *Condition Assessment Report, Ferry Shed, Botany Bay National Park, Kurnell, March 2006*.

- Eldershaw, G. 2006, *The Captain Cook's Landing Place Tree Register: an investigation into the commemorative tree planting programme* (Draft report 2006).
- Goodall, H., D. Byrne, J. Kijas and S. Wearing 2004, 'Recognising Cultural Diversity: The Georges River Project in South-Western Sydney', *Sustainability and Social Science Round Table Proceedings*, The Institute for Sustainable Futures, Sydney and CSIRO Minerals, Melbourne
- Hamilton, M.A. and S. Anderson 2005, *Draft Kamay Botany Bay National Park at Kurnell Oral History Project*.
- Hamilton, M. A. and S. Andersen 2006, *Stage 1 of the Kamay Botany Bay Oral History (Draft)*, prepared for Department of Environment and Conservation, Parks and Wildlife Division.
- Hitchmough, J. 1994, *Urban Landscape Management*, Inkata Press, Australia
- Irish, P. 2007a, *Overview of documented Aboriginal heritage, Meeting Place Precinct, Botany Bay National Park, Kurnell, NSW*. Report to DECC and the Government Architects Office, February 2007.
- Irish, P. 2007b, *Draft Aboriginal archaeological management recommendations, Meeting Place Precinct, Botany Bay National Park, Kurnell, NSW*. Report to DECC and the Government Architects Office, June 2007.
- Irish, P. 2007c, *Summary report on Aboriginal test excavations, Meeting Place Precinct, Botany Bay National Park, Kurnell, NSW*. Report to the La Perouse Aboriginal community, June 2007.
- Morrison, A. J. 1999, *Cook's Stream, Botany Bay National Park: Research, Assessment and a Rehabilitation Strategy*, prepared by A.J. Morrison & Associates for NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service.
- Museums Australia July 2006, 'Stage 1 Assessment of Captain Cook's Landing Place Collection within the Moveable Heritage Collection of Botany Bay National Park Kurnell', Policy Guidelines, DEC.
- Museums Australia (undated), *Previous Possessions, New Obligations: Policies for Museums in Australia and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Peoples*.
- Museums Australia (undated), *Previous Possessions, New Obligations: Policies for Museums in Australia and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Peoples*, <http://www.amonline.net.au/pdf/matcon/policy.pdf>.
- NSW Government 2006, Whole of Government Framework for Cultural Resource Use, unpublished policy document.
- NSW Heritage Office 2000, *Movable Heritage Principles*, Heritage Information Series, NSW Heritage Office.
- NSW Heritage Office 2004, *Objects in their Place: An Introduction to Movable Heritage*, NSW Heritage Office and Ministry for the Arts Movable Heritage Project.
- NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service 2002, *Cultural Heritage Community Consultation Policy*.
- NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service 1988, *NPWS Field Management Guidelines*.
- NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service 2002, *Botany Bay National Park Plan of Management*, adopted by the Minister for the Environment on 27 May 2002.
- NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service 2002, *Cultural Heritage Strategic Policy*, currently under revision, January 2002.
- NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service 2003, *Meeting Place Precinct Master Plan, Botany Bay National Park, Kurnell*, April 2003.

NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service 2006, Where Cultures Meet web site, www.wherecturesmeet.com.au.

Nugent, M. 2005, *Botany Bay – Where Histories Meet*, Allen and Unwin, Sydney.

Thomas, Mandy 2002, *Moving Landscapes and the Vietnamese Experience*, New South Wales National Parks and Wildlife Service, Sydney.

Thomas, Martin 2001, *A Multicultural Landscape: National Parks and the Macedonian Experience*, New South Wales National Parks and Wildlife Service, Sydney.

Tuck, D. 2007, *Historical archaeological monitoring report, Kurnell Meeting Place Project*. Report to DECC.

University of Melbourne, Burnley College 2002, *The Burnley plant directory [electronic resource]: a guide to the selection of landscape plants for south-eastern Australia*, Richmond, Victoria.

University of Sydney 1999, Built Monuments and Ceremonial Plantings, Conservation Management Plan for Botany Bay National Park. Unpublished draft prepared for NPWS.

University of Sydney (Masters of Conservation students) 1999, Conservation Management Plan for the Alpha Farm site including the Kurnell Accommodation House. Unendorsed draft prepared for NPWS.

APPENDIX 1: GLOSSARY

Term	Definition
BBNP	Botany Bay National Park
C&HD	Culture and Heritage Division – previously Cultural Heritage Division (CHD)
CCLP	Captain Cook Landing Place
CCLPT	Captain Cook Landing Place Trust
DECC	Department of the Environment and Climate Change (NSW) – previously Department of the Environment and Conservation (DEC)
PWG	Parks and Wildlife Group – previously Parks and Wildlife Division (PWD)
RBG	Royal Botanic Gardens, Sydney
RNE	Register of the National Estate

APPENDIX 2: STATEMENT OF CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE (2006)

The Statement of Significance is taken from the *Heritage Assessment* (Design 5 2006: Section 6). It should be read in relation to the revised considerations of significance contained in Section 2 of this report (Context 2007).

6.1 Summary statement of cultural significance

The Meeting Place Precinct on Botany Bay is both historically and socially unique within NSW and Australia, and is therefore of national significance.

