

Birchgrove Park Plan of Management



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Park Plan of Management-Rational and Development

Council prepared and developed this Plan of Management in partnership with the community to assist in enabling Council to manage, maintain and develop Birchgrove Park to a level desired by the community.

Plans of management must be prepared for all community land. This is a legal requirement under the Local Government Act (1993). An essential management tool, Plans of management:

- Are written by Council in consultation with the community
- Identify the important features of the land
- Clarify how Council will manage the land, and in particular
- Indicate how the land may be used or developed.

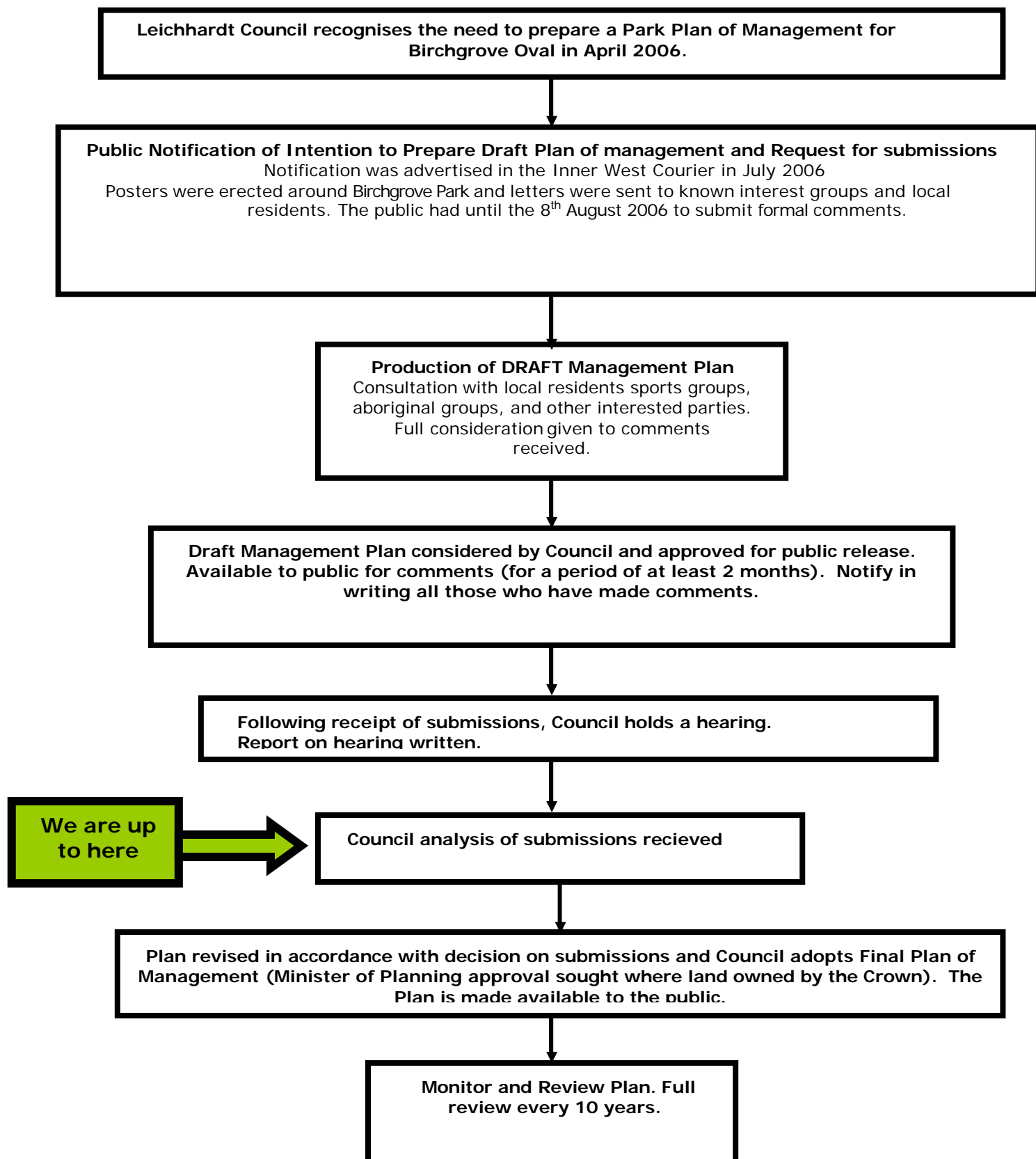
What does this Plan of Management Contain?

The Birchgrove Park Plan of Management contains information about the history of the park as well as practical information relating to physical and legal descriptions, proposed Council policies for managing and maintaining the park, as well as a detailed conceptual plan for proposed development within the park.

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Process to Prepare Birchgrove Park Plan of Management



Forward

Birchgrove Park is one of Leichhardt's premier sports and recreation parks. One of the first publicly developed parks in Sydney, Birchgrove Park has heritage significance as an organised sporting and recreation venue. Currently used as a venue for organised sports which includes soccer, rugby league, tennis and cricket the park is a popular sporting venue. The park is also popular as a place for informal recreation, including unstructured informal play, dog walking, jogging, kite flying and ball games. The park also boasts a small but popular children's playground. From a parks management perspective the park provides a variety of recreation experiences for people of all ages and interests.

Birchgrove Park while maintained to a high standard is a challenging asset to manage. As a sports and recreation facility Council recognises that to be accessible and well-used the park must be proactively managed and limits established to ensure it is maintained in good condition and use of the park does not adversely impact upon the surrounding residences. Balancing competing needs and interests is a key issue which is addressed in this Plan of Management.

This plan outlines management guidelines for Birchgrove Park for the next five to ten years as well infrastructural and capital improvements which will enhance and improve community use and enjoyment of the park

Regular players will benefit from new and improved canteen facilities, player changing rooms and public toilets, and improvements to the playing surfaces. Spectators and casual users will also enjoy new shade trees, heritage and park interpretation, a new and formalised pedestrian and fitness trail, additional seating and barbecue facilities, additional cricket practise net provision and the development of a new viewing and shade area for visual appreciation, wedding and event functions. The specific improvements planned for the park are detailed in this Plan of Management.

I am confident that, with the improvements planned for Birchgrove Park and the management guidelines which have been established within this plan, Birchgrove Park will continue to be a popular recreation venue for people of all ages.

Clr Carolyn Allen
Mayor of Leichhardt Council

1.0 Introduction to Birchgrove Park

Created in 1881 Birchgrove Park is owned by the State of NSW and is managed and administered by Leichhardt Council.

Birchgrove Park is the premier recreation ground in the Leichhardt Local Government area for cricket, soccer and rugby league. The park has a rich cultural and recreation heritage. First grade Cricket and Rugby League have been dominant sporting features of the park since 1897 and 1908 respectively. Tennis is also a dominant sporting feature which can be traced back to 1902 when the first courts were established adjacent to Rose Street along with small grandstand on the north western slopes. Soccer has also featured as an early sport within the park, its popularity getting stronger in successive generations.

The original 1796 land grant which created Birchgrove estate and the subsequent reclamation of bayside land to support sport, recreation and leisure pursuits are important milestones in the cultural development of the Balmain area. The development of retaining walls, the configuration and planning of the sports oval along with the landscaping of the park and the built features which support active sporting pursuits all add to the cultural significance of the park as a focal and valued community asset.

Today the park enjoys a diversity of use and caters for a wide range of organised sporting pursuits, cultural events and opportunities for informal recreation and leisure. A district sporting venue, the park has local value as a neighbourhood park which provides residential amenity, a sense of community as well as access to open space and the harbour.

Birchgrove Park is a valued area of open space. Its rich cultural and sporting heritage along with its protection and enhancement as community open space which caters for a diverse range of community recreation needs is important. Long term management, interpretation and development of Birchgrove Park must consider the community values which have historically shaped the park as well ensuring that the needs of existing users are provided for without negatively impacting upon the amenity value of the park.

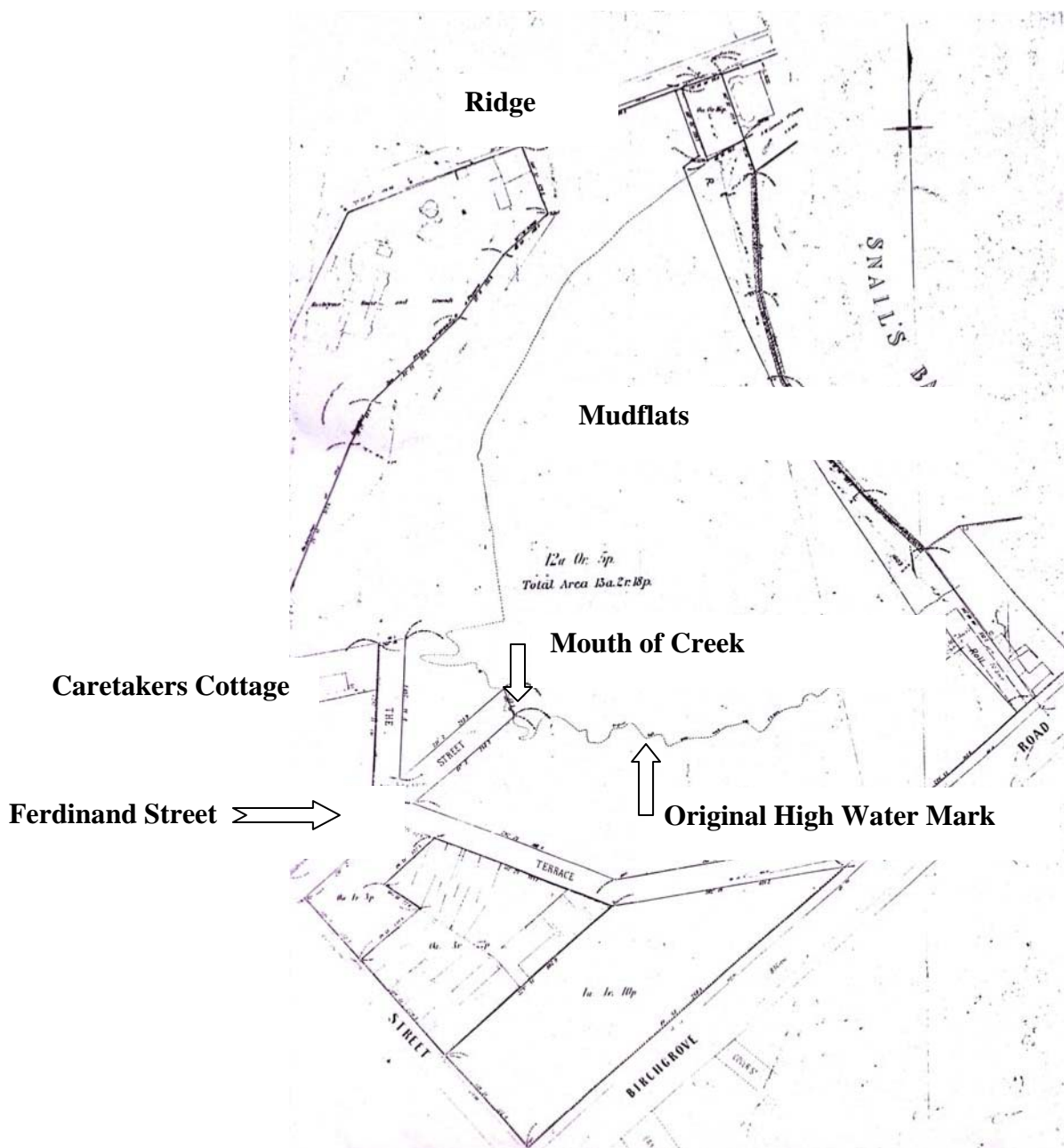


Fig 1.0 - Birchgrove Park and the North Eastern Portion of the Balmain Peninsula

Birchgrove Park is bordered on its south by Grove Street, on its north by private residential properties along Louisa Road, on its west by Rose and Ferdinand Streets and on its east by Snails Bay of Sydney Harbour. The locality around the park is generally residential in nature. The Rose Street frontage of the park is not continuous, due to the Crown not purchasing a group of allotments between Rose Street and The Terrace in the early 1880s.

1.2 Site Analysis

Birchgrove Park is located at the edge of Snails Bay at the western edge of Sydney Harbour and covers an area of 4.97 hectares. The central sports oval portion of the site was originally mud flats surrounded by Hawkesbury Sandstone landforms, with a steeper benched ridge on the northern side. These landforms would have supported typical Sydney sandstone open-forest containing trees such as *Angophora costata* and the Sydney Peppermint, *Eucalyptus piperita*. It is likely that *Casuarina* species were also found adjoining the mud flats. A creek once ran down the route of present-day Ferdinand Street and flowed into the Bay just south of the caretaker's cottage, as indicated in the plan below:



2.0 Statutory and Policy Context for Management

2.1 Crown Lands Act 1989

The Crown Lands Act 1989 governs the planning, management and use of crown land including reservation or dedication for public purpose. The Principles of Crown Land Management stated in Section 11 of the Crowns Land Act are:

- a) That environmental protection principles be observed in relation to the management and administration of crown land.
- b) That the natural resources of crown land (including water, soil flora, fauna and scenic quality) be conserved wherever possible.
- c) That public use and enjoyment of appropriate crown land be encouraged.
- d) That, where appropriate, multiple use of Crown land be encouraged.
- e) That, where appropriate Crown Land should be used and managed in such a way that both the land and its resources are sustained in perpetuity; and
- f) That Crown land be occupied, used, sold, leased, licensed or otherwise dealt within the best interests of the state consistent with the above principles.

The Crown Lands Act does not prescribe the content for the plans of management however the Act allows the Minister to direct what matters the plan of management needs to address. A plan of management is acceptable to the Department of Lands (Department responsible for the management of Crown land) provided the following points are addressed:

- The Plan and its outcomes are consistent with Crown Land Management Principles;
- Any proposed uses, development and management practises must conform to the public purpose for the reserved or dedicated land;
- The plan addresses any matters required by the minister responsible for the Crown Lands Act;
- Submissions about the draft plan are referred to both the Minister responsible for the Crown Lands Act and the local Council prior to adoption ;and
- The draft plan is exhibited for public comment in accordance with the Crown lands Act and regulations.

Management and Use of Crown Land

Crown Land must be managed and used in accordance with the following:

- The principles of Crown Land Management;
- The reservation; and
- Any conditions and provisions within the specific zoning in the Council's Local Environmental Plan.

2.2 Local Government Act 1993

Birchgrove Park is Crown Land administered under the care and control of Leichhardt Council. The principles of the Local Government Act (1993) apply in the administration of the park and in relation to Community land management in respect of the park's classification. Classified as "Community Land " in recognition of its use as a public recreation facility and the need to maintain public access the park is categorised for the purposes of reserve management as the following:

- a) A Sportsground
- b) A Park



The core objectives for management of community land as pursuant to the Local Government Act (1993) in each of the above categories is as follows:

Section 36 (F) Core objectives for management of community land categorised as a sportsground

- (a) to encourage, promote and facilitate recreational pursuits in the community involving organised and informal sporting activities and games, and
- (b) to ensure that such activities are managed having regard to any adverse impact upon nearby residences.

Section 36 (G) Core objectives for management of community land categorised as a Park

- (a) to encourage, promote and facilitate recreational, cultural, social and educational pastimes and activities, and
- (b) to provide for passive recreational activities or pastimes and for the casual playing of games and
- (c) to improve the land in such a way as to promote and facilitate its use to achieve the other objectives for its management.

2.3 Leichhardt Local Environmental Plan 2000

Birchgrove Park has an Open Space Zoning in the Leichhardt Local Environment Plan 2000 and is recognised within the plan as having heritage significance at both the local and state level.

The Open Space Zoning applies to land utilised for both active and informal recreation. The zoning specifies the types of development which is permitted with and without development consent. This includes:

Development allowed without development consent:

- Ancillary sporting structures
- Open space embellishment
- Playgrounds
- Recreation areas

Development allowed **only** with development consent:

- Clubs
- Community facilities
- Community gardens
- Jetties
- Kiosks
- Public amenities
- Public transport stops
- Recreation facilities
- Demolition
- Subdivision

3.0 Historical Context

3.1 Pre-Settlement History

The area in which the Birchgrove Park is located was inhabited by the Wangai band of the Dharug (Eora) language group for at least 10,000 years before European settlement. “Wangai Country” was known as wanne, and it originally extended from the suburbs of Balmain and Birchgrove in the east to Silverwater and Auburn in the west. European settlement in mid 1800’s brought with it the ravages of disease including smallpox which had a devastating effect on the indigenous population. After 1840 there was only a limited indigenous population left within the area. Visual evidence of aboriginal occupation within the Birchgrove Park area is however non-existent. This is attributed to the farming practises employed within the parklands during the early part of the 19th century (largely associated with fruit tree growing and dairy farming) and the reclamation of the mud flats from Snails Bay into the park. These activities no doubt attributed significantly to scattering, covering and removing any evidence of aboriginal occupation of the area.