- 6.1.1 It is the place where the first European, Lieutenant James Cook, set foot on the eastern shores of Australia in April 1770, during his first voyage of exploration of the Pacific. Although the first British settlement did not occur on this site as initially intended, the place has taken on a symbolic association with the founding of the Australian nation.
- 6.1.2 It is here also that the first contact was made between the British, who were later to possess and settle the land, and the traditional Aboriginal owners of the land, the Gweagal people of the Dharawal nation. For Aboriginal people, the place has come to represent their dispossession from the land, with Botany Bay becoming an incredibly important stage for Aboriginal protests against forms of history that ignore, silence and deny their own experiences of colonisation.
- 6.1.3 It was at this place that the first scientific collections of Australian native flora (collected by Sir Joseph Banks and Dr Daniel Carl Solander) and indigenous cultural artefacts (collected by James Cook) were made and the first description of the land and its people was recorded both in words (by Cook and Banks) and artwork (by Sidney Parkinson and Tupaia).
- 6.1.4 The Meeting Place Precinct has long been used by individuals and groups within settler Australian society as a site to commemorate, celebrate and reflect on the Cook expedition. The collection of monuments and memorials, dating from as early as 1821, which are set within a ceremonial landscape that allows for and promotes the conduct of commemorative ceremonies and parades, strongly reflects the importance of the site for this purpose. The creation of the Captain Cook's Landing Place Reserve, now the Meeting Place, in 1899, marks the beginning of a coordinated effort to conserve the place as a publicly owned historic site of state and national significance.
- 6.1.5 The place is strongly associated with several figures of international significance, through their participation in the activities that took place at the site in April 1770 - Captain James Cook (British explorer), Sir Joseph Banks (British Botanist and promoter of Botany Bay for the establishment of a new British colony) and Dr Daniel Carl Solander (Swedish naturalist).

6.2 Secondary significance

The Meeting Place Precinct is also significant for the following reasons:

- 6.2.1 The place is prominently located on the Kurnell Peninsula headland, which together with Cape Banks, frames the entrance to Botany Bay. The well-vegetated dunes and cliffs of these sites contrast with the low-lying, flat and highly developed residential and industrial areas that generally surround Botany Bay.
- 6.2.2 The place is one of natural beauty that provides opportunities for visitors to experience first hand the landscape of the bay, the beaches, rock platforms, cliffs, open parklands and bushland. It provides both panoramic and framed views across Botany Bay.

-
- 6.2.3 The orientation of the 20th century cultural landscape of the precinct towards Botany Bay reflects the importance of the primary access to the site, which for the whole of the 19th and the first half of the 20th century, was by water across Botany Bay.
- 6.2.4 The ferry crossing from La Perouse to Kurnell has historic, aesthetic and social significance. The physical experience of the crossing and the view of the place that the ferry provided heightened visitor expectation and experience of the place.
- 6.2.5 Throughout the 19th and 20th centuries, the place has provided, and today continues to provide, opportunities for visitors, both local and from the broader community, to participate in recreational and social activities, including picnicking, walking, swimming, fishing, bird watching, and socialising. Historically, visitors also participated in camping and hunting.
- 6.2.6 The place contains endangered ecological communities as listed under the *NSW Threatened Species Act 1995* - EEC Kurnell Dune Forest (coastal scrub on sand) and EEC Swamp Scherophyl Forest (Swamp Forest) and the habitat of several rare and endangered species.
- 6.2.7 Together with Banks' and Solander's 1770 collection of native flora from the region, the remaining endemic vegetation communities have the potential to provide evidence of the vegetation communities that existed on the site in 1770.
- 6.2.8 The place has strong cultural and spiritual associations for the Gweagal and Dharawal people, who occupied the land prior to European settlement and after. It is a place where they can pass on their knowledge of the environment, cultural practices, history and spiritual connections to the land to future generations.
- 6.2.9 The view across Botany Bay from La Perouse to Kurnell is important to the local Aboriginal community as it provides a visual link to country. The ferry that once operated between the two places provided an important physical link for this community.
- 6.2.10 The place, together with its archaeological remains, the collections of artefacts taken from the site in 1770 and since, and the oral history of the Gweagal people, has the potential to reveal information about the life and customs of the Gweagal people who occupied the land prior to European settlement.
- 6.2.11 The place contains several significant Aboriginal sites including among others the shell midden on which Alpha House is built, Skeleton Cave and a rock art site.
- 6.2.12 In recent years, the place has developed a high level of potential as a place that can foster reconciliation between indigenous and non-indigenous Australians.
- 6.2.13 The place was the first place cleared by white settlers for the establishment of a new British colony, although under the direction of Governor Arthur Phillip, the settlement was relocated to Port Jackson after only 6 days.
- 6.2.14 The place was part of the first land grant made on the southern side of Botany Bay, that being to James Birnie, who established Alpha Farm on the site.
- 6.2.15 Several significant items of built heritage occupy the site. These include Alpha House, which includes the cellar of the previous farmhouse, the Inscription Plate, the Cook Obelisk, the Solander monument, the Banks Memorial Seat, other monuments in the group, the shelter shed and the remains of the Trust wharf. Of lesser significance are the Discovery Centre and the other buildings associated with the development of the place as a public reserve.
- 6.2.16 The place, together with its monuments, ceremonial plantings and the records of the Captain Cook Landing Place Trust, provides evidence of the changing ways in which different groups of settler Australians have interpreted, understood and constructed their histories.
-

- 6.2.17 The place, together with its archaeological remains and associated collections of illustrative and documentary material, has the potential to reveal information about the 19th century occupation and agricultural use of the place and its environs.
- 6.2.18 The place, together with its remaining structures, archaeological remains, plantings, site works and the records of the Captain Cook Landing Place Trust, has the potential to provide information on the development and management of a 20th century historic site and recreational grounds, and early approaches to regeneration of a previously degraded environment.
- 6.2.19 The place is closely associated with Hon. Joseph Hector Carruthers, former NSW Minister for Lands and long term trustee of the Captain Cook Landing Place Trust.
- 6.2.20 The place is associated with Joseph Henry Maiden, director of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Sydney, who, during the early part of the 20th century contributed to the planting program undertaken on the site.
- 6.2.21 The place has been the subject of three Royal visits - Princes Albert and George in 1881, the Duke and Duchess of Glouster in 1946 and Queen Elizabeth II in 1970.
- 6.2.22 The place has been used in the education of school children in both Australian history and the environment throughout the 20th century.
- 6.2.23 The place provided, in its camping grounds and foreshore caves, opportunities for temporary accommodation during the Depression years, of which there are some limited remains.
- 6.2.24 The place is associated with environmental politics and preservation, particularly through the work of early conservation groups and resident action groups.
- 6.2.25 The place, which is used by many cultural groups, provides an opportunity to strengthen the sense of community and cross cultural interaction.

APPENDIX 3: ASSESSING SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE

Criteria

New South Wales Heritage Register

The New South Wales Heritage Register addresses social significance under Criterion (d):

An item has strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group in New South Wales for social, cultural or spiritual reasons (State significance) OR

An item has strong or special associations with a particular community or cultural group in the area for social, cultural or spiritual reasons.(local significance).

The types of items which meet this criterion include:

- Items which are esteemed by the community for their cultural values;
- Items which if damaged or destroyed would cause the community a sense of loss; and / or
- Items which contribute to a community's sense of identity.

The definition of social significance is quite specific and includes inclusion and exclusion guidelines.

Guidelines for Inclusion	Guidelines for Exclusion
Is important for its associations with an identifiable group	Is only important to the community for amenity reasons
Is <u>important</u> to a community's sense of place	Is retained only in preference to a proposed alternative.

National Heritage List

The criterion for the National Heritage List is:

(g) the place has outstanding heritage value to the nation because of the place's strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons.

As yet there are no guidelines nor significance indicators to assist in the assessment of social significance. Current practice is therefore to use the previous indicators developed by the Australian Heritage Commission. This framework contains three sub-criterion (or significance indicators):

- Important to a community as a landmark, marker or signature
- Important as a reference point in a community's identity or sense of itself
- Strong or special community attachment developed from use and/or association

As well, three tests are typically applied and require that:

- A community (or communities) can be identified
- That community (or those communities) survive today
- There is evidence of social significance - that is the item can be demonstrated to be important to that community or communities.

The NHL entry for Kurnell Peninsula includes three values statements related to criterion (g), however none of these relate to ethnic/ migrant communities.

Integrated social significance criteria

Based on the NSW criterion, and reflecting on the national criteria, the following checklist of values has been prepared to guide the analysis of the social significance data and presentation of statement of social significance. Essentially, this checklist recognises that the first two elements are unique to the NSW explanation of this criterion. The third element has been used to integrate the NSW and national frameworks.

Community esteem: Items that are esteemed by the community for their cultural values. This would include places representing any cultural value held in high esteem by the community.

Sense of loss: Items which if damaged or destroyed would cause the community a sense of loss, and/or

Community identity: Items which contribute to a community's sense of identity. This would include:

- Important to a community as landmark, marker or signature
- Important as a reference point in a community's identity
- Strong or special attachment developed from long use and/or association.

This integrated approach should be used for any further social significance assessment undertaken for the Meeting Place Precinct.

Social significance & ethnic communities

Scope and methodology

This section reports on a preliminary investigation of the social significance of the Meeting Place Precinct to Australian ethnic communities. Its purpose is to review existing information on social significance to these communities and to identify the need (or otherwise) for further research to be undertaken. No primary research or consultation was undertaken for this project.

Documents consulted included key management reports for Botany Bay and the Meeting Place Precinct specifically (eg: *Botany Bay National Park Plan of Management 2002*, *Heritage Assessment, Meeting Place Precinct 2006*), histories of Botany Bay and studies of the ethnic/migrant experience of the national parks of New South Wales more generally. Among the latter, studies by Martin Thomas and Mandy Thomas and materials prepared for the UTS project "Parklands, Culture and Communities: cultural diversity and the Georges River" were of particular value. From the history of use of and association with the site, the report then makes some preliminary observations about the nature and extent of social significance and present conclusions and recommendation for further work.

This investigation has been undertaken by Context Pty Ltd as a component of the Conservation Management Plan for the Meeting Place Precinct and has been undertaken as an additional component to the original brief. The work, including review of materials and preparation of this report, was undertaken in three and a half days.

Concepts of 'national park' and 'ethnicity'

The examination of the social significance of the Meeting Place Precinct to ethnic communities requires some preliminary examination of the concepts of both 'national park' and 'ethnicity'. Second generation Australians and migrant Australians from English speaking backgrounds may have a tendency to assume an understanding of the concept of 'national park' which shapes our expectations of what a national park is and how it should be used. As Thomas (2001) points out, however, the concept is peculiar to a particular cultural experience:

The current internationalisation of the national parks concept can obscure the fact that this specific way of identifying and managing landscapes originally developed in the former colonial

societies of Australia and the United States. In both countries there is a well established association between national parks and issues of nationality. As originally conceived, the reservation of natural spaces had a premeditated connection with a sense of emerging nationhood. These were iconic spaces: both the property of the nation and expressive of certain national virtues (Thomas, 2001: 23).