3.2 European Settlement

Birchgrove Park is composed largely of a land grant which was granted to Private George Whitfield of the NSW Corps in September 1796 and land which was reclaimed from Snails Bay. Recorded as “Whitfields Farm” the original tenure of ownership was relatively short-lived with George Whitfield transferring ownership of the property in 1800 to the Knight family. The land changed hands again some six years later to Captain E Abbot of the NSW Corps in 1806 this was followed up by a subsequent transfer of ownership in 1810 to Lieutenant John Birch.

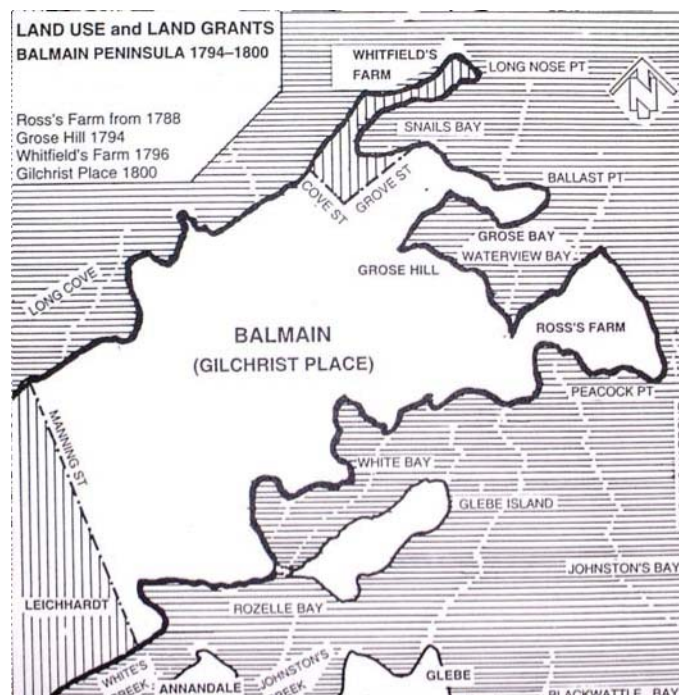


Figure 1.0 – Plan showing the location of Whitfield’s Farm in relation to the Balmain grant of 1800. Source: Reynolds, P., William Balmain and John Gilchrist, Balmain Historical

John Birch was responsible for the development of the first permanent residence on the estate. Named Birchgrove in apparent reference to the fruit trees growing on the estate the original house was constructed of local materials many of which were reportedly utilised from the land and foreshore surrounding the property. The first house constructed on the Balmain Peninsula, the residence occupied the site for over 150 years. Demolished in 1967 the residence was thought to be the second or third oldest residential property in Sydney.



Birch Grove House in 1967, shortly before its demolition (Source Mayne-Wilson and Associates-Draft Conservation Plan Birchgrove Park (2005))

In March 1814 after only 4 years ownership and development John Birch sold the estate to Rowland W. Loane, merchant and settler. After 19 years of ownership the estate once again changed hands. In 1838 the first registered transaction of the property took place to Captain John McLean. Due to unpaid loans and significant financial debt the estate was subsequently handed over to mortgagees – Bloxsome and Turner in 1849. The property was once again sold in 1854, to Henry Watson Parker and then in the same year ownership was transferred to Didier Numa Joubert.

3.3 Residential Subdivision

Didier Numa Joubert was responsible for the first residential subdivision of the Birchgrove Estate. Between 1856 and 1860 survey subdivision plans were developed laying the foundations for what is today the modern street layout for the Birchgrove area. Streets on the plan were named after the Joubert family while the main feature of the property, Birchgrove house was retained with its expansive waterfront views and terraced access to the lower gardens of the estate. In December 1862, after a period of financial instability for Joubert, Birchgrove was surrendered as a financial interest to the Bank of NSW.

The Bank of NSW continued with the subdivision plans for Birchgrove Oval. Over a period of 16 years 23 lot sales were handled by the bank. The sale figures while considerably small were reflective of competing sales which were occurring within the area at the time. This included the sale of nearby properties in Balmain. By 1878 however only two properties of the original 1860 subdivision remained unsold. In 1878 the remaining properties were purchased by a syndicate of three business men (McLean, McGregor and Threlkeld). New subdivision plans were drawn up and subsequently advertised. Part of the plans and their associated sale advertising promised the formation of a parks and recreation ground along with a government jetty.



1883 plan showing zones around Snails Bay reserved for public recreation and the extent of the mud flat that was proposed to be filled. Source: Leichhardt Local Studies Library and Draft Conservation Management Plan for Birchgrove Park.

3.4 Reclamation Works and the Creation of Birchgrove Park

The subdivision plans proved popular with prospective purchasers. This period was significant as the Crown also actively took part by purchasing thirty six allotments for the formation of the Birchgrove Recreation Ground. Negotiation by the Crown was also held on the purchase of Lot 9, Section 4 which is attributed today as the site of the caretaker's cottage.

1882 saw the creation of the Birchgrove Park Trust and with planing underway for the development of the park a large scale programme was implemented to reclaim the Snail Bay mud flats.

Initial fencing of the recreation grounds commenced in 1883 and this was completed in 1885. A practice cricket pitch was laid out in 1885 (at which time, too, major levelling-off works were carried out). *The Balmain Observer* from September 1885 reported that requests had already been made for construction of toilet blocks and shelters in the park. A dozen bench seats were also purchased around this time for the park. In 1887, Thomas Rose, a man with botanical experience, was engaged to carry out planting and landscape work in the park.

Almost from its foundation in 1882, the newly constituted Birchgrove Park Trust pressed for Government support for a large-scale program to reclaim the mud flats in the bay, using filling from the Sutherland Dock then being excavated on Cockatoo Island. As a result, a large portion of the mud flats was steadily reclaimed from 1886 and a rough dyke wall to support the oval was begun in 1887. By 1904 this reclaimed land was fully incorporated into the park.



Looking north across Snails Bay c.1891, at which time the reclamation and sea wall works were under construction (beyond the right side of this image). The original sea wall and the sandstone retaining wall upslope from it are also visible on the far side of the bay. Birch Grove House is at the top left of the image. Note the mature Norfolk Is. Pine and (probably) Fig Trees that surround it. At the foot of this image a white picket fence is already in place along the southern boundary of the park.

Source: Mitchell Library small pictures file and Mayne Wilson and Associates Draft Conservation Management Plan

3.5 Further Reclamation and Development Works

The development of the park did not proceed evenly, with an extended hiatus occurring during the depression of the early 1890s. Work resumed again in 1897 with further filling using clay from Davison Street (above White Bay). This enabled an extension of the line of reclamation beyond the 1887 dyke-wall, and thereby the construction of the sandstone block seawall present today.

Some changes were made to the land surrounding the new park. By the mid 1880s the northern arm of The Terrace had been terminated at its current end point; thenceforth the only vehicular access to *Birch Grove House* was from Louisa Road. Earlier issues of the *Balmain Observer* (from 1885) also record that at that time gates had stood across The Terrace at Ferdinand Street, presumably to limit vehicular access across the park and developing cricket ground. These gates were subsequently removed. The owner of *Birch Grove House* (Adams) meantime had himself moved out of the mansion in 1897, leasing the property to Richard Bennetts in 1899. [This study will not include a full ownership and tenancy record of *Birch Grove House* from this time onward, as it is not relevant to the development of the Park. However, we do note that in 1900 Adams subdivided the *Birch Grove House* grounds into 12 lots. Subsequently, in 1911, Mary Scott, who bought the lot containing the mansion, subdivided it further, into 5 portions.

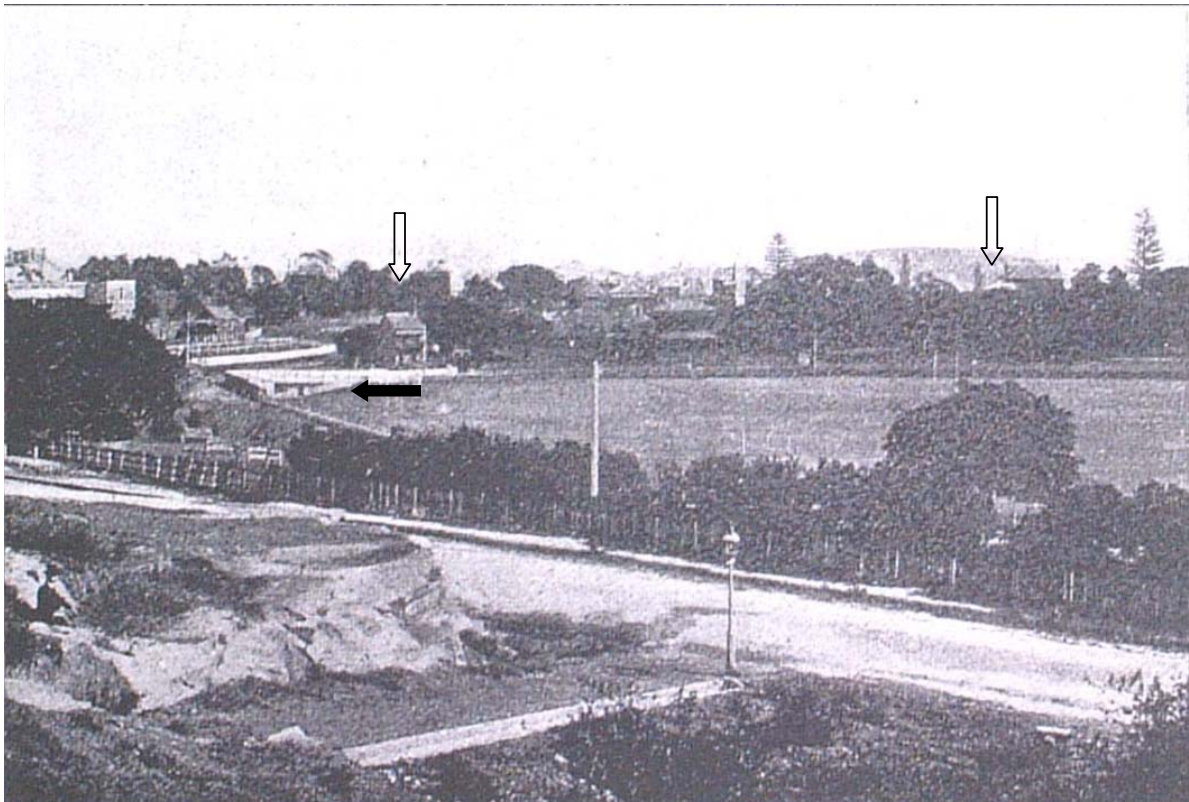
The tennis courts near Rose Street were constructed around 1902 and the Birchgrove Tennis Club was launched in 1904. Although on Crown land, it is controlled by Leichhardt Council and is currently leased to the North Western Tennis Association. In addition, a single tennis court with an adjoining pavilion (Figures H20 & H1 4) was built c.1910 at the request of St John's Church at the south-east end of the park near Grove Street, but was not officially opened until 1920. It was known as the Parkview Tennis Club, whose members still play weekly.



View east through Birchgrove Park, likely to be c.1910. The picket fences along the Snails Bay and southern boundaries of the park are in place, while a white post and two rail fence marks the western boundary (to enable spectators to see through it to watch the sports matches). Note the simple bench seating for spectators, and the drinking fountain in the centre foreground. The Parkview tennis court and pavilion are visible at top right. 1960s. Source: Municipality of Balmain – Retrospect 1860-1935, courtesy of The Balmain Association Inc.



Photograph by the McLean family, said to be in 1910 but quite possibly earlier, looking north across the park, showing the reclamation works finished and the existing sea wall completed. Note that there are no significant trees along the foreshore zone, although it is possible that the square structures along it are tree guards for early plantings. Deloitte Avenue has also been laid out along the seawall. Birch Grove House is arrowed. Source: The Balmain Association.



A view across Birchgrove Park in 1910, taken from the junction with Ballast Point Road. The caretaker's house (white arrow left) is in place, and a high wall to the south of it, apparently close to the point where Ferdinand St meets The Terrace. A shed or change room is located to the front of it (black arrow). Note the sturdy paling fence along the boundary. Birch Grove House (and grounds) are indicated by the white arrow (far right of the photo).

4.0 Birchgrove Park-Statement of Heritage Significance

The significance of Birchgrove Park as a Heritage site is discussed in relation to the criteria adopted by the NSW Heritage Office and set out in its guidelines document *Assessing Heritage Significance 2001*.

Birchgrove Park has heritage significance as a public reserve deliberately created by the State Government through the purchase in 1881 of numerous lots of the 1878 subdivision of the Birch Grove estate. The Park was created from these lots and the subsequent reclamation of the mud-flats around the head of Snails Bay for the formation of a large sports oval. This reflected the Victorian era practice of acquiring, resuming and reserving land in suburbs around expanding cities as places for the urban population to have wholesome recreation in the fresh air. The Park was gazetted as a public reserve on 6 July 1894 and its seawall was completed ten years later.

In addition Birchgrove Park has historical significance as an early example of reclaiming foreshore land on Sydney Harbour to create a public park for the specific purpose of providing ovals for sports such as cricket and football/rugby.

Birchgrove Park also has some associative significance for having been part of land granted to George Whitfield in 1796 and on which Birch Grove House was built c. 1810 by Lieut. John Birch, from whose estate the subsequent suburb derived its name. The house was owned and/or occupied by several prominent persons in colonial society until its demolition in 1967. Part of its early plantings and terracing still contribute to the Park's distinctive setting and character.

In terms of aesthetic characteristics the Park provides long clear views from its upper slopes across Snails Bay eastward to Balls Head and the City of Sydney, which are of considerable aesthetic value and should be retained. Moderately scaled buildings from the 19th century to the north, west and south, some of them row houses, contribute to its setting and sense of enclosure, as do the rising slopes and sandstone benches along its northern perimeter. The early plantings of Fig Trees below Birch Grove House and other ornamental species planted in the period 1905-1925 contribute greatly to the Park's aesthetic value, character and amenity.

At the local level Birchgrove park has a high level of significance. The park is listed as a place of State/local significance in Schedule 2 of Leichhardt Local Environmental Plan 2000, gazetted on 22 December 2000 and on the National Trust (NSW) Register, 1988. However, no detailed inventory sheet was prepared justifying this rating; it is not listed on the State Heritage Register; and no category of 'State/local' formally exists.





4.1 Heritage Rationale

A Draft Conservation Management Plan completed for Birchgrove Park by Mayne-Willson and Associates in 2005 documented the main heritage items contained within the park. This plan provided rationale for the significance of the individual heritage items. These are listed HI 1 through to HI 30. (HI =Heritage item)





DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE	EXPLANATION
5. Exceptional	Rare or outstanding elements that directly contribute to the heritage significance of the place.
4. High	Elements that contribute significantly to the Park's heritage value .Previous alterations or changes do not detract from the element's value Largely in its/their original form
3. Moderate	Elements which contribute to the overall significance of the place. Loss of them would damage the place's heritage value
2. Little	Elements which contribute to the overall significance of the Park in a limited way
1. None	Elements that do not contribute to the heritage value of the Park
Intrusive	Elements that detract from the Parks heritage values

(Recommended conservation related work is outlined in Section 9.2 of this Plan)





4.2 Table of Significant Heritage Items





Representative Photograph of Item	Description of Item	Degree of Significance
 <p>HI 1</p>	<p>Role: An important retaining wall supporting Grove St. and defining the southern boundary of the Park. Its large, sparrow-picked blocks were probably quarried on the peninsula.</p>	<p>Rating: 4 Sandstone block retaining wall between Grove St. and park. Likely to have been built in conjunction with the development of the lower portion of Grove Rd. Appears in current form in photographs from 1900s & 1910s and may date from as early as 1860s after subdivision of the Balmain land grant commenced.</p>
 <p>HI 2</p>	<p>The Terrace roadway was laid out in the first subdivision in 1860. It has retained its same form ever since.</p>	<p>Rating: 4 Role: This access roadway from Grove St. to the upper (western) sector of the Park was the first access through the Park site prior to any reclamation works.</p>
 <p>HI 3</p>	<p>Children's Playhouse, S-E Corner</p>	<p>Rating: 2 This rustic item was built as part of the children's building playground in late 1977 at the behest of Mr R Jones, Director Birchgrove Community Association, who also operated a school from a house in Rose Street.</p>
 <p>HI 4</p>	<p>Tennis court and pavilion in the south-eastern sector were constructed c.1910, reputedly for nearby St. John's Church. The court was originally a hard-court, since resurfaced with artificial grass.</p>	<p>Rating: 3 Role: This court was not part of the original design of the Park as a sports ground but a response to pressure from a local group for the provision of a facility for their use. It is known as the Parkview Tennis Club. As that use has continued for nearly a century, it has social significance.</p>