In the case of Botany Bay National Park and the Meeting Place Precinct particularly, the 'nationalistic' nature of the national park is highly apparent given its very literal connections to the birthplace of the Australian nation. Research into the migrant / ethnic experience of national parks indicates that these communities may attach very different meanings and use to these places.

The concept of migrant or ethnic communities is thrown into sharp light by the conceptualisation of the Meeting Place as the birthplace of the relationship between Indigenous and settler Australians. In this sense, all settler Australians are essentially migrant or ethnic communities and the Meeting Place is situated as a site where this dialogue may continue to evolve as the settler community grows and diversifies.

Review of the *Heritage Assessment* (Design 5)

There is little specific reference to ethnic communities in the social significance assessment section of the *Heritage Assessment* (Design 5 2006), however the report does discuss the fact that the Meeting Place is visited by people from a range of ethnic backgrounds. The report also alludes to the Meeting Place as a site where the process of reconciliation may therefore be said to be ongoing between Indigenous Australians, settler (non – Indigenous) Australians and migrant Australians. Text from Design 5's discussion on social / spiritual significance is repeated here. Although this text does not specifically address ethnic communities, it echoes other discussions on the experience that ethnic/migrant communities have of National Parks (see below). Similarly, their Statement of Significance talks about how different groups of settler Australians experience Botany Bay as a way to understand their histories. The text that follows (in italics) is quoted verbatim from Design 5 (2006).

History of use and association

The Meeting Place Precinct is a place visited by people from various differing cultural backgrounds. A recent survey of park visitors showed that visitors included people who identified themselves as having cultural backgrounds that were Lebanese, Greek, Italian, English, Indian, Egyptian, Chinese, Yugoslavian, Armenian and Macedonian. While these visitors variously engage with the Meeting Place as one that is prominent in Australian history, they add an additional layer of community making and appreciation of the environment that is influenced by a rich range of cultural approaches to parks and open spaces. This is significant for the way in which the Meeting Place landscape is understood and can act in broader processes of community reconciliation (Design 5 2006: 142).

Assessment of social significance

Section 5.5 - Social / spiritual

For some visitors the experience of 'being' in the Meeting Place landscape can be spiritual, involving an appreciation of either (sometimes both) natural or historical values. For others their appreciation of the environment is one of use. Still others have engaged with the landscape as one of recreation, of picnicking, playing in the dunes, riding on the ferry and spending a day with the family and friends, playing cricket. All of these activities can reinforce a sense of both individual and community identity. The stories and memories of these activities, whether experienced or passed on, are significant components of the meanings of today's Meeting Place landscape. The community-based construction of the Meeting Place as a recreational landscape includes experiences that are both sensual and aesthetic: the experiences of modern day visitors who wander around the precinct allow them to construct a personal sense of a complex place, and this includes smells, sound, views, movement and

touch. Part of this experience relates to the 'bush', where the natural features of the landscape are part of a typically 'Australian' experience of the environment (Design 5 2006: 141).

Section 5.7- State Heritage Register Criteria

There is no reference to ethnic community associations in the presentation of values against the State Heritage Register criterion (d).

Section 6 - Statement of Significance

Botany Bay has long been used by individuals and groups within settler Australian society as well as overseas visitors to New South Wales as a site to commemorate the Cook expedition and imperial navigation and science, pay homage to Cook, Banks and others, and to reflect upon the meaning of the Endeavour's stay as an origin point for the subsequent history of the colony and of the nation (criteria g & d). For this reason it is significant as a place that can yield information about the changing ways in which different groups of settler Australians have interpreted, understood, and constructed their histories (criterion e) (Design 5 2006: pg 123).

Review of other materials

There is little material available which allows specific observations to be made about the relationship between ethnic Australian communities and the Meeting Place Precinct. However, in recent years, material has been produced which discusses the use and perceptions of New South Wales National Parks by migrant communities. These studies have primarily focused on Macedonian use of the Royal National Park and use of the Georges River National Park by Vietnamese and Arabic speaking communities.

Whilst these have not been social significance reports, it is possible to use this material to draw some preliminary conclusions. Perhaps the most important information to be drawn from this research is that experiences of parks appear to vary enormously between different ethnic/migrant communities and that the manner in which Anglo – Celtic ('first – wave') settler Australian approach to notion of a 'park' cannot be expected to reflect the experiences of more recent migrant communities. Understanding landscape and nature are entangled in cultural understandings and this impacts how different people will respond to the notion of 'park' (Thomas 2002: 128-129).

History of use and association

The Botany Bay Oral History Project has obtained some evidence about the history of use of the National Park by ethnic/migrant communities. Kurnell resident Nick Boes informed the project team that in the 1960s, the park was 'heavily frequented by predominantly migrant people'. He noted that their background was predominantly Greek, Italian and Yugoslavian and they came in such large numbers that vehicles were backed up a considerable distance out of the park. Boes has further observed that European migrants were gradually replaced by Asian and Middle Eastern migrants during the 1970s (Hamilton and Anderson 2005).

The 2004 / 2005 NPWS Parks Visitor Survey indicates that approximately 15% of visitors to all National Parks spoke a language other than English at home. However, this data is not broken down by either specific park or ethnic background. Numerous surveys and anecdotal evidence from NSW NPWS indicate that Parks are a popular location among diverse ethnic Australian communities, with surveys indicating that approximately 20% of visitors to parks speak a language other than English at home (Thomas 2001: 28 - 29). South –east Asian communities are slightly below the average for visitation rates (Goodall et al:161).

Christine Hopkins, area manager for Botany Bay National Park, has provided some insight into the use of the Park by ethnic/migrant communities. Ms Hopkins has observed particular migrant community users of the park include Macedonians, Lebanese and Arabic speaking people and Koreans and Vietnamese. Macedonians and Lebanese and Arabic speaking people are the most likely to visit the park in extended family groups on particular occasions whilst

Koreans and Vietnamese visit repeatedly and in smaller groups, primarily for the purpose of fishing (Christine Hopkins, pers comm).

Discussion with Rangers indicated that ethnic communities are more likely to visit picnic spaces (than, for example, walking tracks). Pacific Islander people particularly value Kurnell and have at times moved heavy concrete picnic furniture to suit their social requirements (Thomas 2001: 30). Despite this commonality separate pieces of research by Mandy Thomas and Martin Thomas on Vietnamese and Macedonian communities respectively point to considerable differences in uses of parks.

Relating to landscape and nature

Martin Thomas points to a 'culture of nature' among the Macedonian community which is echoed in the native Macedonian experience of nature and strengthened by some decades of historical association among the migrant community (see below). Macedonian people have strong associations with gathering outdoors in Macedonia to eat and share time with family and friends. They have a particular fondness for mountainous areas, reflecting the geography of their homelands. The ocean "is not their natural context" (Thomas 2001: 62). The strength of attachment to particular landscapes that derives from personal history is illustrated in the comments of a Macedonian man who maintains that the Australian bush is without smell and that he misses the scents of his own country (Thomas 2001: 62).

The work that Mandy Thomas undertook with Vietnamese communities paints a very different picture of relationship to landscape. The people she spoke to had very different perceptions of 'parks' as places of human activity as opposed to natural landscape, indeed many had no real experience of wilderness or unpopulated places at all. The experience of a natural place was therefore noteworthy for many, although many felt unprepared for and disconcerted by the experience. When asked, many Vietnamese respondents wanted amenities such as short walks, concrete paths and mobile phone contact. Many expressed fears of disappearing or being kidnapped while in the park and preferred the idea of public parks as opposed to wilderness areas (Thomas 2002: 94 – 95). The Vietnamese community appear to prefer places associated with water, again reflecting the native geography. Byrne et al (2006: 112) note that the Georges River is seen by many Vietnamese as the embodiment of a dragon and that various locations are considered favourable or otherwise for certain activities according to their correspondence with the dragon's anatomy.

History and associations

Research undertaken to date indicates that migrant communities are likely to have diverse histories of use and association, however anecdotal evidence from rangers that parks are more likely to be visited for facilities such as picnic grounds rather than walking trails seem to be supported. There is a long standing (more than 30 years) tradition among Sydney's Macedonian community to gather at the Audley picnic ground in the Royal National Park on Christmas day (the Macedonian church does not celebrate the birth of Christ on this date). Christine Hopkins (pers comm) notes that the Macedonian Christmas celebration in fact had its origin at Botany Bay National Park in the post war years before shifting to the Royal National Park in the 1980s. However, the occurrence of fires in Royal National Park in 2000 has seen the Macedonian Christmas return to Botany Bay.

The tradition may have its origins in the fact that there were very few women amongst the post-war wave of Macedonian migrants into Australia, making social gatherings such as dances unacceptable. The predominantly male community had to find a way to socialise and public picnics were an option that reflected a form a socialising that had existed in their native country. The Christmas Day celebrations at Botany Bay and the Audley picnic ground are similar in both nature and purpose to the 'typical' Australian BBQ (Thomas 2001).

The Vietnamese community also typically uses parks for social gatherings such as BBQs, picnics, ball games and fishing. Among these uses, fishing is a dominant theme and connections to waterscapes (and rivers in particular) dominate (www.migrationheritage.nsw.gov.au/exhibitions/goldandsilver). The rivers and oceans are seen

as sources of food and indeed both Thomas 2001 & 2002 talk about the increased presence of Asian fishermen in national parks as receiving unfavourable responses from other fishermen who accuse them of exploiting the natural environment. Interestingly, few of Mandy Thomas' respondents could name any specific parks that they had visited or felt a particular attachment to (Thomas 2002: 96 – 100). Christine Hopkins (pers com) has observed that the Vietnamese and Korean communities are frequent visitors to the Botany Bay National Park. These visitors are not typically in extended families but in smaller groups who visit repeatedly, primarily for the purpose of fishing.

Rivers are also highly valued by Sydney's Arabic-speaking Mandaean community who regularly participate in collective baptism ceremonies. The ceremonies require access to fresh flowing water. As a result, this community has a high level knowledge about bank, flow and pollution conditions. Other Arabic speaking users of the Georges River National Park have identified patterns of use that indicate a preference to use the park in the evenings as the Muslim cycle of religious observance strongly shapes social life in favour of evening activities, especially during Ramadan (Goodall et al: 172). Christine Hopkins (pers comm.) has also made this observation at Botany Bay, noting that Lebanese and other visitors from Arabic speaking backgrounds are most likely to visit in large or extended family groups on days of fine weather and at the end of Ramadan. It is of general interest to note Hopkins' observation that the ethnic /migrant community users of Botany Bay National Park are also users of the Georges River National Park.