Source: Mayne-Wilson & Associates

Representative Photograph of Item	Description of Item	Degree of Significance
 <p>HI 5</p>	<p>Bus drivers' rest room, on the corner of Grove Street and Deloitte Avenue.</p>	<p>Rating: 1</p> <p>Role: This convenience has no role vis-à-vis the Park but only for drivers at the terminus of the Balmain bus route. It does, however, 'anchor' the south-east corner of the Park.</p>
 <p>HI 6</p>		<p>Rating: 3</p> <p>Role: Such an access road was not proposed in the 19th century subdivision plans, but has remained in place since c. 1904. It helps define the Park's eastern boundary and provides a pleasant esplanade along the waterfront for pedestrians to enjoy views to the city.</p>
 <p>HI 7</p>	<p>Sydney Water's sewerage pumping station adjoining Deloitte Avenue, built in the south-east corner of the Park during the mid 1910s as a matter of convenience. It is fenced off and does not contribute visually to the Park, nor is it an amenity to it.</p>	<p>Rating: 2</p> <p>Role: Although this facility is located on the edge of the Park, it serves a wider role for the suburb beyond. It makes no heritage contribution to the Park.</p>
 <p>HI 8</p>	<p>Sandstone block wall along the southern side of the oval past the tennis pavilion to the southern lawns. The date of construction of this wall is not certain, but it is likely to have been built concurrently with the reclamation works, c. late 1890s – early 1900s.</p>	<p>Rating: 3</p> <p>Role: This eastern end of the retaining wall was not part of the original sea wall built around the northern edge of Snails Bay for the <i>Birch Grove</i> estate. It was built to define and contain the southern boundary of the oval from the slope behind it.</p>





Source: Mayne-Wilson & Associates

Representative Photograph of Item	Description of Item	Degree of Significance
 <p>HI 9</p>	<p>The oval, formed as a result of the reclamation works to Snails Bay, undertaken from the mid 1880s until 1904.</p>	<p>Rating: 4</p> <p>Role: The oval itself is the core area of the Park deliberately created for active recreation sports, especially cricket. Only the rear of it formed part of the original land grant to George Whitfield, later known as the <i>Birch Grove Estate</i>.</p>
 <p>HI 10</p>	<p>The seawall, completed c.1904, was not the original wall built to contain the imported fill for the reclamation works. The original wall was a rough dyke wall and was probably built just inward of the current block wall.</p>	<p>Rating: 4</p> <p>Role: This wall formally marks the eastern edge of the Park precinct, separating it from the waters of the Bay. It was built with care, has been well maintained, and has some aesthetic merit.</p>
 <p>HI 11</p>	<p>The commemorative plaque for the Deloitte gates, named in honour of the widely admired local sportsman Q.L. Deloitte. The gates were built in 1930, but their material and exact structure has not yet been ascertained. They were removed early in WWII and melted down as part of the war effort.</p>	<p>Rating: 2</p> <p>Role: These gates once served to control entry into the Park through the boundary picket fence along Deloitte Ave. Such a role lasted only for a decade. They were not replaced.</p>
 <p>HI 12</p>	<p>Old staircase connecting Louisa Road (at top of image) down to Deloitte Ave. and the Bay.</p> <p>The actual date of its construction is not yet known. The stringers of the staircase may be older than the steps, which appear to have been recast using the concrete mix typical of the late 1920s-30s.</p>	<p>Rating: 3</p> <p>Role: These stairs mark the eastern limit of the Park on its northern side, and provide the only pedestrian access to the Bay from Louisa Road. They are not associated with <i>Birch Grove House</i> and are likely to have been built in the first decade of the 20th century when the sea wall and Deloitte Avenue were constructed.</p>





Representative Photograph of Item	Description of Item	Degree of Significance
 <p>HI 13</p>	<p>Sandstone rubble and block retaining wall on the northern side of the oval. This wall was the first sea wall built in Snails Bay, during the mid to late 1800s, presumably by one of the owners of <i>Birch Grove House</i>.</p>	<p>Rating: 4</p> <p>Role: This wall would have retained the lowest terrace of the footslope below the ridge on which <i>Birch Grove House</i> was built, and separated it from the tides and mudflats of the original Bay.</p>
 <p>HI14</p>	<p>Sandstone outcrop, just below Louisa Road, has a bench seat cut into its southern face. This cut may have been made during the first decades after the establishment of <i>Birch Grove House</i>, although no documentary evidence has yet been found to confirm this</p>	<p>Rating: 2</p> <p>Role: This item, although indicative of the underlying rock benches that constitute the slope between the ridge and the original embayment, has a little natural and social interest, but makes no contribution to the Park's heritage values.</p>
 <p>HI 15</p>	<p>Sandstone block retaining wall along the northern pathway from Louisa Road around oval. The date of construction of this wall is unknown, but the flight of steps cut into it further to the west suggests that at least part of the wall may date from the mid to late 1800s. Note the Phoenix Palms at right.</p>	<p>Rating: 3</p> <p>Role: This wall retains the midslope between the ridge of Louisa Rd. and the sports ground below, enabling an easy gradient pathway to be built from Louisa Rd. past the base of <i>Birch Grove House</i> grounds to link up with the northern arm of The Terrace to the west.</p>
 <p>HI 16</p>	<p>Sandstone block retaining wall on the north-east boundary of the park supporting a property along Louisa Road.</p> <p>It is not known exactly when this wall was constructed, but it was in place in the 1890s. It may have been built to create a platform for <i>Birch Grove House</i>, but could have been built for allotments created by the subdivision of 1878 or later.</p>	<p>Rating: 3</p> <p>Role: This retaining wall supports the grounds of a house built on a lot east of <i>Birch Grove House</i> following the subdivisions of the rump of that estate in the early 20th century. It forms a clear edge to the Park & demonstrates how such walls were grafted onto the rock benches between the ridge and the mudflats.</p>

Representative Photograph of Item	Description of Item	Degree of Significance
 <p>HI 17</p>	<p>Sandstone block steps from the northern pathway around the oval past the base of the sandstone outcrops below the Louisa Road properties and on to Louisa Road itself.</p> <p>As is evident, early but skilled repairs are needed.</p>	<p>Rating: 4</p> <p>Role: These stairs may have provided the first formal pedestrian access from <i>Birch Grove House</i> grounds to its seawall and Snails Bay during the 1800s.</p>
 <p>HI 18</p>	<p>Another example of the way in which sandstone blocks were added to the existing natural rock benches in order to create level platforms for dwellings.</p> <p>The quality of the stonework varies and <i>ad hoc</i> repairs have been made, but it is likely these walls were built in the last decade of the 19th century or early in the 20th century</p>	<p>Rating: 3</p> <p>Role: These retaining walls support the grounds of properties built on the south side of Louisa Road. They are not shown on Water Board maps of the 1880s, so may not be associated with <i>Birch Grove House</i>.</p>
 <p>HI 19</p>	<p>Sandstone wall north of the caretaker's cottage (originally called <i>Bay View House</i>), likely to have been built concurrently with that residence. According to a Sydney Water plan of 1888), a 'rough stone wall' in this location originally extended further to the north. It appears from the condition of this wall that it has been rebuilt in recent times.</p>	<p>Rating: 3</p> <p>Role: A small retaining wall that provides a level terrace along part of the western slope of the Park, below the 1970s toilet block. Its predecessor may have been the rough sea wall separating the foot slope from the mud-flats of the Bay, as the high water mark was closely.</p>
 <p>HI 20</p>	<p>The caretaker's house, built originally for Mr. David Muir, in the early 1880s and known as <i>Bay View House</i>.</p> <p>This was the only house built along the northern arm of The Terrace after the 1878 subdivision.</p>	<p>Rating: 3</p> <p>Role: The terrace house configuration reflects the narrow block pattern of the original subdivision and the row-house style of building to suit that. Its availability for use as the caretaker's residence was fortuitous, not pre-planned.</p>

Mayne-Wilson & Associates

Representative Photograph of Item	Description of Item	Degree of Significance
 <p>HI 21</p>	<p>This small weatherboard maintenance shed has only been in this location since the late 1960s. It is not yet known if it was relocated from a position close to the junction of Ferdinand St. and The Terrace, where old plans indicate a similar WB structure was present earlier.</p>	<p>Rating: 2-3</p> <p>Role: This shed is a functional, contributory item of the Park and has a little heritage significance. Because its materials & style suggest it may be an older structure (but relocated) it may warrant a 3 rating</p>
 <p>HI 22</p>	<p>A service shed has existed in this corner for most of the 20th century, this red brick version having replaced an earlier weatherboard one. Unfortunately, its red brick colour and severely functional 'modernist' form are quite out of character with the rest of the Park structures, and its location at the most used entrance to the Park combine to make it visually intrusive.</p>	<p>Rating: Intrusive</p> <p>Role: Although the site and configuration of the landform behind it have long supported a service structure in this location, the actual buildings on it have changed. The present one has no heritage value. Its facilities should be moved to a less visually intrusive location, and in an architecturally more sympathetic building.</p>
 <p>HI 23</p>	<p>This old ticket collection booth beside the entrance gates at the junction of Ferdinand St and The Terrace is likely to date from the time when first grade cricket matches, and also rugby league matches, were held in the Park, for which admission was charged.</p>	<p>Rating: 2</p> <p>Role: Although of little intrinsic heritage value, this concrete ticket booth is a reminder of the days when major sporting matches drew large crowds to the Park. It thus has some social significance.</p>
 <p>HI 24</p>	<p>Sandstone kerbing along the southern edge of Ferdinand St. just before it meets with The Terrace. They mark the western entrance to the Park but have only been laid here in recent times. However, the blocks appear old and may have been relocated from elsewhere in the area.</p>	<p>Rating: 2</p> <p>Role: These kerb stones, are minor contributory elements but warrant retention.</p>

Source Mayne-Wilson & Associates

Representative Photograph of Item	Description of Item	Degree of Significance
 <p>HI 25</p>	<p>The oldest of the Park's tennis courts, built adjacent to the corner of Rose and Ferdinand Streets. Although their configuration has been changed around, they have existed at this site since about 1902. They are currently leased out to the North Western Tennis Association.</p>	<p>Rating: 3</p> <p>Role: These courts have both social and historical significance, having been continuously used for tennis in the same location for a century. The original timber clubhouse was replaced in the 1970s.</p>
 <p>HI 26</p>	<p>These courts were not constructed until 1970, but occupy land set aside for the Park in 1881.</p>	<p>Rating: 2</p> <p>Role: These courts have a little degree of social significance and enjoy fine views out to the Bay</p>
 <p>HI 27</p>	<p>The concrete irrigation control shed, located on the eastern edge of southern arm of The Terrace. It appears to have been built in the late 1960s, though this has yet to be confirmed.</p>	<p>Rating: Intrusive</p> <p>Role: This structure serves a functional need of the Park but should be more sympathetically designed and located in a less visually sensitive location or cut into the slope so it would be partly underground.</p>
 <p>HI 28</p>	<p>This crude pavilion & change room was built at the eastern side of the tennis pavilion probably in the 1940s. It replaced the early timber change room for referees, and was also used as a shelter for people waiting for the ferry. It engulfs a Camphor Laurel tree (arrowed), probably planted in the 1920s. As a pavilion, it is poorly oriented, facing due north.</p>	<p>Rating: 1</p> <p>Role: This ugly structure, fortunately tucked into a corner, is not highly intrusive but has no heritage significance.</p> <p>It would be better demolished and if considered necessary, a new, sympathetically designed pavilion located in a more appropriate position.</p>

4.3 Obligations arising from Heritage Significance

As assessed in Section 4.0, Birchgrove Park is a place of high local significance. It has a broad range of cultural values that are summarised in the Statement of Significance. The significance of the Park gives rise to an obligation for conservation. This obligation extends to retention of all identified specific aspects of significance, including:

- retention of physical evidence;
- maintenance of historical associations;
- recognition of all site elements, including landscape, built structures, records and associations;
- involvement of interested people; and
- interpretation.

The above assessment of Birchgrove Park has identified both the park as a whole and numerous contributory elements within it, as listed in the Significance Tables, as having varying degrees of heritage significance. It is important that these should be acknowledged by Council, and taken into account in future management and maintenance strategies and actions.

The NSW Heritage Act 1977 and the Leichhardt LEP 2000 both provide statutory protection for items listed as having State and local heritage significance. There are obligations on control authorities to protect and conserve such items and places, and to manage and maintain them in a manner which retains their significance. Generally, the higher the ranking which such items or places are assessed as having, the greater the degree of protection and conservation is required.

The actions for protecting and conserving items which have been recognised as having heritage significance within Birchgrove Park are outlined in Section 9.2 of this plan.

5.0 History of Sport and Recreation

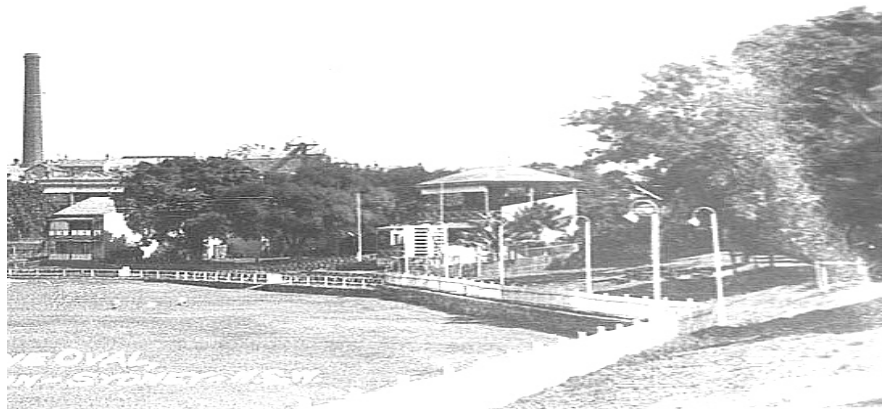
Active sport and recreation have been a predominant feature of Birchgrove Park since its inception as parkland in the 1890's.

The parks development and its existence today was due to the recognised need by the Crown for active sporting facilities for the growing populace of inner Sydney.

5.1 Cricket, Tennis and Rugby League at Birchgrove Park

Created in 1897 the Balmain Cricket Club had its inaugural match on the grounds in September of that year. A number of prominent Balmain identities including those involved with the Birchgrove Park Trust were also involved in the Balmain District Cricket Club. This included Quarton L. Deloitte who played a significant role in the development of the park, firstly as a member of the Park Trust and then as chairman of the Balmain Cricket Club. Deloitte Avenue, constructed in 1904 after completion of the reclamation, had been named after him, partly in appreciation for his leading role in the Park Trust since 1884. Deloitte was to become one of the most prominent sporting identities in Sydney, making a major contribution to the establishment of rowing on the river. However, he maintained his close links with Balmain Cricket Club until his death in 1929. The Deloitte Gates were erected in his honour the following year at the entry to the park off the jetty but they were melted down during World War II for use in the war effort. Today, the only reminder of the Deloitte Gates is the plaque fixed to the edge of the sea wall.

In 1902 a grandstand was constructed near the caretaker's residence. Around this time the tennis courts near Rose Street were laid and the Birchgrove Tennis Club was officially launched in 1904. A single tennis court with an adjoining pavilion was constructed in 1910 at the south eastern end of the park below Grove Street. Known as the Parkview Tennis Club this particular facility was built at the request of St Johns Church. It is now leased to the North Western Tennis Association.



Birchgrove Park and the Oval Around 1910-Note the Grandstand and Terraced Seating.

In 1932 Birchgrove Park eclipsed the previous record for hosting a local cricket match when, over two Saturdays, a crowd of some 20,000 attended to watch Donald Bradman play for St George against Balmain. Special trams had to be scheduled to bring the large crowds to the oval for the match. Cricket (and Rugby League) continued to figure prominently in usage of the park through to the 1960's.

Rugby League also has traditional ties to the park. The first NSW 1st Grade League game was staged at Birchgrove Park on 20 April 1908. The game was between North Sydney and South Sydney, with North's defeating South's by 11-7. A second game the same afternoon was between Balmain and Wests (Balmain won 24 to nil), with other games simultaneously being played between Newtown and Eastern Suburbs and Glebe and Newcastle at nearby Wentworth Park. Birchgrove Park remained the home ground of the Balmain Rugby League Club until 1933. In total 176 Sydney premiership league games were played at Birchgrove Park between 1908 and 1942. The majority of premier matches involving the Balmain Tigers.



A photo (*poor quality*) taken in approximately 1910 of Rugby league being Played at Birchgrove Oval–Note the large number of spectators and the large grandstand that was present.

5.2 Soccer (Football) at Birchgrove Park

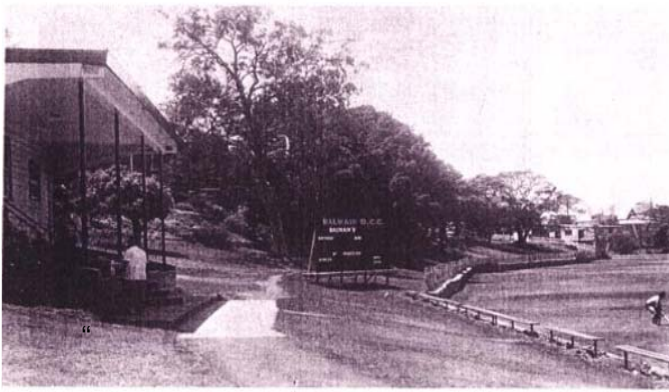
Despite common misconceptions, soccer is not a new sporting activity at Birchgrove Park. In fact soccer, as a recreational sport commenced at the park during the 1890's.