Community identity

According to New South Wales National Parks and Wildlife Service, 'A Vision Statement for Kurnell Peninsula', March 1997 the concept of the 'meeting place' was multi-layered. It referenced the 'first contact between indigenous Australians and the crew of the bark Endeavour under the command of James Cook in April 1770' and it incorporated the idea that Botany Bay was 'symbolic as a meeting place of diverse cultures and may be seen as the point of initiation of a multicultural nation'. Research does indicate that New South Wales parks generally can be said to contribute to the building of a multicultural nation by playing an important role among migrant communities as places for understanding the history and culture of Australia and / or building new identities as migrant communities.

Consultation for the Meeting Place Master Plan identified 'reconciliation' as a key theme and specified that this included Indigenous, Anglo-Celtic and recent migrants and that the Meeting Place was seen as a gathering point for many cultures (Meeting Place Master Plan: 56 – 57). Martin Thomas' discussions with members of the Macedonian community in relation to their use of National Parks revealed a strong interest in issues of Aboriginal history and reconciliation, and a feeling that they understood the convict story more than the Aboriginal story (Thomas 2001: 91). In contrast, Mandy Thomas found less knowledge of or interest in Aboriginal history and culture among the Vietnamese she interviewed (with the exception of those with specific educational or employment experience). Uluru and Kakadu were seen to be Aboriginal places and no New South Wales sites were mentioned (Thomas 2002: 106-111).

It is however clear that parks generally have a role in building migrant Australian identity. In an interesting discussion of assumptions about Vietnamese fishing, Goodall et al suggest that this practice may not reflect a transposition of Vietnamese practices into an Australian setting. They suggest that it may in fact reflect a romanticizing of 'being Vietnamese' among the Vietnamese community itself. This incorporates a belief that in what they *should* have done in Vietnam with a strong aesthetic tradition of the depiction of fishermen in idyllic natural contexts across south-east Asia. That is, the parks offer an opportunity to enact a version of being Vietnamese that was not possible in Vietnam (Goodall et al: 176-177).

More obviously, the use of parks as gathering places makes them a focus for building community identity within a migrant context. The Macedonian Christmas gathering at Botany Bay and Royal National Park is an example of an activity that is sanctioned by both the Macedonian community and the NSW NPWS. However Goodall et al (172) also talk about

how Anglo and Vietnamese youth in particular are keen users of the parks after dark to escape adult presence.

It is worth noting that parks and public spaces can become sites where community identity is built in response to negative factors. Members of many ethnic groups (particularly Vietnamese and more recently Middle – Eastern communities) experience harassment and sometimes violence in parks (Goodall et al: 167). This contributes to the sense of apprehension about using parks noted among the Vietnamese community and has the impact of confining people to the public areas of the parks. Hopkins (pers comm.) has also observed changes in the use of the Botany Bay National Park by Arabic speakers. She recalls that until the last couple of years, Muslim communities used to pray in large numbers at the Park but that they no longer come with this purpose in mind. She attributes this to an increased sense of fear and discomfort among these communities.

Social significance of the Meeting Place Precinct for ethnic communities

Reflections from the available evidence

Currently, there is no evidence that the Meeting Place Precinct has particular social significance to any specific ethnic Australian communities, with two possible exceptions. The first is the Macedonian community returning to Botany Bay to celebrate on Christmas Day. Given, however, the fact this is a recent return to the site after some decades at Royal National Park, arguing that this constitutes social significance may be problematic. The observation by Parks staff that Kurnell is particularly popular among Pacific Islanders as a picnic area is also worthy of further investigation. Based on studies among specific ethnic communities and their experience of National Parks generally, it is however possible to broadly hypothesize certain possibilities.

Diversity of experience

It is important to remember that the ethnic community is incredibly diverse: there is not just one ‘ethnic’ community. The histories and experiences of these communities will vary enormously and this will affect their perception of national parks and how they are used. It is not possible to speak of the potential significance of the Meeting Place to ‘the’ ethnic community, only to examine the multiple significances to multiple communities. This is of course entirely compatible with the conceptualisation of the Meeting Place as a location where dialogue occurs between Indigenous and settler Australians. We can expect this dialogue to remain multi-voiced and complex.

This being said, there appears to be a clear pattern among ethnic communities to use parks as places for social rather than nature based activities. It also seems possible that certain communities may be more likely to be drawn to certain parks which remind them of the culture or geography of their home, although this connection remains quite tenuous.

Water

The coastal location of the Meeting Place Precinct may make it more popular among ethnic communities who have a homeland experience of similar geography. Preliminary confirmation of this is found in the popularity of Kurnell among Pacific Islanders. Vietnamese and Korean communities also appear to value Botany Bay as a place to come and fish.

Places of ‘culture’ / places of ‘nature’

It is frequently observed by Parks staff and researchers that ethnic communities tend to value places where they can comfortably gather with others as a large social group (including extended family/ies; ‘community’). That is, there is a preference for areas where they can hold picnics, BBQs and games over ‘natural’ experiences such as bushwalking and climbing. It could therefore be hypothesised that the highly modified landscape of the Meeting Place Precinct offers the kind of National Park experience that may be most valued by these communities.