Birchgrove Park's historical significance as a venue for soccer in NSW is worth noting. In 1895 the Oval became the first park in Sydney where soccer nets were used in a formal inter club competition match. This being between the Balmain and Thistle Soccer Clubs.

This is significant as it highlights the use of the park as a recreational ground for soccer a decade before rugby league commenced its inaugural match. Soccer continues to be a popular winter sport at the park and like rugby league and cricket the use of the grounds for active sports and recreation will continue.

5.3 AFL

Australian Football was also a feature of Birchgrove Park commencing in 1903. The Balmain Club began playing at Birchgrove Oval as part of the Sydney Football League. The club however faltered after three years, going down to the Sydney Football Association, before returning to the higher league in 1909. It continued until 1926, when it was kicked out, not to return to the Sydney Football League until 1948.



"All that's left" in 1980 of the small grandstand/change rooms on the northern slope beyond the oval, with houses of Louisa Rd. in the background. Source: Winning, C. 1980. Cricket Balmania. op.cit

5.4 Archery

From 1920-1935 archery enjoyed a level of modest support within Sydney with one club holding regular meetings and some schools teaching archery to girls. The 'Sydney Bowmen' club was formed and held regular meetings at Birchgrove Oval.



Birchgrove Park around 1910-Note Sheep grazing, early cricket sightscreens, park lighting and the large public grandstand.

6.0 Management Objectives and Guidelines

This Plan of Management provides objectives and guidelines for the future use, development, management and maintenance of Birchgrove Park.

It is important as part of the management of Birchgrove Park that Council aims to maximise the potential of the various facilities, ensuring that they are adequately maintained, that they continue to cater for an appropriate range of activities, that conflicts are kept to a minimum, and that any future development is compatible with the character (including the historical nature of the grounds), operation and function of the park.

Birchgrove Park is the only park within the Leichhardt LGA to have dedicated and permanently based ground staff. Staffing of the park has been undertaken in recognition of the importance of Birchgrove Park as the premier sporting oval within the LGA.

Staffing levels within the park are reviewed annually. This is required due to the fact that over time recreation needs of the community change, hence the number and structure of staff, funding levels management and maintenance of the park are also likely to change to better respond to identified needs.

6.1 Management Objectives

Based on legislative goals, community needs and expectations the following management objectives have been identified:

- To manage the park for public recreation in accordance with the overall objectives of the Birchgrove Park Plan of Management.
- To ensure management of the park takes into consideration the principles of Crown Land management as set out in the Crown Lands Act;
- To provide and maintain a high quality and multipurpose recreation facility that meets the needs of local users and the wider community, including visitors, based on identified needs and within budget;
- To provide the community and other users with opportunities to participate in a wide range of organised sporting activities;
- To provide access to the sporting oval outside of formal sporting use for public use for opportunities for leisure, informal recreation and unstructured play experiences.
- To ensure that opportunities and decisions considered in relation to recreational use of the sporting oval is made on an equitable basis.
- To take a consistent approach to maintenance of the park and associated facilities and to maintain these areas to an acceptable and appropriate standard;
- To provide for public safety;
- To minimise conflict between different users of Birchgrove Park
- To minimise impacts of Park use on surrounding residences;
- To upgrade existing facilities and provide new facilities as required in accordance with identified needs.

- To ensure that management operations interfere as little as possible with organised sporting activities;
- To encourage other compatible forms of recreation to take place on Birchgrove Park within the constraints imposed by the primary use of the facilities.
- To encourage community involvement in the management of the park
- To provide where appropriate visual interpretation of the park and its heritage values.
- To protect and maintain identified heritage characteristics of the park.

6.2 Sport and Recreation

Council's Recreation and Open Space Needs Study (2005) contains a number of key principles and objectives relating to recreation provision across the Leichhardt local government area. Council's principal aim is to provide a diverse range of accessible open space settings and recreation facilities and services across the LGA. Council also recognises that it needs to provide recreation facilities which maximise shared usage and flexibility to meet changing community needs and aspirations.

In relation to Birchgrove Oval, Council will continue to monitor the sporting use of the grounds and will retain an open minded approach in relation to providing access for new and emerging sports where current sporting field demand permits.

Policy: Council will assess the demand for sports field use by new sports teams taking into consideration the impacts that such use will have on existing facilities, the amenity of the park and the surrounding neighbourhood.

6.2.1 Existing Sport and Recreation

Presently organised sporting use of Birchgrove Park is confined to four major sports. Tennis, Rugby League, Soccer and Cricket. Both Rugby League and Soccer are confined to winter use of the Oval (April-September) while Cricket is the predominant sport during the summer period (October-March). Tennis is played throughout the year. Organised sporting users include:

- **Tennis -** North Western Tennis Association
- **Cricket -** Tigers Balmain and District Junior Cricket Club
UTS Balmain Cricket Club
- **Rugby League -** Balmain Junior Rugby League
- **Soccer -** Balmain and District Soccer Club Inc
Balmain Tigers Soccer Club
Balmain Wanderers Soccer Club

The park will continue to enable sporting use now and into the future in accordance with the guidelines contained within this plan. This plan recognises the relationship between the park and the adjacent residential areas. In this respect the residential amenity of the Birchgrove area needs to be recognised as does the need for residential access to the park during non sporting use. In this respect it is recommended that use of the sporting oval for active sports should be as follows:

Guidelines For Organised Sporting Use of Birchgrove Oval

Day	Time	Activity
Saturday	8:30am-6pm	Active Sports
Sunday	8:30am-6pm	Active Sports
Monday	Rest Day	Rest Day
Tuesday	8:30am-9pm	*Possible Sports Bookings plus scheduled training
Wednesday	8:30am-9pm	*Possible Sports Bookings plus scheduled training
Thursday	8:30am-9pm	*Possible Sports Bookings plus scheduled training
Friday	8:30am-9pm	*Possible Sports Bookings plus scheduled training

* Scheduled sports training is restricted on the sports oval to 9pm. On week days use of the sporting oval (*with the exception of the cricket block*) unless pre booked for organised sport will be freely available for passive and unstructured recreation by the local community. Active sporting use of the Sporting Oval by registered sporting teams should not commence before 8:30am or continue past 9pm.

6.2.2 Informal Recreation

Birchgrove Oval is valued by the community as a sporting oval and as an area for unstructured play and passive recreation. Walking, picnicking, exercise, resting and quiet contemplation are all popular activities within the park and these values need to be preserved and enhanced where appropriate.

Current sporting use of the park is in the majority limited to evening and weekend use. On occasions the park is utilised during week days by Birchgrove Public School and other local school groups for organised sporting activities including use of the long jump pit.

It needs to be recognised that the original intention which lies behind the creation of the park is centred around the provision of community land for active sporting recreation.

This purpose has not changed, nor is it anticipated that given current sporting demands that organised sporting levels on the park will diminish. Overuse of the park is however an important community issue and as such sporting and facility use needs to be monitored to ensure that excessive wear and tear on turf facilities is avoided. In this respect additional sporting use of the Oval should not to be permitted unless current sporting levels diminish.

6.2.3 Sports Floodlighting

In 2006 Council was granted development application approval to upgrade existing flood lights around the sporting oval and replace these with 3 x 15 fifteen metre high and 2 x 25 metre high floodlight poles. The floodlights, designed to Australian Standards provide sports floodlighting for the Oval. The lights are designed specifically for safe evening sports training and are not designed for competitive play.

Policy: In line with the conditions of consent issued in respect of the floodlight installation at Birchgrove Park operational use will be restricted from Sunset -9pm. Use of the lights

by sports bodies utilising the park is subject to Council consent and management guidelines for sporting oval use.

6.2.4 Active and Passive Use of Sports Fields

Seasonal Codes

Policy: The allocation of the sporting fields at Birchgrove Park for organised competitive sport and for training purposes will be formalised by Council officers at the beginning of each sporting season.

Pre and Post Season Games

Policy: Games or training outside the designated season are to be booked with Council on a per game or pre practise basis. Determining factors will include: renovations and lay resting periods.

Park Bookings

The booking of Birchgrove Park provides Council with a record of the people and groups utilising the park and its assets. A booking system helps prevent two users booking the same area of the park at once (double booking) and provides useful information to Council, grounds staff and contractors on when the grounds can be accessed for maintenance and remedial works. The booking system also allows Council to monitor use of the grounds and minimise the impacts that excessive wear and tear may have from overuse.

Policy 1: Council will provide a sports field booking service which is fair and equitable and takes into consideration sustainability issues associated with potential overuse of the park

Policy 2: All sports groups wishing to train or utilise the ground for competitive play or fitness instruction must register with Council and have such use approved prior to utilising the sports oval.

Policy 3: Groups (consisting of 20 people or more) wishing to utilise Birchgrove Park for organised events i.e. weddings, barbeques, birthday parties etc must also register their application for use of the park with Council.

Casual Sports Bookings

Policy: Casual bookings (including school bookings) for use of the park for organised sports, weddings and events will be considered by Council in line with regular sports bookings and with regards to the management guidelines outlined within this plan.

Cancellations

Policy 1: Council in its capacity as a the local authority responsible for the management and maintenance of the sports oval and the park as a whole reserves its right to cancel or formally close part or the whole of the park if environmental or development conditions warrant it so. All cancellations relating to sporting ground use will be will be notified to the respective sports teams utilising the grounds. In other cases "Ground Closed" signs will be erected at the main entrance points to the park.

Policy 2: Council reserves the right to suspend or withdraw permission for of the park where users fail to comply with conditions of use.

Park User Charges

Charges are made for the use of the park for organised sporting use and event bookings. Charges are determined by Council and are applied as a fee to recover some of the costs associated with providing and maintaining Birchgrove Park and its facilities. Charges are subject to annual review by Council.

Policy: A fee for hire and use of Birchgrove Park will be charged to groups and sports teams wishing to use the park for sporting, training or event usage.

6.2.5 Casual Recreation Opportunities

Casual recreation includes physical activities that are not organised to occur at a regular time nor involve any officials in conducting the activity. Participation in non competitive social sport is matched by a rapid growth in casual particularly individual recreation such as walking, fitness training (running, jogging strength training), mountain biking, Frisbee etc. As the demand for recreational space increases the potential for recreational conflict between different park users also increases. While there is scope for informal and active recreation to coexist on Birchgrove Park there is a need for Council to educate park users and regulate the use of the park to ensure that the potential for recreational conflict is minimised.

Policy: Council will provide opportunities for informal use of Birchgrove Park and its sporting oval. Multi purpose use of the park will continue to be promoted and advocated by Council.

6.2.6 Management of Playing Surfaces

Council aims to maintain Birchgrove Park to a high standard for both informal and active play. During the months of March and September the use of Birchgrove Park may be restricted or prohibited to enable the recovery and preparation of playing surfaces before the onset of the winter or summer sporting season.

The maintenance of the playing surfaces enclosed for exclusive use (i.e. tennis courts) is the responsibility of the lessee, except where Council has agreed to provide maintenance services.

Policy: Council reserves the right at any time to close or prohibit use of any or part of Birchgrove Park and its grounds for renovations or for development purposes.

6.3 Retail and Commercial Activities

Private, community, retail and commercial activities organisers often request to use parks within the Leichhardt LGA because of their demand for space to accommodate large crowds or provide a service on a temporary basis or run a business with recreation users as potential customers. Retail and commercial activities can complement recreation based activities through providing services such as food for players and spectators. In this respect it is important to recognise the commercial and public benefits of allowing such activities on sports grounds but there is also the need to ensure that such use does not compromise the primary purpose of the park and its amenity value as a recreational facility.

Policy: Short-term and casual community, retail and commercial activities must gain approval and formal permission from Council through the activity application process

before utilising Birchgrove Park for commercial purposes. Council reserves the right to prohibit commercial use of the park where it believes the public interest is not served. Longer term retail and commercial uses also need approval from Council and the Minister for Lands and will usually be regulated by a lease or licence (see 6.5 below.)

6.4 Major Events and Community Festivals

Council recognises the value of Birchgrove Park as a community facility. Events and community festivals have benefit to the community in promoting unity and community cohesion and they can also provide economic and educational benefit. Birchgrove Park provides open space suitable for events and community festivals and its use in this respect should be promoted where there is no conflict between organised sporting use of the park.

Policy: Sport and recreation uses of Birchgrove Park will have priority over festivals and community events unless authorised by Council.

6.5 Leases and Licences

The granting of a lease or licence formalises and sets out the conditions for use of public land by commercial organisations, non-profit groups and individuals to whom the lease or licence is granted. A lease is appropriate when there is exclusive use and control of an area by a party at all times during the period of the lease or if it is desirable in the interests of management of an area or facility. A licence is appropriate where the use is not exclusive or is only at certain times.

Crown Lands Act: Council, as manager of the reserve, may only grant leases and licences in accordance with the Crown Lands Act, 1989 and with the approval of the Minister for Lands. A lease or licence must be for a use which is compatible with the purpose of the reserve, in this case, public recreation. (The Crown Lands Act does permit the Minister to grant or consent to Council granting a lease or licence for any purpose, but this is for exceptional cases.)

The Crown Lands Act does not specify a maximum length but the Minister usually will not consent to a lease or licence for longer than 21 years to be consistent with the Local Government Act, 1993. The Department of Lands' guidelines state that leases / licences should be as short as practicable. For terms longer than 5 years, the Crown Land Act requires that the Minister must advertise the proposed lease/licence and allow at least 14 days for submissions prior to consenting to the lease/licence.

Part of the rent/licence fee paid must be remitted by Council to the Department of Lands and the balance of the rent/licence fee paid must be applied by Council to maintenance or other work to (any part of) the reserve, not necessarily the part of the park leased.

Prior to seeking the consent of the Minister, Council must resolve that the lease/licence be granted. In deciding whether to approve a lease or licence, the Minister through the Department of Lands considers:

- * whether the lease or licence is in the public interest,
- * whether it is compatible with the reserve purpose,
- * the environmental impacts of the proposed activities,
- * the length of the lease/ licence,
- * whether the lessee/licensee was selected by public tender or how selected,
- * whether the rent represents a proper return to the public for the use of public land,
- * whether there are provisions for periodic review of the rent, and
- * whether the lease or licence contains appropriate provisions for indemnities, insurance

and other matters.

The lease/licence will allow the area to be used only for a specified purpose and prohibit other uses. The terms and conditions of the lease/licence should include that the lessee/licensee undertakes proper management of the relevant area, such as maintaining it and keeping it in a safe condition, and protect the interests of Council and the community, for example by imposing requirements for the operation of facilities and in some cases setting maximum charges.

Policy: This Plan of Management authorises the granting of leases, licences and other interests which are compatible with the purpose of Birchgrove Park as a reserve for public recreation, comply with the requirements of the Crown Lands Act and assist in meeting one or more of the following aims:

- * provision of amenities for members of the public,
- * provision of public facilities,
- * provision of public services or services for members of the community,
- * efficient management and operation of facilities and amenities within the park,
- * provision of income from and for the park,
- * provision of benefit to the community or parts of the community,
- * are in the public interest.

It is proposed and this Plan of Management authorises that the Birchgrove Park Tennis Court complex located adjacent to Rose Street and the Park View Tennis Court off Grove Street, both part of Birchgrove Park, be leased with the lease restricting hours of operation and maximum court hire charges.

7.0 Built Structures

Buildings and other structures associated with the sports playing fields are an integral part of Birchgrove Park. Ancillary facilities including spectator seating, changing rooms, amenities blocks, scoreboards, storage facilities and floodlights significantly aid user appreciation of the park.

Policy: The allocation of ancillary facilities at Birchgrove Park to support organised sport and for training purposes will be formalised by Council at the beginning of each sporting season. This will include an assessment associated with the need for storage of sports training equipment. The use of floodlights on the park will be restricted to winter use only while the use of amenities blocks and changing facilities for casual bookings will be addressed on an individual user need basis.



Built Structures Within Birchgrove Park

- 1** Cricket Nets
- 2** Long Jump Pit
- 3** Public Wharf
- 4** Seawall
- 5** Sydney Water Sewage Pumping Station
- 6** Bus Driver's Rest Room
- 7** Children's Sandstone Playhouse
- 8** Sandstone Block Seawall
- 9** 1940's Sports Pavilion
- 10** Tennis Pavilion
- 11** Sporting Oval Picket Fence
- 12** Children's Playground
- 13** Irrigation Control Shed
- 14** Red Brick Service Shed and Toilets
- 15** Weatherboard Maintenance Shed
- 16** Old Ticket Collection Booth
- 17** Main Tennis Clubhouse
- 18** Caretakers Cottage
- 19** Amenities Block (storage, canteen, changeroom, public toilets)

7.1 Relationship with Adjoining Properties

Birchgrove Park is bounded by residential properties many of which border and overlook the park. The impact of sportsground and casual use of the park is an important and ongoing issue in relation to the parks management.

The close proximity of the park to local residences emphasises the relationship and impacts that result from park usage and enjoyment especially in the evenings. For this reason, the impacts identified need to be considered as a significant component of managing the park as a community facility successfully.

Potential impacts on the adjoining residential community can include parking and traffic congestion, excess litter and noise pollution.

Council is conscious of balancing the needs of park users with the needs of the surrounding residents, and resident concern is acknowledged and acted upon where appropriate.

Policy: Neighbouring residents are encouraged to notify Council if offensive noise or other undesirable behaviour is occurring, and Council officers will then liaise with the relevant clubs and identified park users in order to encourage more effective self-regulation, or impose restrictions where this becomes necessary. Note in assessing offensive noise Council will take into account the established guidelines which have been set by the NSW Environmental Protection Agency in relation to Noise Management.

7.2 Companion Animals

Leichhardt Council recognises that dog owners are a significant part of the community and that they should have access to open space areas across the LGA. Council also recognises that such access must not adversely impact upon other users of open space. In respect to Birchgrove Park specific criteria has been developed in consultation with the community for companion animal access to the park.

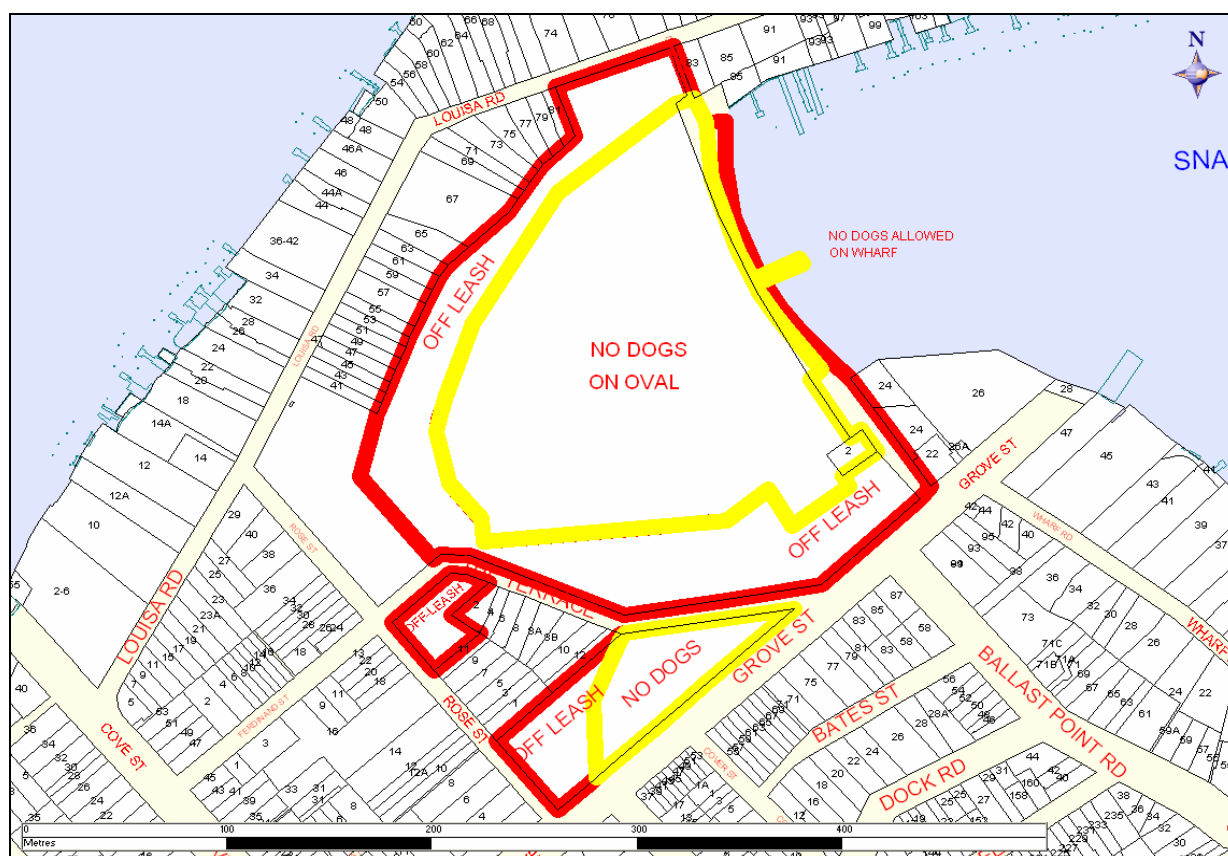


Figure 2.0 – Companion Animal Access Regulations Birchgrove Park.

7.3 Park Accessibility, Traffic and Car Parking Issues

Birchgrove Park is generally well placed in terms of public transport in the form of Sydney bus services. Council's current policy is to encourage the use of public transport throughout the Leichhardt LGA area and to discourage reliance on private cars. This is being advocated in an attempt to reduce the impact of cars on the environment and to reduce problems with traffic congestion and parking.

The provision of car parking within Birchgrove Park is viewed as an alienation of public space, and not ancillary to the recreational use of the area. Car parking by the general public is restricted at present to neighbouring streets and is prohibited within the park except on special occasions when permission must be obtained from Council. Traffic congestion associated with the park is recognised by Council as a significant problem particularly on match play days. Public consultation during the formulation of this plan has highlighted this issue with a number of submissions received asking Council to formally address car parking issues around the park.

In order to address this issue a formal traffic study is required by Council which identifies key problem areas and advocates practical solutions to assist in alleviating problems associated with car parking around the park.

In terms of equal access to the park for people with disabilities, current access is considered restrictive and in places poor. While access from The Terrace to the Sporting Oval is good, access around the perimeter of the park notably that of the western perimeter is considered poor. Considerable improvements including a redesign of the path network is required to address this issue on a long term basis. Engineering solutions are needed at a number of key locations including along the western perimeter and from the Louisa Road entrance to the Park. Section 9.0 of this plan recommends developing a formalised path system around the park which will link Deloitte Avenue to western perimeter of the oval. This concept has the main aim of improving pedestrian access around the perimeter of the park and providing equal access for all park users.

7.4 Park Interpretation and Signage

Interpretation of Birchgrove Park and its identified heritage is needed to assist in increasing visitor awareness and understanding of the value of the park as a community facility. Interpretation within the park should also aim to highlight the management objectives and challenges which Council faces in managing the park as a modern and functional recreational facility. The main aims of park interpretation should be directed towards:

- increasing visitor enjoyment
- informing the community about the purpose and nature of the park, permitted activities, park heritage and future development opportunities.
- increasing community support for council's management
- minimising visitor/neighbour impacts.

Interpretive signage developed for Birchgrove Oval should be sympathetic to the built form of the park and signage design should be clear, simple and understood by all.

8.0 Park Tree Management

In open space settings such as Birchgrove Park, the planting, selection and layout of trees is important for many reasons. They shape the structure of the design of the park, provide shelter and habitat, frame designed landscapes and become functional features of the parkland adding to the aesthetic value of the open space as a community asset.

Individual trees, groups and avenues create vistas, views, and set scenes. As such they are key to the architecture of the park. Trees notable for their size, form, age, species or colours are also valued as they add interest and highlight a park setting. Birchgrove like other aged parks within the Sydney Metropolitan area contain important specimen trees.





The layout of trees and species in parks and gardens can often indicate the period or periods of historical development. In repairing and restoring historic parks and gardens it is important that replacement or new planting are historically accurate.

Equally critical is the management and maintenance of existing plantings, not only to ensure park user safety but also to ensure that the longevity of the plantings are maintained. In planning for new plantings it is critical that Council follow prescribed management objectives and maintenance guidelines in the management of its planting assets. Poorly designed or sited tree planting or inappropriate species and tree forms can harm historic parkland. A tree survey will often be needed in order to inform repair and restoration work. This particular section of the management plan aims to set parameters for Council to manage its tree resource within the park and provide guidelines for future tree management as well as the implementation of replacement strategies where required.







Looking South East across Birchgrove Park -March 2007. Existing Plantings assist in forming the character as well add ambiance to the Park. Plantings also provide practical value as a source of shade for park users, both active and passive.




8.1 Table of Significant Trees

Representative Photograph of Item	Description of Item	Degree of Significance
 T1	Trees around northern boundary of 'pocket park' on southern side corner of Rose & Ferdinand Sts. These trees appear semi-mature in 1930 aerial photo & may have been planted in 1920s. The tree on left is an Elm and to its right <i>Ficus obliqua</i> . The rest are Brush Box.	Ranking: 3 Role: Contributory items that help define the entry to the Park as well as the perimeter of this subsidiary open space. They also screen built items and help channel the view to the Harbour.
 T2	Mature trees including Camphor Laurels, Brush Box and Pepper Trees on the corner of Rose Street and Grove St., most of which appear semi-mature in the 1930 aerial photograph. They were probably planted in the period 1910 – 1920s.	Ranking: 3 Role: Contributory items that define the south-west boundary of the Park and provide amenity to this corner of it. They also ameliorate the impact of surrounding built form beyond it.
 T3	Multi-trunked Queensland Umbrella tree (<i>Brassaia actinophylla</i>) (at right, and Holm Oak (<i>Quercus ilex</i>) at centre, two of the early plantings (c. 1910-25) in the Park, already visible as semi-mature in the 1930 aerial photograph.	Ranking: 3 Role: Contributory items of historical and aesthetic value that provide amenity and visual softening to this otherwise plain precinct of the Park.
 T4	Two mature Jacaranda trees (<i>Jacaranda mimosaeifolia</i>) on the south-west slopes of the Park, which appear to have been planted in the period 1930-1950.	Ranking: 2 Role: Items of modest historical and aesthetic value that have contributed to the amenity and visual quality of the south-west slopes of the Park for over half a century.




Source: Mayne-Wilson & Associates

Representative Photograph of Item	Description of Item	Degree of Significance
 <p>T5</p>	<p>Mature trees along the Grove St park boundary, including Brush Box and Ficus species. Most of these appear to be young to semi-mature in a 1930 aerial photograph.</p>	<p>Rating: 3</p> <p>Role: Contributory items helping to define the southern boundary of the Park and providing some amenity and sense of enclosure, as well as some screening of built items along Grove St.</p>
 <p>T6</p>	<p>Camphor Laurels (left) & Coral Tree between the tennis court and Grove St. Appear semi-mature or mature in 1930 aerial photograph of site, and may be plantings from c.1910. One senescent Camphor Laurel & the Coral tree are damaged & will soon be removed.</p>	<p>Rating: 3</p> <p>Role: Contributory items helping to define the southern boundary of the Park and providing some amenity and screening of built items along Grove St.</p>
 <p>T7</p>	<p>This line of seven Fig Trees along the western side of the southern half of Deloitte Avenue was planted in the 1920s, and the one Brush Box was interplanted slightly later, as an infill for a failed Fig.</p>	<p>Rating: 3</p> <p>Role: Contributory items helping to define the eastern boundary of the Park and providing some amenity and framing of views to the Harbour from the western slopes of the Park.</p>
 <p>T8</p>	<p>The large old Fig Tree, flanked by later Brush Box plantings, at the northern end of the eastern boundary of the Park, outside the picket fence and adjacent to Deloitte Ave. This Fig appears as semi-mature in the 1930 aerial photo, but not in images of the Park grounds before 1910. It was probably planted about then.</p>	<p>Rating: 3</p> <p>Role: The oldest and grandest contributory item to the eastern boundary of the Park, it frames views to the Harbour from the western slopes of the Park. It also provides welcome shade and amenity.</p>




Source: Mayne-Wilson & Associates

Representative Photograph of Item	Description of Item	Degree of Significance
 <p>T9</p>	<p>One of the oldest Fig trees at the northern corner of Snails Bay, it actually lies within private property, on the eastern side of Deloitte Ave.</p>	<p>Rating: Not directly applicable, since it lies outside the Park.</p> <p>Role: This tree, together with that described above, makes a major visual contribution to the setting and sense of enclosure to the Park.</p>
 <p>T10</p>	<p>A good specimen of Forest Red Gum (<i>Eucalyptus tereticornis</i>) probably planted c. 1970. Although of good form and mature, it is not endemic to the area and is not a remnant or regenerated species of the original open forest.</p>	<p>Rating: 2</p> <p>Role: This attractive, clean-trunked tree is a welcome addition to the north-west upper slopes of the Park from which earlier mature trees have been removed over the last few decades.</p>
 <p>T11</p>	<p>This Hills Fig (<i>Ficus Hillii</i>) lies just inside the grounds of the Park near the upper tennis courts.</p> <p>It does not appear to have been part of any deliberate street tree or park planting.</p>	<p>Rating: 3</p> <p>Role: From its size (canopy and trunk) and location, this tree appears old enough to have been a planting associated more with former <i>Birch Grove House</i> than the Park.</p>

Source: Mayne-Wilson & Associates

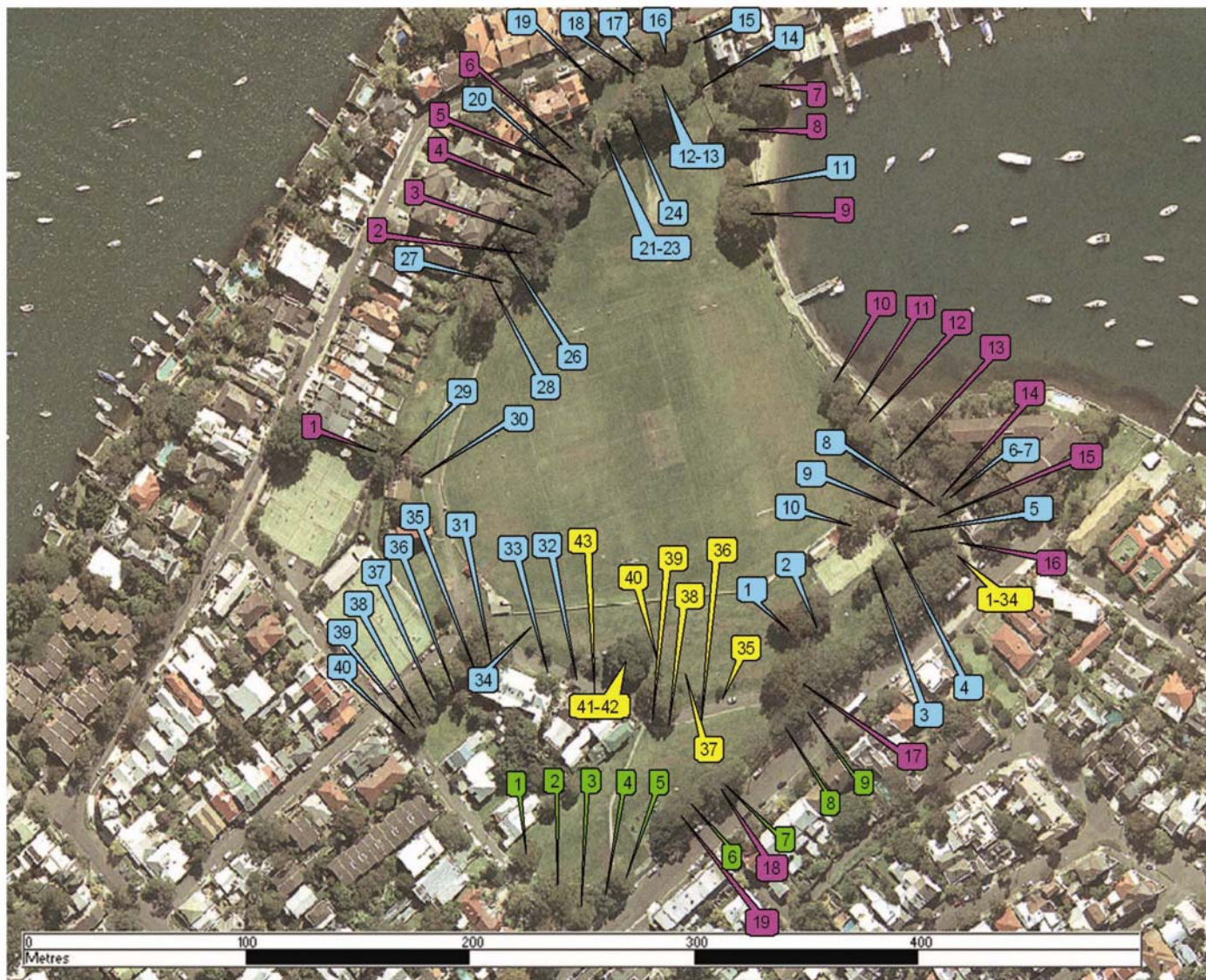
Representative Photograph of Item	Description of Item	Degree of Significance
 <p>T12</p>	<p>Five mature Brush Box trees along Louisa road, on the northern boundary of the Park.</p> <p>From aerial photos, it appears these trees were planted here in the 1920s.</p>	<p>Rating: 3</p> <p>Role: These trees define the north-east edge of the Park, helping to provide a sense of enclosure and to soften and partly screen the built forms across Louisa Road</p> <p>They also provide shade and amenity to this oddment of space.</p>
 <p>T13</p>	<p>A short row of mature Phoenix palms abutting the pathway from the Louisa Street entry to the park.</p> <p>It seems likely these are some of the trees planted at the instigation of Q. L. Deloitte and A. Fitzhardinge in the 1920s.</p>	<p>Rating: 3</p> <p>Role: These Palms were planted to flank the pathway down from Louisa Road into the north-west sector of the Park. They were favourite plantings of the period 1910-1930.</p>
 <p>T14</p>	<p>A very old Fig (<i>Ficus obliqua</i>) abutting the pathway from the Louisa Street entry to the park. From its girth, it appears to be one of the oldest Figs in the Park,</p>	<p>Rating: 4</p> <p>Role: This Fig is possibly associated with the grounds of former <i>Birch Grove House</i>, and appears to date from the 19th century.</p>