Assessment based on known social significance

Social value assessment methods are designed to identify the associated communities, the nature and extent of their association, whether or not significance arises from those associations, and the nature and extent of significance. Social significance is recognised in Australia ICOMOS Burra Charter and in New South Wales and Commonwealth legislation. It is generally defined as strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons.

Based on current knowledge, there is no evidence to suggest that the Meeting Place Precinct is of social significance to ethnic/migrant communities. It is important to note that this statement reflects an absence of knowledge about the associated communities and their use of the area, rather than an absence of significance.

Assessment of potential social significance

Evidence about the association of ethnic communities with other National Parks indicate that there is a potential for the Meeting Place Precinct to be of social significance to specific ethnic/migrant communities. The recent return of the Macedonian Christmas day celebrations to Botany Bay warrants further investigation and it is possible that the Meeting Place Precinct *may* serve a similar function to Pacific Islander communities. Further investigation would need to be undertaken to determine the nature and extent of the use of Kurnell by these communities (refer to Opportunities below).

The Meeting Place Precinct may have social significance to Vietnamese and Korean communities. There is currently no evidence of this, but anecdotal evidence from Christine Hopkins indicates that these communities are important visitors to the Park. Similarly, Botany Bay National Park has a recent history of use among people of an Arabic speaking background and the nature of this association may be interesting to investigate.

The Meeting Place Precinct *may* be more valued by various ethnic communities than other National Parks because it is a highly modified landscape offering large grassy areas for picnics, gatherings and games.

Implications

The Meeting Place is already understood as a location where there is an opportunity to encourage dialogue between Indigenous and settler Australians. Although this may be understood as taking place primarily between Indigenous and Anglo-Celtic Australians, increasingly this dialogue embraces the increasingly diverse Australian ethnic/migrant communities.

In addition, research undertaken of the use of other National Parks by ethnic/migrant communities indicates that the more modified areas of park with facilities for social events are more likely to be used by ethnic/migrant communities than natural or wilderness areas. The Meeting Place Precinct currently provides such facilities.

It is important however, to remember that these comments are assumptions based on studies of other places, and not on the Meeting Place Precinct specifically. Further research is considered desirable to both test these assumptions and extend our understanding of the social significance of the Meeting Place Precinct.

Conclusions and recommendations

Conclusions

The investigation of the social significance of the Meeting Place Precinct to ethnic/migrant communities is clearly a complex process of initially identifying the relevant communities and then understanding the nature of their attachment. It appears that Botany Bay has been used by migrant communities from the post-war era and that the composition of migrant visitors

has reflected the changes in migrant population. That is, European migrants have been joined by those from Arabic-speaking countries (particularly Lebanon) and Asian countries (particularly Vietnam and Korea).

It would appear, therefore, that national parks such as Botany Bay do indeed have a role in the development of multicultural Australia. Interestingly, on the basis of current evidence, this role seems to relate to activities that promote a sense of cultural identity. That is, Macedonian identity is reinforced by the Christmas Day gatherings, and Muslim identities by post-Ramadan celebrations. In this regard, it is possible to see Botany Bay as place where reconciliation between *all* Australian communities may be being seen to take place.

Recommendations

Undertake additional research into the types of ethnic/migrant communities using the Meeting Place

As this report has endeavoured to demonstrate, it is not meaningful to talk about the use or significance of an area such as a National Park to 'the' ethnic/migrant community. Conversely, it is necessary to consider that there are many such communities and that preliminary evidence indicates that these communities will vary considerably in terms of the places they have attachments to and the reasons that they use and value them. A necessary first step in understanding potential significance would therefore be to identify *who* the associated ethnic/migrant communities are.

Investigate possible significance to Macedonian, Arabic-speaking, Pacific Islander, Vietnamese and Korean communities

Christine Hopkins observations on the use of Botany Bay National Park by Macedonian, Arabic-speaking, Vietnamese and Korean communities are interesting and warrant further investigation. Her comments indicate that different communities do indeed use the Park in different ways and therefore one might expect some variation in the nature and extent of attachment to this place or parts of it.

It has been observed that Kurnell is particularly popular among Pacific Islander communities and an investigation of potential social significance of the Meeting Place Precinct to this group could also prove valuable. Another interesting aspect of the relationship between Pacific Islanders and Kurnell is of course the fact that the Pacific Islands have their own 'Captain Cook' stories. Whether or not this 'shared history' plays a role in this communities association with the Meeting Place is a fascinating question.

Investigate uses of open space and amenities by ethnic/migrant communities at the Meeting Place

Research indicates that public space for socialising is important to ethnic/migrant communities using National Parks. In investigating potential social significance to these communities, it may be useful to address whether the highly modified landscape of the Meeting Place makes it a more desirable location than other parks.

Investigate possible linkages with the UTS Georges River project

There are interesting links between the UTS Georges River project and the Meeting Place Precinct, and there may be opportunities for NPWS to link into this research. Extending knowledge about the relationship between ethnic/migrant communities and parks into the Botany Bay area more generally could add to a fascinating map of ethnic cultural attachment and promote Parks' vision of the Meeting Place as a place of reconciliation and cross-cultural dialogue.

References

Byrne, D., H. Goodall, S. Wearing and A. Cadzow 2006. Enchanted Parklands. *Australian Geographer* 37 (1):103 – 115.