Source Mayne-Wilson & Associates

Representative Photograph of Item	Description of Item	Degree of Significance
 <p>T15</p>	<p>One of several very old Figs growing on the slopes to the north of the sports oval. These Figs appear in photos of <i>Birch Grove House</i> from the late 1800s.</p>	<p>Rating: 4</p> <p>Role: This Fig (<i>Ficus Hillii</i>) is associated with the grounds of former <i>Birch Grove House</i>, and appears to date from the 19th century. It is in poor condition, though appears to be recovering somewhat.</p>
 <p>T16</p>	<p>Another Hills Fig along the northern pathway, below the grounds of <i>Birch Grove House</i>.</p>	<p>Rating: 4</p> <p>Role: This Fig (<i>Ficus Hillii</i>) is associated with the grounds of former <i>Birch Grove House</i>, and appears to date from the 19th century.</p>
 <p>T17</p>	<p>A very old Olive in front of the 1970s toilet block.</p>	<p>Rating: 4</p> <p>Role: This tree is likely to be associated with the early orchard of the <i>Birch Grove estate</i>.</p>

Source Mayne-Wilson & Associates

8.2 Location of Significant Trees - Birchgrove Park



8.3 Birchgrove Park - Significant Trees Maintenance Schedule

8.3		Birchgrove Park Significant Trees Maintenance Schedule									
Zone	Tree	Location	Genus	Species	Age	DBH(mm)	Height (m)	Span (m)	SULE*	Observations	Recommendations
1	1	Rose st Frontage	<i>Cinnamonum</i>	<i>camphora</i>	Mature	800	20	12	Medium	Mech damage to roots	Wood chip drip line
	2	Rose st Frontage	<i>Cinnamonum</i>	<i>camphora</i>	Mature	1200	22	26	Med-long	Mech damage to roots	Wood chip drip line. Crown thin 10%
	3	Cnr Rose & Grove st	<i>Lophostemon</i>	<i>confertus</i>	Mature	1100	15	12	Long	Girdling.Pow line pruned	Wood chip drip line. Crown thin 10%
	4	Grove st frontage	<i>Schinus</i>	<i>ariera</i>	Mat, over mat	1000	12	12	Short	Decay in trunk	Crown reduce 20-30% to reduce Weight on major limbs.
	5	Adjacent the above	<i>Lophostemon</i>	<i>confertus</i>	Mature	1000	15	12	Long	Healthy	Wood chip drip line. Annual deadwooding
6 7		Adjacent the above	<i>Cinnamonum</i>	<i>camphora</i>	Mature	1000	15	18	Med-Long	Mech damage to roots	Wood chip drip line. Crown lift for playground
		Adjacent the above	<i>Lophostemon</i>	<i>confertus</i>	Semi-mat	700	11	6	Medium	Large trees supressing crown growth. Major deadwood.	Deadwooding and wood chip drip line.
	8	Adjacent the above	<i>Cinnamonum</i>	<i>camphora</i>	Over-mat	1200	12	20	Failed	Limb and leader failure. Dieback	Remove as soon as possible. Replant with fig as per Council resolution
		Adjacent the above	<i>Lophostemon</i>	<i>confertus</i>	Mature	800	12	10	Long	Sparse crown and reduced leaves	Wood chip drip line. Remove deadwood.
	2	From end of Grove st to the terrace	<i>Cinnamonum</i>	<i>camphora</i>	Semi-mat	800	15	12	Med-long	Good vigor	Deadwood, crown lift and wood chip drip line of the remaining.
9	2	From end of Grove st to the terrace	<i>Cinnamonum</i>	<i>camphora</i>	Semi-mat	800	15	12	Med-long	Good vigor	Deadwood, crown lift and wood chip drip line of the remaining.
	3	From end of Grove st to the terrace	<i>Cinnamonum</i>	<i>camphora</i>	Semi-mat	800	15	12	Med-long	Good vigor	Deadwood, crown lift and wood chip drip line of the remaining.
	4	From end of Grove st to the terrace	<i>Cinnamonum</i>	<i>camphora</i>	Semi-mat	800	15	12	Med-long	Good vigor	Deadwood, crown lift and wood chip drip line of the remaining.
	5	From end of Grove st to the terrace	<i>Cinnamonum</i>	<i>camphora</i>	Semi-mat	800	15	12	Med-long	Good vigor	Deadwood, crown lift and wood chip drip line of the remaining.

8.3	Birchgrove Park Significant Trees Maintenance Schedule										
Zone	Tree	Location	Genus	Species	Age	DBH(mm)	Height (m)	Span (m)	SULE*	Observations	Recommendations
	6	From end of Grove st to the terrace	<i>Cinnamonum</i>	<i>camphora</i>	Semi-mat	800	15	12	Med-long	Good vigor	Deadwood, crown lift and wood chip drip line of the remaining.
	7	From end of Grove st to the terrace	<i>Cinnamonum</i>	<i>camphora</i>	Semi-mat	800	15	12	Med-long	Good vigor	Deadwood, crown lift and wood chip drip line of the remaining.
	8	From end of Grove st to the terrace	<i>Cinnamonum</i>	<i>camphora</i>	Semi-mat	800	15	12	Med-long	Good vigor	Deadwood, crown lift and wood chip drip line of the remaining.
	9	From end of Grove st to the terrace	<i>Cinnamonum</i>	<i>camphora</i>	Semi-mat	800	15	12	Med-long	Good vigor	Deadwood, crown lift and wood chip drip line of the remaining.
	10	From end of Grove st to the terrace	<i>Cinnamonum</i>	<i>camphora</i>	Semi-mat	800	15	12	Med-long	Good vigor	Deadwood, crown lift and wood chip drip line of the remaining.
	11	From end of Grove st to the terrace	<i>Cinnamonum</i>	<i>camphora</i>	Semi-mat	800	15	12	Med-long	Good vigor	Deadwood, crown lift and wood chip drip line of the remaining.
	12	From end of Grove st to the terrace	<i>Cinnamonum</i>	<i>camphora</i>	Semi-mat	800	15	12	Failed	Tree has suffered due to suppression from more successful trees	Remove.
	13	From end of Grove st to the terrace	<i>Cinnamonum</i>	<i>camphora</i>	Semi-mat	800	15	12	Med-long	Good vigor	Deadwood, crown lift and wood chip drip line of the remaining.
	14	From end of Grove st to the terrace	<i>Cinnamonum</i>	<i>camphora</i>	Semi-mat	800	15	12	Failed	Tree has suffered due to suppression from more successful trees	Remove.
	15	From end of Grove st to the terrace	<i>Cinnamonum</i>	<i>camphora</i>	Semi-mat	800	15	12	Med-long	Good vigor	Deadwood, crown lift and wood chip drip line of the remaining.
	16	From end of Grove st to the terrace	<i>Cinnamonum</i>	<i>camphora</i>	Semi-mat	800	15	12	Med-long	Good vigor	Deadwood, crown lift and wood chip drip line of the remaining.
	17	From end of Grove st to the terrace	<i>Cinnamonum</i>	<i>camphora</i>	Semi-mat	800	15	12	Med-long	Good vigor	Deadwood, crown lift and wood chip drip line of the remaining.
	18	From end of Grove st to the terrace	<i>Cinnamonum</i>	<i>camphora</i>	Semi-mat	800	15	12	Med-long	Good vigor	Deadwood, crown lift and wood chip drip line of the remaining.

8.3	Birchgrove Park Significant Trees Maintenance Schedule										
Zone	Tree	Location	Genus	Species	Age	DBH(mm)	Height (m)	Span (m)	SULE*	Observations	Recommendations
	19	From end of Grove st to the terrace	<i>Cinnamonum</i>	<i>camphora</i>	Semi-mat	800	15	12	Med-long	Good vigor	Deadwood, crown lift and wood chip drip line of the remaining.
	20	From end of Grove st to the terrace	<i>Cinnamonum</i>	<i>camphora</i>	Semi-mat	800	15	12	Failed	Tree has suffered due to suppression from more successful trees	Remove.
	21	From end of Grove st to the terrace	<i>Cinnamonum</i>	<i>camphora</i>	Semi-mat	800	15	12	Med-long	Good vigor.	Deadwood, crown lift and wood chip drip line of the remaining.
	22	From end of Grove st to the terrace	<i>Cinnamonum</i>	<i>camphora</i>	Semi-mat	800	15	12	Med-long	Good vigor.	Deadwood, crown lift and wood chip drip line of the remaining.
	23	From end of Grove st to the terrace	<i>Cinnamonum</i>	<i>camphora</i>	Semi-mat	800	15	12	Failed	Tree has suffered due to suppression from more successful trees	Remove.
	24	From end of Grove st to the terrace	<i>Cinnamonum</i>	<i>camphora</i>	Semi-mat	800	15	12	Failed	Tree has suffered due to suppression from more successful trees	Remove.
	25	From end of Grove st to the terrace	<i>Cinnamonum</i>	<i>camphora</i>	Semi-mat	800	15	12	Med-long	Good vigor.	Deadwood, crown lift and wood chip drip line of the remaining.
	26	From end of Grove st to the terrace	<i>Cinnamonum</i>	<i>camphora</i>	Semi-mat	800	15	12	Med-long	Good vigor.	Deadwood, crown lift and wood chip drip line of the remaining.
	27	From end of Grove st to the terrace	<i>Cinnamonum</i>	<i>camphora</i>	Semi-mat	800	15	12	Med-long	Good vigor.	Deadwood, crown lift and wood chip drip line of the remaining.
	28	From end of Grove st to the terrace	<i>Cinnamonum</i>	<i>camphora</i>	Semi-mat	800	15	12	Med-long	Good vigor.	Deadwood, crown lift and wood chip drip line of the remaining.
	29	From end of Grove st to the terrace	<i>Cinnamonum</i>	<i>camphora</i>	Semi-mat	800	15	12	Med-long	Good vigor.	Deadwood, crown lift and wood chip drip line of the remaining.
	30	From end of Grove st to the terrace	<i>Cinnamonum</i>	<i>camphora</i>	Semi-mat	800	15	12	Med-long	Good vigor.	Deadwood, crown lift and wood chip drip line of the remaining.
	31	From end of Grove st to the terrace	<i>Cinnamonum</i>	<i>camphora</i>	Semi-mat	800	15	12	Med-long	Good vigor.	Deadwood, crown lift and wood chip drip line of the remaining.

8.3	Birchgrove Park Significant Trees Maintenance Schedule										
Zone	Tree	Location	Genus	Species	Age	DBH(mm)	Height (m)	Span (m)	SULE*	Observations	Recommendations
	32	From end of Grove st to the terrace	<i>Cinnamonum</i>	<i>camphora</i>	Semi-mat	800	15	12	Med-long	Good vigor.	Deadwood, crown lift and wood chip drip line of the remaining.
	33	From end of Grove st to the terrace	<i>Cinnamonum</i>	<i>camphora</i>	Semi-mat	800	15	12	Med-long	Good vigor.	Deadwood, crown lift and wood chip drip line of the remaining.
	34	From end of Grove st to the terrace	<i>Cinnamonum</i>	<i>camphora</i>	Semi-mat	800	15	12	Med-long	Good vigor.	Deadwood, crown lift and wood chip drip line of the remaining.
		Trees along the Terrace from Camphor grove onwards	<i>Brachychiton</i>	<i>acerifolius</i>	Young	350	6.84	3	Medium	Mech damage to roots.Minor bark inclusions	Monitoring of inclusions. Wood chip drip line.
35	36	Adjacent the above	<i>Jacaranda</i>	<i>mimosifolia</i>	Young	100	6.34	5	Long	Mech damage to limb	Wood chip drip line and annual deadwooding.
	37	Adjacent the above	<i>Fraxinus</i>	<i>oxycarpa</i>	Young	200	5.14	3	Long	Trunk suckers	Deadwooding and wood chip drip line. Remove suckers.
		Opposite no.12 The Terrace	<i>Cinnamonum</i>	<i>camphora</i>	Semi-mat	1000	12	13	Long	Healthy. Internalised branches	Remove internal and misdircted branches
38		Adjacent the above	<i>Corymbia</i>	<i>maculata</i>	Semi-mat	800	11	6	Long	Swollen trunk base due to reaction wood	Wood chip drip line. Annual deadwooding.
39	40	Adjacent the above	<i>Jacaranda</i>	<i>mimosifolia</i>	Young	75	6.14	2	Long	Good specimen	Wood chip drip line. Annual deadwooding and removal of competing leaders.
41		Adjacent the above	<i>Jacaranda</i>	<i>mimosifolia</i>	Mature	900	10	15	Med-long	2 ridges of reactionary wood possible due to internal fractures on main stem.	Wood chip drip line and annual deadwooding.Monitor or resistograph testing to be done.
	42	Adjacent the above	<i>Jacaranda</i>	<i>mimosifolia</i>	Mature	880	9	12	Med-long	Minor deadwood	Wood chip drip line. Annual deadwooding.
	43	Adjacent to ancillary shed	<i>Eucalyptus</i>	<i>botryoides</i>	Semi-mat	600	12	4	Failed	Major pest attack	Remove
3	1	Adjacent tennis courts	<i>Schleffera</i>	<i>actinophylla</i>	Mat-over mat	3 stems western stems 750. Eastern stem 1000	13	15	Medium	Massive gnarled roots and trunk torsion due to pressure are evident in this large specimen.	Monitor due to age. Wood chip drip line.

8.3		Birchgrove Park Significant Trees Maintenance Schedule									
Zone	Tree	Location	Genus	Species	Age	DBH(mm)	Height (m)	Span (m)	SULE*	Observations	Recommendations
	2	Adjacent to the above	<i>Olea</i>	<i>africana</i>	Mature	Splits into 9 stems at 1m height. 700mm each	12	15	Long	Minor deadwood	Wood chip drip line. Annual deadwooding. Crown lift.
	3	Adjacent to the above	<i>Cinnamomum</i>	<i>camphora</i>	Semi-mat	1000	12	10	Failed	Major decay in the trunk. Bees nest present	Remove.
	4	Adjacent to the above	<i>Erythrina</i>	<i>x sykesii</i>	Mature	1200	15	12	Failed	Major decay from mech damage	Remove.
	5	Adjacent brick cottage	<i>Ligustrum</i>	<i>species</i>	Over-mat	800	10	5	Failed	These trees have past their life expectancy and have become a hazard.	Remove.
	6	Adjacent brick cottage	<i>Ligustrum</i>	<i>species</i>	Over-mat	800	10	5	Failed	These trees have past their life expectancy and have become a hazard.	Remove.
	7	Adjacent brick cottage	<i>Ligustrum</i>	<i>species</i>	Over-mat	800	10	5	Failed	These trees have past their life expectancy and have become a hazard.	Remove.
	8	Northern side of sps121	<i>Largerstroemia</i>	<i>indica</i>	Semi-mat	500	8	5	Long	Suckering where major limbs have been removed.	Wood chip drip line. Annual crown thinning to promote airflow and reduce powdery mildew.
	9	Northern side of sps122	<i>Largerstroemia</i>	<i>indica</i>	Semi-mat	500	8	5	Long	Suckering where major limbs have been removed.	Wood chip drip line. Annual crown thinning to promote airflow and reduce powdery mildew.
	10	In Grandstand	<i>Cinnamomum</i>	<i>camphora</i>	Mature	1000	12	18	Medium	Roots are lifting concrete in the Grandstand. Branches are close to roof line.	Crown lifting over the roof and deadwooding

8.3		Birchgrove Park Significant Trees Maintenance Schedule									
Zone	Tree	Location	Genus	Species	Age	DBH(mm)	Height (m)	Span (m)	SULE*	Observations	Recommendations
		Along Deloitte Ave	<i>Lophostemon</i>	<i>confertus</i>	Semi-mat	Splits into 2 stems at 1m each stem 800mm	12	12	Long	Healthy	Woodchip drip line and annual deadwooding.
11	12	Opposite cricket nets	<i>Lophostemon</i>	<i>confertus</i>	Semi-mat	900	9	12	Medium	Has a unbalanced shape due to the suppression from the fig.	Wood chip drip line. Prune over hanging limbs of the fig away from the crown.
	13	Adjacent to the above	<i>Lophostemon</i>	<i>confertus</i>	Mature	800	10	12	Medium	Mech damage to roots	Wood chip drip line and annual deadwooding.
	14	Along path to water	<i>Ligustrum</i>	<i>species</i>	Mature	700	6	6	Failed	Self sown into base of rock shelf	Remove
15		Lousia Rd Frontage	<i>Lophostemon</i>	<i>confertus</i>	Semi-mat	700	10	8	Med-long	Mech damage to roots. Orange bracket fungi on trees but is ok for this species. It has been badly pruned in the past.	Wood chip drip line. Remove crossed and rubbing branches.
	16	Louisa Rd Frontage	<i>Lophostemon</i>	<i>confertus</i>	Semi-mat	700	10	8	Med-long	Mech damage to roots. Orange bracket fungi on trees but is ok for this species. It has been badly pruned in the past.	Wood chip drip line. Remove crossed and rubbing branches.
	17	Louisa Rd Frontage	<i>Lophostemon</i>	<i>confertus</i>	Semi-mat	700	10	8	Med-long	Mech damage to roots. This tree has been poorly pruned.	Wood chip drip line. Remove crossed and rubbing branches.
	18	Adjacent to the above	<i>Syncarpia</i>	<i>glomulifera</i>	Semi-mat	700	10	5	Medium	Poorly pruned in the past, stubs left on. suckering.	Remove all stubs. Wood chip to drip line. Annual deadwooding.
	19	Adjacent to house at the end of grassed area Louisa Rd	<i>Syncarpia</i>	<i>glomulifera</i>	Mature	1300	15	11	Long	Basal stem has been removed and the stub left. One side of the union between the two	Monitor the main stem union. Wood chip drip line. Deadwood.

8.3	Birchgrove Park Significant Trees Maintenance Schedule										
Zone	Tree	Location	Genus	Species	Age	DBH(mm)	Height (m)	Span (m)	SULE*	Observations	Recommendations
										main stems is included, the other excluded and sound. Good specimen tree.	
	20	Along lower path in the park parallel to Louisa Rd	<i>Lophostemon</i>	<i>confertus</i>	Mature	1000	15	12	Long	Girdling. Crown suppression due to Fig. Healthy	Prune Ficus limbs that overhangt. Woodchip drip line.
	21	Opposite side of path to the above	<i>Phoenix</i>	<i>canariensis</i>	Mature	800	15	10	Long	Some fronds chlorotic in appearance.	Annual removal dead fronds and fruit. Wood chip around the base.
	22	Opposite side of path to the above	<i>Phoenix</i>	<i>canariensis</i>	Mature	800	15	10	Long	Some fronds chlorotic in appearance.	Annual removal dead fronds and fruit. Wood chip around the base.
	23	Opposite side of path to the above	<i>Phoenix</i>	<i>canariensis</i>	Mature	800	15	10	Long	Some fronds chlorotic in appearance.	Annual dead fronds and fruit. Wood chip around the base.
	24	Adjacent to the above	<i>Eucalyptus</i>	<i>microcorys</i>	Semi-mat	600	15	8	Long	Poorly pruned in the past, stubs left on.	Prune of stubs and wood chip drip line.
	25	Further along the path towards the cottage	<i>Lophostemon</i>	<i>confertus</i>	Mature	1200	15	13	Long	Adjacent trees are supressing the crown. Healhy.	Prune over hang of the Ficus away from the crown. Wood chip drip line.
	26	Atop embankment opposite the above	<i>Phoenix</i>	<i>canariensis</i>	Mature	800	12	8	Long	Some fronds are chlorotic but healthy.	Annual removal of dead fronds and fruit. Wood chip around the base.fertilise with high nitrogen.
	27	Adjacent to the above	<i>Lophostemon</i>	<i>confertus</i>	Mature	800	15	9	Medium	Crown healthy with the exception of one decayed stem.	Remove the decayed stem. Wood chip drip line.
	28	Adjacent to the above	<i>Eucalyptus</i>	<i>globulus</i>	Mature	1500	23	15	Long	Mech damage and hollow at the base. Also a hollow at the previous branch removal site.	Resistograph test of the trunk to determin the internal decay if any. Aerial inspection of canopy hollow. Wood chip drip line. Crown thin 10%.
	29	Adjacent to toilet block	<i>Cinnamonum</i>	<i>camphora</i>	Mature	1200	12	14	Long	Tree has been pruned for power lines.	Wood chip drip line. Crown thin 10% to relieve congestion.

8.3		Birchgrove Park Significant Trees Maintenance Schedule									
Zone	Tree	Location	Genus	Species	Age	DBH(mm)	Height (m)	Span (m)	SULE*	Observations	Recommendations
	30	In front of toilet block	<i>Olea</i>	<i>europaea</i>	Over-mat	1000	6	8	Medium	Very old and healthy.	Crown reduce 10-20% to reduce wind effect. Wood chip drip line.
	31	Opposite the entry gates off Ferdinand St	<i>Corymbia</i>	<i>citriodora</i>	Semi-mat	1000	16	14	Long	Minor deadwood	Wood chip drip line. Annual deadwooding.
	32	Avenue of trees in small grassed area on the corner of The Terrace and Ferdinand St	<i>Cinnamomum</i>	<i>camphora</i>	Mature	1000	18	30	Long	Excellent Health.	Wood chip drip line.Crown thin 10% for airflow. Annual deadwooding
	33	Avenue of trees in small grassed area on the corner of The Terrace and Ferdinand St	<i>Cinnamomum</i>	<i>camphora</i>	Mature	1000	18	30	Long	Excellent Health.	Wood chip drip line.Crown thin 10% for airflow. Annual deadwooding
	34	Avenue of trees in small grassed area on the corner of The Terrace and Ferdinand St	<i>Cinnamomum</i>	<i>camphora</i>	Mature	1000	18	30	Long	Excellent Health.	Wood chip drip line.Crown thin 10% for airflow. Annual deadwooding
	35	Adjacent to the above	<i>Araucaria</i>	<i>bidwillii</i>	Mature	800	22	10	Long	Minor deadwood. No fruit was noted at the time of inspection. Healthy.	Annual removal of fruit and deadwood. Wood chip drip line.
		Along Ferdinand St	<i>Lophostemon</i>	<i>confertus</i>	Mature	1000	20	25	Long	Healthy. Minor Deadwood.	Wood chip drip line. Annual removal of dead wood and crown lift for mower access.
36	37	Along Ferdinand St	<i>Lophostemon</i>	<i>confertus</i>	Mature	1000	20	25	Long	Healthy. Minor Deadwood.	Wood chip drip line. Annual removal of dead wood and crown lift for mower access.
	38	Along Ferdinand St	<i>Lophostemon</i>	<i>confertus</i>	Mature	1000	20	25	Long	Healthy. Minor Deadwood.	Wood chip drip line. Annual removal of dead wood and crown lift for mower access.
	39	Along Ferdinand St	<i>Lophostemon</i>	<i>confertus</i>	Mature	1000	20	25	Long	Healthy. Minor Deadwood.	Wood chip drip line. Annual removal of dead wood and crown lift for mower access.
	40	Along Ferdinand St	<i>Lophostemon</i>	<i>confertus</i>	Mature	1000	20	25	Long	Healthy. Minor Deadwood.	Wood chip drip line. Annual removal of dead wood and crown lift for mower access.
Figs	1	First tree past the cottage	<i>Ficus</i>	<i>microcarpa var hillii</i>	Semi-mat	1200 Splits into 3 stems	20	20	Medium	Mech root damage.Stem on northern side displays a major scar with	Mulch drip line.Remove stem with dieback.With this action it may led to further problems so annual deadwooding is required.

8.3	Birchgrove Park Significant Trees Maintenance Schedule										
Zone	Tree	Location	Genus	Species	Age	DBH(mm)	Height (m)	Span (m)	SULE*	Observations	Recommendations
										dieback.	
		On embankment	<i>Ficus</i>	<i>rubiginosa</i>	Semi-mat	600	20	20	Failed	The crown has failed and shows no sign of recovery.	Removed (due to Phellinus attack in 2006)
2	3	On embankment	<i>Ficus</i>	<i>rubiginosa</i>	Semi-mat	2000	20	20	Medium	Growing out of a crack in the sandstone. Healthy.	Inspection of the sandstone shelf for any signs of cracking. Deadwooding and crown thinning.
	4	On embankment	<i>Ficus</i>	<i>rubiginosa</i>	Semi-mat	1200	20	20	Failed	Trunk tissue displaying soft rot, fungal fruiting bodies at base. Crown dieback.	Manage in accordance with adopted arborist report recommendations
		On embankment	<i>Ficus</i>	<i>rubiginosa</i>	Semi-mat	2000	20	20	Failed	Crown dieback. Again <i>Armillaria</i> suspicion.	Manage in accordance with adopted arborist report recommendations
5		On embankment	<i>Ficus</i>	<i>microcarpa</i> var <i>microcarpa</i>	Semi-mat	1000	12	15	Medium	Leaning over Property but shows good health.	Annual crown thinning and deadwooding.
6	7	Far north-east cnr of park	<i>Ficus</i>	<i>rubiginosa</i>	Semi-mat	3000	25	30	Long	Good health and vigor.	Mulch to drip line. Annual crown thinning and deadwooding.
	8	Adjacent seawall and private wharfs	<i>Ficus</i>	<i>rubiginosa</i>	Semi-mat	600	15	15		Good health and vigor.	Mulch to drip line. Annual crown thinning and deadwooding.
	9	North of public Wharf	<i>Ficus</i>	<i>rubiginosa</i>	Mature	2000	24	27	Long	Minor deadwood. Healthy	Mulch dripline and annual crownthinning and deadwooding.
	10	Adjacent No Dogs sign	<i>Ficus</i>	<i>rubiginosa</i>	Semi-mat	1000	10	12	Medium	Leaves are smaller than other examples due to the exposure to the sea front.	Mulch dripline and annual crownthinning and deadwooding.
	11	Adjacent the above	<i>Ficus</i>	<i>rubiginosa</i>	Semi-mat	1200	10	12	Medium	Leaves are smaller than other examples due to the exposure to the sea front.	Mulch dripline and annual crownthinning and deadwooding.

8.3	Birchgrove Park Significant Trees Maintenance Schedule										
Zone	Tree	Location	Genus	Species	Age	DBH(mm)	Height (m)	Span (m)	SULE*	Observations	Recommendations
12		Adjacent the above	<i>Ficus</i>	<i>rubiginosa</i>	Semi-mat	1000	10	14	Medium	Leaves are smaller than other examples due to the exposure to the sea front.	Mulch dripline and annual crownthinning and deadwooding.
	13	Adjacent No. 2 Deloitte Ave	<i>Ficus</i>	<i>rubiginosa</i>	Semi-mat	700	8	3	Failed	Hollow cavity in the main stem and canopy failure.	Remove.
	14	South of the above	<i>Ficus</i>	<i>rubiginosa</i>	Semi-mat	1000	18	12	Long	Pruned for powerlines and is now developing a misshapen crown but healthy.	Mulch dripline and annual crownthin and deadwooding. Bi-annual pruning to correct shape.
	15	South of the above	<i>Ficus</i>	<i>rubiginosa</i>	Semi-mat	1200	12	14	Medium	Pruned for powerlines and is now developing a misshapen crown but healthy.	Mulch dripline and annual crownthin and deadwooding. Bi-annual pruning to correct shape.
		Adjacent sub-station	<i>Ficus</i>	<i>rubiginosa</i>	Semi-mat	250	10	3	Failed	This tree has been heavily suppressed by the camphor.	Remove.
16	17	At cnr of Grove St and Terrace st	<i>Ficus</i>	<i>rubiginosa</i>	Semi-mat	600 multi stemmed	20	20		Healhy.	Mulch dripline. Annual crownthin and deadwooding.
	18	Opp 57 Grove St	<i>Ficus</i>	<i>rubiginosa</i>	Semi-mat	1200	22	20	Medium	20% of canopy lost due to Fig psyllid.	Monitoring. Annual deadwoodig Crownthin/lift.
	19	Opp59 Grove St	<i>Ficus</i>	<i>microcarpa</i> var <i>microcarpa</i>	Semi-mat	1200	15	25	Long	Poor pruning due to line clearing.	Annual crown thin/ lift and deadwooding as the tree overhangs the playground.

8.4 Management and Maintenance of Significant Trees

All the trees listed as significant in Section 8.1 should be inspected annually by a qualified and experienced arborist. Every effort should be made to maintain and prolong the life of the heritage-rated trees, which should not be removed just because their SULE (safe and useful life expectancy) rating may be relatively low. Their contextual, social, aesthetic and historical values must also be considered.

8.5 Remedial Action

Pruning and removal of dead branches should be done in the cooler months and fungal infestations dealt with appropriately as soon as signs of attack appear. The Hills Figs are susceptible to attack from the *Phellinus* species (a white rot fungus), and *Armillaria mellea*, which resides in the soil and causes root rot. *Phytophthora cinnamomi* can also be present. It is understood that a few of the Hills Figs have been attacked by one of these fungal agents, and as no cure or control has yet been devised, they may have to be removed soon if they are considered to be in danger of toppling over.

A full range of management actions concerning significant tree maintenance has been set out in the accompanying Birchgrove Oval Tree Maintenance Schedule (refer to Section 8.3). This includes the implementation of a regular inspection regime, mulching, removal of deadwood and in the case of some of the older and over mature and unsuitable species, removal and replacement.

8.6 Tree Replacement

Generally, if significant trees become senescent or in the opinion of a qualified arborist are dangerous and have the potential to fail, they should be removed and replaced by the same species, if the distinctive, historic character of the Park is to be retained.

However, when the 19th century Fig Tree plantings along the northern boundary fail and have to be removed, difficult decisions will arise. If fungal agents are proven to be present, then the choice is either to excavate and remove all the infected soil (very difficult in this rock-benched location) or to replace them with a different species with immunity to the particular fungus. However, not enough research has yet been done to be certain which such species are. A complicating factor is that the soil at this location is in continual shade, caused partly by the overhanging rock benches, retaining walls and tall buildings along Louisa Road, and partly by the density of the present tree canopies. Being on a south-facing slope exacerbates this problem.

Even if fungal infection is not present, or can be dealt with by soil replacement or remediation, consideration should be given to replacing these trees with smaller growing Figs, such as Sandpaper Fig (*Ficus fraseri*) or Rock Fig (*F. platypoda*). This will assist in avoiding canopy height problems which currently exist with the over-mature Figs which interfere with views to the Harbour and City from houses along the south side of Louisa Road.

Given the amenity value of such views, the removal of the tall existing trees would be welcomed by some house owners, but their replacement with the same species with the future prospect of a return to view impairment would not. Covert means of ensuring that they did not reach that stage cannot be excluded. Hence it is pertinent that these issues are carefully considered in any tree replacement programme for the Park.

In addition to the technical and aesthetic considerations, the issue of historical values also needs to be taken into account in terms of the early plantings within the park.

The presence of the over-mature Figs both demonstrate and facilitate people's future ability to interpret the former presence of Birch Grove House and its grounds.

With the demolition of that house in 1967 and its replacement by a block of flats, the only remaining fabric are the Figs, the original seawall along the northern edge of the mudflats, and possibly some steps and the sandstone block retaining walls on the upper slopes.

Although it can be argued that the replacement of the Figs by identical species is essential to retain the ability to interpret the former presence of Birch Grove House, it is less certain that such action would be relevant to retaining and interpreting the heritage significance of Birchgrove Park.

Policy: Fig Tree plantings along the northern boundary of the park will be gradually replaced with smaller growing Figs, such as Sandpaper Fig (*Ficus fraseri*) or Rock Fig (*F. platypoda*). Tree replacements will be carried out in accordance with Council's tree replacement policy. All significant trees will require a Development Application for removal. All smaller trees and those not listed as significant trees will have notifications affixed to them outlining the reasons and timing of the removal and will also note the replacement species recommended. These proposed removals will be forwarded to the local Precinct Committee for their comment prior to any works being undertaken

Camphor Laurel (*Cinnamomum camphora*)

An exotic specimen, Camphor Laurel trees are present in various areas throughout Birchgrove Park. The environmental urban, and agricultural problems associated with these particular specimens is well documented. Camphor Laurels are officially registered as a Class 4 noxious weed in a number of surrounding local government areas including Willoughby, Ryde, Kuring-gai and Hornsby, where large areas of bushland reserve survive. Due to its pest status as a specimen tree Camphor Laurel is not commercially grown anymore. As such Council recognises that this specimen should be gradually replaced with more appropriate tree and shrub species.