Department of Environment and Conservation 2005. *NPWS Visitor Data System Parks Visitor Survey 2004 / 2005*.

Design 5, 2006. *The Meeting Place Precinct, Botany Bay National Park, Kurnell, Heritage Assessment*.

Goodall, H., D. Byrne, J. Kijas and S. Wearing (undated). *Recognising Cultural Diversity: The Georges River Project in South – Western Sydney*. Sustainability and Social Science Round Table Proceedings.

Hamilton, M.A., and S. Anderson 2005. *Draft Kamay Botany Bay National Park at Kurnell Oral History Project*.

New South Wales National Parks and Wildlife Service, 2002. *Botany Bay National Park Plan of Management*.

Thomas, Martin 2001. *A Multicultural Landscape: National Parks and the Macedonian Experience*. New South Wales National Parks and Wildlife Service, Sydney.

Thomas, Mandy 2002. *Moving Landscapes and the Vietnamese Experience*. New South Wales National Parks and Wildlife Service, Sydney.

APPENDIX 4: ESTIMATED LIFE SPANS FOR HISTORIC PLANTINGS

Preliminary guide to the estimated life spans of historic plantings within the Meeting Place Precinct. Estimates were provided verbally by Doug Benson, and the Burnley Plant Database (University of Melbourne, 2002).

(The list should be expanded and amended as information is updated.)

Common name	Botanical name	Life span (broad estimates)
Norfolk Island Pine	<i>Araucaria heterophylla</i>	130 years
Cook Pine	<i>Araucaria cookii</i>	?
Port Jackson Fig	<i>Ficus rubiginosa</i>	> 130 years
Local natives	<i>Angophora costata</i>	< 100 years
Casuarinas	<i>Casuarina glauca</i>	Indefinite (short for individual specimens, but regenerate from root stock)
Tallowwoods	<i>Eucalyptus microcorys</i>	100–150 years
Lemon scented gums	<i>Corymbia citriodora</i>	50 years
Paperbarks	<i>Melaleuca sp.</i>	50-100 years
Banksia	<i>Banksia integrifolia</i>	30-50 years (regenerate by fire)
Monotoca	<i>Monotoca elliptica</i>	Long-lived
Turpentine	<i>Syncarpia glomulifera</i>	Medium to long-lived in native habitat (coastal forest)
Brush Box	<i>Lophostemon confertus</i>	(?) medium, possibly to long-lived

APPENDIX 5: SIGNIFICANCE AND PRIORITIES

The setting of priorities for specific actions should be guided by the contribution that an element or group of elements makes to the significance of the Meeting Place Precinct as a whole. This is indicated in the diagram below.

	Primary significance			Secondary significance	
	The enduring landscape Pre-1770 to present	A place of Aboriginal connections Pre-1770 to present	A place of history making 1821 to the present	A European settled landscape c1815-1899; 1920s-50s	A place for leisure c1850s to the present
Significance ranking					
1 Exceptional	PRIORITY 1	PRIORITY 1	PRIORITY 1	PRIORITY 2	PRIORITY 2
2 High	PRIORITY 1	PRIORITY 1	PRIORITY 1	PRIORITY 2	PRIORITY 2
3 Moderate	PRIORITY 2	PRIORITY 2	PRIORITY 2	PRIORITY 3	PRIORITY 3
4 Little	PRIORITY 3	PRIORITY 3	PRIORITY 3	PRIORITY 4	PRIORITY 4
5 Intrusive	PRIORITY 1	PRIORITY 1	PRIORITY 1	PRIORITY 3	PRIORITY 3

APPENDIX 6: NATIONAL HERITAGE MANAGEMENT PRINCIPLES

Appendix 6 is relevant to the sub-section on Management plans required under the EPBC Act (1999, as amended), in Section 3.3 Statutory planning frameworks of this report (Context 2007).

Extract from the DEH fact Sheet 18 (Feb 2004)

What are heritage management principles?

Heritage management principles provide a guiding framework for excellence in managing heritage properties. They set the standard and the scope of the way places should be managed in order to best protect heritage values for the generations ahead.

When should they be used?

These principles should be used when preparing and implementing management plans and programs. In the absence of a management plan, they should guide the management of heritage values of a property.

Most places on the National and Commonwealth Heritage Lists are required to have management plans setting out how their heritage values will be managed and protected over time.

Each list has its own set of heritage management principles to underpin the development and implementation of the management plans.

National Heritage Management Principles

1. The objective in managing National Heritage places is to identify, protect, conserve, present and transmit, to all generations, their National Heritage values.
2. The management of National Heritage places should use the best available knowledge, skills and standards for those places, and include ongoing technical and community input to decisions and actions that may have a significant impact on their National Heritage values.
3. The management of National Heritage places should respect all heritage values and seek to integrate, where appropriate, any Commonwealth, state, territory and local government responsibilities for those places.
4. The management of National Heritage places should ensure that their use and presentation is consistent with the conservation of their National Heritage values.
5. The management of National Heritage places should make timely and appropriate provision for community involvement, especially by people who:
 - (a) have a particular interest in, or associations with, the place, and
 - (b) may be affected by the management of the place.
6. Indigenous people are the primary source of information on the value of their heritage and the active participation of Indigenous people in identification, assessment and management is integral to the effective protection of Indigenous heritage values.
7. The management of National Heritage places should provide for regular monitoring, review and reporting on the conservation of National Heritage values.