As part of the ongoing management of Birchgrove Park it is recommended that Camphor Laurels are gradually replaced with native Lilly Pilly (*Syzygium sp*). There are over 60 different varieties of Lily Pillies throughout Australia some endemic to the Sydney region. They range from small bushes to medium to large trees (up to 10 metres) and are well respected for their spectacular ornamental qualities. These native trees are valued for their use in the landscape for screening, windbreaks, bird attractants (with their showy purple to red edible berries) or as ornamental planting varieties.

8.7 Southern Boundary Plantings

Camphor Laurels were the favoured plantings of the early 20th century Birchgrove Park. It is advocated and recommended that existing Camphor Laurels which have failed and those that fail in the future, as they reach the end of their lives, are replaced (as above).

Policy: Camphor Laurels along the northern boundary of the park will be maintained and as they become diseased and/or die will be replaced with larger growing species of Lilly Pillies planted in the same locations.

8.7 Southern Boundary Plantings

Camphor Laurels were the favoured plantings of the early 20th century Birchgrove Park. It is advocated and recommended that existing Camphor Laurels which have failed are replaced (as above)

Policy: Camphor Laurels along the northern boundary of the park will be maintained and replacement specimens of Lilly Pillies planted when individual trees fail.

8.8 Eastern Boundary Plantings

On the eastern boundary, the present Fig Trees have some heritage significance. This area is inter-planted with Brush Box trees. It is recommended that no additional trees should be added along this boundary, as it is important to retain the present visual access to the Harbour beyond. As the present trees are not approaching senescence there are no significant issues associated with replacement specimens.

Policy: Replacement Plantings should the need arise will take into account visual access views to the harbour and replacement planting will conform to current specimen selection for this area.

8.9 Western Boundary Plantings

The western boundary of Birchgrove Park, has significant scope for new or replacement plantings, as practically all of the original trees which graced this area have been removed. The species of trees should be drawn from within the present palette of trees in the Park, but not those likely to exceed 8 metres in height. This would exclude the larger Figs, and also most Eucalypts. Suitable trees would include Holm Oak, Brown Pine, and the Sandpaper and Rock Figs mentioned previously, as a fairly dense, dark-green canopy is needed to carry through the same effect of the enclosing and screening trees as along the northern boundary.

8.9.1 Appropriate Species for Future Plantings

Jacarandas and Holm Oaks have been planted in the southern sector of the Park, and would be suitable for use in certain locations. The Jacarandas could be used in other parts of the southern sector, although not along the boundaries of it. Holm Oaks would be appropriate to use on the northern and western boundaries and in other locations where a rich, dark green colour and texture would provide a strong visual framework and setting for the Park.

Although Pepper Trees and Umbrella trees have also been used historically, their forms and leaf types are too different from the prevailing trees to be suitable for use in future. It is also not recommended that Elms be used, as they are prone to fungal attack and their bare branches in winter weaken the visual strength of the bold evergreen plantings around the boundaries.

8.9.2 Planting of Native Trees and Shrubs

Although it is general Council policy to use native species in public open spaces, they have not been part of the Park's plantings from the outset. Nor did more than a handful of native trees survive the clearing and farming operations by the owners of Birch Grove House during the 19th century, and any that did remain were removed when the Park was created.

Shrubs and small, light green native trees are however considered suitable for use in certain areas of the Park, particularly where biodiversity values can be enhanced. Opportunities to undertake native planting improvements with small native shrubs should be encouraged with the support and assistance of the community. Planting should be undertaken however in manner which enhances the biodiversity of the park but also takes account of and does not impede with the historic parkland character of Birchgrove Park.

8.9.3 Additional Tree Management Guidelines for Birchgrove Park

Stump Removal

Where tree removal is required all stumps and structural roots onsite ground should be removed to a minimum depth of 300mm. A schematic of underground services should be supplied to contractors undertaking such works prior to the commencement of stump grinding works.

Where the presence of *Phellinus* sp. is prevalent the excavation from stump grinding should remain exposed for 6 months in an effort to ameliorate the presence of *Phellinus* sp. (when such works are undertaken exclusion zones should be established and signage around excavations to prevent injury to park patrons). It is important that stump grindings are removed from site and disposed of thoughtfully to prevent the possibility of cross-contamination.

Selection of Arborists

All major tree works (i.e. formative pruning works) undertaken in Birchgrove Park should be carried out by a qualified arborist to AS4373. The selected arborist should be a member of, or be eligible for membership with, The Tree Contractors Association or The National Arborist Association of Australia.

Tree Inspections

In addition to weekly ground staff inspections trees on the park should be subject to assessment by a qualified arborist at 12 monthly intervals.

Fertilising of Existing and New Plantings.

In line with recommended arborist advice concerning tree management at Birchgrove Park a blend of native weed and seed free leaf mulch should be applied at a depth of 75mm within the PRZ of existing and newly planted trees.

A slow release nitrogen rich fertiliser such as Osmocote should be applied within the root zone of the newly planted trees no sooner than 12 months after planting and ideally within the months of spring and autumn. However the application of fertiliser

should not be applied within the root zone of established (mature) trees except in the case of soil nutrient deficiencies or at the advice of the site arborist.

Prior to new plantings or fertiliser application being undertaken it is recommended that the soil on-site be tested for nutrient deficiencies and pH.

Herbicide Application

In relation to herbicide application it is Council policy to use the least persistent in the environment herbicides and only apply when required. Herbicides onsite are to be used sparingly, in still and dry conditions (no wind/rain),

Watering

The most important factor in the ongoing health of tree assets is adequate water. In this regard it is recommended that subject trees be watered during extended dry periods and when they exhibit symptoms associated with water stress. However it needs to be noted that during periods of watering restrictions, Council is only permitted to carry out watering used hand held hoses. Thus watering will be carried out when mulching and fertilising is required and at times when trees are suffering from water stress.

Leichhardt Council's Urban Forest Policy

Leichhardt Council's Urban Forest Policy has been created to assist in reducing the impacts of climate change and creating a sustainable environment through the protection, restoration and enhancement of our natural environment and native biodiversity including the urban landscape. The principals, practices and policy objectives contained within the Urban Forest Policy should be adhered to as part of tree management and future planting initiatives within Birchgrove Park.

9.0 Park Contamination Issues

As discussed in Section 4.0 Birchgrove Park has historical significance as an early example of reclaimed foreshore land which was reclaimed to create a public park for the specific purpose of providing ovals for sports such as cricket and football/rugby.

Like many areas of the inner west, Birchgrove Park lies on foreshore land reclaimed by the use of fill from numerous sources. Tests carried out on the park note the presence of contaminants indicative of materials found right across the inner west of Sydney and pose little risk if managed in accordance with recommended environmental management guidelines.

9.1 Biodiversity

Urban parks and public open space play an important role in the promotion, protection and enhancement of biodiversity. It is important that open spaces particularly larger parks such as Birchgrove Park are developed, managed and maintained in a manner which is multifunctional, fit for purpose and accessible to all. The provision of green corridors which provide valuable wildlife habitats for insects, birds and plant communities is a concept which needs to be considered and promoted in the long term management of Birchgrove Park.

Promoting the ecological benefits of parks through biodiversity is not only good planning it also assists in adding to the amenity and character of open space, encourages nature conservation, provides educational opportunities and enhances the surrounding neighbourhood.

Opportunities for fostering biodiversity and promoting wildlife corridors needs to be explored and encouraged at Birchgrove Park. The western perimeter of the park along the Louisa Rd boundary and the section of open space on the corner of Rose and Ferdinand Street both lend themselves to such development as do areas along the Grove Street Boundary of the park. The selection and planning of a planting regime which adds amenity value, protects existing views (of the park and its surrounds), promotes nature conservation needs to be encouraged and promoted by Council. The opportunity for community input into the planning and implementation phases of biodiversity initiatives also needs to be encouraged not only as a matter of good practise but as a means of promoting and ensuring community ownership over what is essentially a community asset and an initiative which will have long term community benefits. It is advocated that Council's Biodiversity Officer and Landscape Coordinator work with the community on addressing this issue.

10.0 Master Plan - Park Development Proposals

As part of the management planning process for Birchgrove Park local residents, park users, the public and sporting users were invited to contribute formal suggestions on landscape and development improvements to Birchgrove Park. This work was undertaken over a 15 month period between July 2006 through to September 2007.

The development matrix outlines the various park improvements which Council with assistance from the community have developed in relation to long term park improvements. The table also specifies priority ratings and a time scale for undertaking these improvements.

Section 10.2 outlines the various conservation and heritage works that Council has identified as needing to be carried out within the park. Further explanation of this work is included in Section 4.1 of the Plan

10.1 Birchgrove Park-Proposed Park Development Matrix

Priority Coding

ST (Short Term 1-2 years)
MT (Medium Term 2-3 years)
LT (long Term) 3-5 years
O (Ongoing)

Development Initiative	Priority	Comments
Creation of formalised path way and boardwalk around the western perimeter of Birchgrove Oval	ST	The creation of a formalised path network which skirts the western perimeter of the recreational oval will improve pedestrian and disabled access within this area of the park. Sections of timber boardwalk are to be constructed in areas where tree roots are problematic.
Construction of Canteen Facility and Improvements to Amenities Block.	ST	Building extension and improvement works are to be undertaken on the existing ablution and changing block in the western portion of the park. A modern food canteen facility which provides for the casual needs of the various sporting and cultural users of the park will be developed. Design of formulated proposals will be undertaken in consultation with the identified future user groups. Design work will include provision for hot food cooking.
Removal of the Intrusive Redbrick Maintenance Shed	ST	The present building has no heritage value. Its facilities should be moved to a less visually intrusive location, and in an architecturally more sympathetic building. Unfortunately, its red brick colour and severely functional 'modernist' form are quite out of character with the rest of the Park structures, and its location at the most used entrance to the Park combine to make it visually intrusive. Area to be turf and fenced to match existing fencing.
Creation of New Groundsman Shed and Storage Facilities	ST	To be developed next to the existing small maintenance shed adjacent to the sports oval on the western perimeter of the park. Building to be designed in a manner which is architecturally sympathetic and in harmony with the current maintenance shed. Provision is also to be made for the tidy storage of green waste material.
Demolition of 1940s Pavilion and its replacement with a sheltered viewing platform and sports storage area.	ST	Structure to be designed in a manner which is architecturally sympathetic and in harmony with the current Tennis pavilion. Consideration to be given to building improvements to the Tennis Pavilion to extend its versatility of use.
Ferdinand Street Entrance-Landscaping Improvements	MT	Key access and view corridor from Rose Street into the park. The northern perimeter is unbalanced in appearance and form. A detailed landscape design proposal is proposed for this area taking into consideration the corridor and the need for framing of the view.
Extension of the Cricket Practise Nets	ST	An additional cricket practise net is to be constructed as an addition to the existing cricket practise nets. These are the only formal cricket nets owned and administered by Leichhardt Council within the entire LGA.
Interpretation and Heritage Signage	MT	Signage which identifies and recognises a number

		<p>of specific heritage elements within the park is to be designed and placed at the following locations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Former Steps Birchgrove House, • Seawall adjacent to Tennis Pavilion, • Adjacent to Wharf. • Grove Street Entrance to the Park • Grove Street adjacent to the proposed barbeque and shade structures. • The Terrace entrance to the Park • Louisa Road entrance to the Park
Pedestrian lighting	MT	Existing Power lines and street lighting to be removed from Deloitte Avenue and bollard lighting is to be installed along the footpath route linking this area from Grove Street through to Louisa Road.
Sydney Water Pump House- Grove Street	MT	Negotiations to be entered into with Sydney Water over the current style and need for security fencing around the pump house. The current fencing is considered intrusive and an eyesore which is detrimental to the amenity value of this area of the park.
Refuse Bins and Park Seating	ST	To be removed and replacements undertaken as outlined in the visual master plan.
Park Tree Plantings	MT	Tree planting will be undertaken as per the draft master plan and in accordance with the planting guidelines relating to species selection criteria as contained within this plan. This includes a number of new planting areas which are designed for screening and landscaping purposes.
Barbeque Facility	LT	One Barbeque facility is to be developed under shade near the children's playground facilities. The location is to be agreed to with the Birchgrove Precinct committee prior to its installation.
Children's Playground Shade Sail	ST	<p>A UV rated shade sail is to be purchased and constructed over the children's playground. This is to be managed as a "temporary shade structure"</p> <p>Tree Planting is to be encouraged in the area bordering the children's playground to provide long term and natural shade. The shade sail is to be removed once deciduous trees have reached sufficient height and provide adequate shade to the playground. The fencing enclosure which surrounds the playground should be repositioned at the time the shade sail is designed to include the existing bench seating which is adjacent to Grove Street Boundary of the Park.</p>
Irrigation Storage Shed	LT	Design work is to be undertaken on new underground housing for the irrigation system located adjacent to The Terrace. While functional the structure needs to be redesigned and located in a less visually sensitive location.
Bubblers	LT	New water bubblers are to be provided in strategic locations within the park. One is to be placed near the cricket practice nets in the north east of the park while the other is to be provided in the proposed barbeque and picnic shelter area. Placing a bubbler near the proposed fitness station should also be considered.
Park Gate	LT	A timber park gate and fence which in built form corresponds with the current fencing design within the park is to be designed and constructed at the entrance to the park where Ferdinand Street meets the Terrace.
Traffic Study	ST	A traffic study which addresses concerns

		associated with traffic movement, car parking (on match play days) and pedestrian safety is to be undertaken. Special emphasis is to be placed on The Terrace and Grove Street. The terms of reference for the traffic study are to be agreed with the Precinct committee prior to work on this work being undertaken. Formal reporting to Council on the traffic study will be required.
Tennis Courts	MT	Management issues and development improvements associated with the tennis courts adjacent to Rose Street are to be addressed including the issue of light spill and improvements to court surfacing.
Grove Street Powerlines	LT	Long term undergrounding of the powerlines along Grove Street is to be undertaken by Council to assist with good tree management and visual amenity improvements within the park.

10.2 Heritage items - Recommended Conservation Actions and Works

Item	Heritage Rating	Action Required	Priority
Sandstone block wall along Grove St	4	Monitor annually, replace mortar or stone with same type as necessary	Routine
The Terrace (roadway and kerbs)	4	Monitor annually; maintain original alignment. Do not add structures or large tree plantings to eastern verge	Routine
Children's sandstone playhouse	2	Worth conserving if valued or used	Routine
S-E tennis court and pavilion	3	Pavilion should be monitored and repaired with same materials as req'd	Routine
Crude concrete pavilion, S-E corner	1	Remove and provide low pavilion on northern slopes if still required today	Priority
Round garden bed with shrubs and sandstone edge, S-E corner	1	Serves no useful purpose. Can be removed.	Routine
Deloitte Avenue	3	Maintain original alignment; limit to pedestrian use. Keep shrubs to 1.5m	Routine
Water/sewerage pumping station	2	Responsibility of Sydney Water	Liaise
S-E sandstone block retaining wall along south edge of oval	3	Monitor annually, replace mortar or stone with same type as necessary	Routine
The oval	4	Maintain present boundaries; mow, fertilize and repair as necessary	Routine
The Sea Wall	4	Monitor & advise responsible authority of need to repair as needed.	Routine
Old staircase to Louisa Road	3	Monitor and repair with same materials as necessary	Routine
Old sandstone rubble retaining wall along oval's northern boundary	4	Monitor annually, replace mortar or stone with same type as necessary	Routine
Middle sandstone block retaining wall along northern pathway	3	Monitor annually, replace mortar or stone with same type as necessary	Routine
Upper sandstone block retaining walls	3	Liaise with property owners and jointly fund necessary repairs	Priority
Sandstone block steps in centre of middle sandstone retaining wall	4	Repair treads & surrounding wall on both sides as required. Use same mortar & weathered stone as original.	Urgent
Sandstone block wall north of caretaker's residence	3	Monitor and repair as required	Routine
Caretaker's residence	3	Monitor and repair/conserv with same materials as originally used	Routine
Square weatherboard maintenance shed near entrance	2-3	Monitor and repair/conserv with same materials as originally used	Routine
Red brick maintenance shed & toilet	Intrusive	Remove & relocate functions to out-of-sight location	Priority
Old ticket collection booth	2	Can be retained; needs interpretation	Routine
Sandstone kerbing along Ferdinand St. entrance	2	Monitor and repair/conserv with same materials as originally used	Routine
Ferdinand Street entrance	2	Redesign & add trees on south side	Priority
Rose St. tennis courts	3	Monitor and repair as required	Routine
Louisa Rd. tennis courts	2	Monitor and repair as required	Routine

Source Mayne-Wilson & Associates

10.3 Birchgrove Park - Master Plan



11.0 References

Leichhardt Municipal Council, Access to Open Space Strategy for Dogs (2004).

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Acknowledgement

Leichhardt Council would like to acknowledge and thank Warwick Mayne Wilson of Mayne Wilson and Associates for his assistance and helpful advice in reviewing this document.