



## HERITAGE COUNCIL OF NSW

### MEETING MINUTES – Approvals Committee

Tuesday, 1 April 2025 | 9:00 AM – 12:30 PM

*via teleconference*

#### ATTENDANCE

##### Members

Dr Nicholas Brunton	A/Chair
Dr Caitlin Allen	Member
Mr David Burdon	Member
Mr Alan Croker	Member
Ms Julie Marler	Member
Mr David McNamara	Member
Mr Bruce Pettman	Member
Ms Sally Barnes	Heritage Council Chair / Alternate Member

##### Apologies

Dr Danièle Hromek	Member
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##### External Presenters

Mr Chris Petrov	Principal Project Officer, Dorrigo Escarpment Great Walk, NPWS (item 2.1)
Ms Barbara Webster	Senior Project Officer, Community Engagement, NPWS (item 2.1)
Ms Olwen Beazley	Manager Historic & World Heritage, NPWS (item 2.1)
Mr Roy Lumby	Senior Heritage Specialist, Tanner Kibble Denton Architects (item 2.3)
Mr Ryann Midei	Director of Infrastructure, Inner West Council (item 2.3)
Mr Tim Brown	Coordinator Parks Projects, Inner West Council (item 2.3)
Mr George Phillips	Principal, Tanner Kibble Denton Architects (item 2.3)
Ms Praj Rege	Parks Project Manager, Inner West Council (item 2.3)
Mr James Frawley	Parks Project Manager, Inner West Council (item 2.3)

##### Heritage NSW

Mr Tim Smith	Director Heritage Assessments
Mr Rajeev Maini	Manager Heritage Assessments (item 2.1)
Ms Shikha Jhaldiyal	Senior Assessments Officer (item 2.1)
Mr Michael Ellis	Manager Heritage Assessments (item 2.2)
Ms Jodi Cameron	Senior Assessments Officer (item 2.2)
Ms Sam Gibbins	Senior Assessments Officer (item 2.2)
Ms Rochelle Johnston	Strategic Manager Heritage Referrals (item 2.3)
Ms Lily Chu	Senior Assessments Officer (item 2.3)
Ms Louise Doherty	Senior Assessments Officer (item 2.3)
Ms Elizabeth Thomas	Senior Secretariat Officer
Ms Asmita Bhasin	Senior Assessments Officer
Ms Rebecca Zulaikha	Senior Assessments Officer

## 1. Welcome and formalities

The A/Chair, Nicholas Brunton, opened the meeting at 9:00 AM.

The A/Chair delivered an Acknowledgement of Country and welcomed attendees.

The A/Chair noted the apologies for this meeting, and it was confirmed that a quorum had been met.

### 1.1 Conflict of Interest Declarations

Prior to the meeting, Nicholas Brunton declared a conflict of interest for *Item 2.2 197 Church Street, Parramatta* and papers were redacted from his view. Members agreed that Dr Brunton will be excused for this item, and the Heritage Council Chair and alternate member of the Committee, Sally Barnes, will chair the meeting for this item.

### 1.2 Out of Session decisions

Nil

### 1.3 Minutes from Previous Meeting – 4 March 2025

Resolution 2025-09
The Heritage Council Approvals Committee:  1. <b>Confirms</b> the minutes of the previous ordinary meeting (Tuesday, 4 March 2025), as a complete and accurate record of that meeting.
Moved by Alan Croker and seconded by David Burdon

### 1.4 Matters Arising

*Kings Green Concept DA, 73-75 York Street, Sydney*

An extensive site visit to 73-75 York Street and other Merivale sites in the Sydney CBD was held on 28 February. Members discussed the need to consider a holistic approach to the development and the potential for advance investigation of the heritage fabric to inform the preparation of the Conservation Management Plan and to better understand any potential heritage impacts.

*Statutory approvals and productivity improvements*

The Heritage Council Chair noted that Heritage NSW's response times to the Department of Planning, Infrastructure and Housing is at 96% and reflects the excellent work of the agency and the Heritage Council and its Committees in making continuous improvements to customer service.

### 1.5 Action Report

The Committee noted that there are no outstanding action items.

## 2. Matters for Consideration

### 2.1 Gondwana Rainforests of Australia (SHR 01002) – pre-lodgement consultation – proposed new Dorrigo Arc Rainforest Centre & Dorrigo Escarpment Great Walk

The Approvals Committee received a report from Heritage NSW and a pre-lodgement presentation from the National Parks and Wildlife Service NSW on the proposed draft master plan proposals for Dorrigo National Park, which is located within the SHR listed *Gondwana Rainforests of Australia*.

*Key points of the presentation*

- The *Gondwana Rainforests* contains important and significant habitats for the conservation of biological diversity, as well as local historical heritage, evidence of past forestry use including roads and bridges, and the remains of a timber tramway on *Syndicate Ridge*.
- Ageing infrastructure and increasing maintenance liabilities, as well as rising visitation to the *Dorrigo Rainforest Centre and Skywalk* has meant increasing challenges in meeting standards and highlights the need for greater accessibility and opportunities to improve and enhance the experience for patrons.

- *The Great Walk* passes through a small area of high conservation value old growth forest in the SHR listed *Bindari National Park*. The multi-day walk has been designed to avoid sites of ecological and cultural significance and heritage items, and the Review of Environmental Factors includes mitigation actions to ensure minimal impacts to the place.
- An Aboriginal design consultancy has been engaged for the project and First Nations consultation is ongoing and includes strong engagement with the Gumbaynggirr women's groups. The concept plans propose a cultural visitor experience that will reflect and embed the knowledge and respect of the traditional owners of the place.
- A co-design approach has involved early and ongoing engagement with the Local Aboriginal Land Councils and interested Aboriginal organisations to develop the cultural governance framework and protocols for heritage interpretation and storytelling.
- Community engagement included over 160 submissions to the *Have your Say* public exhibition of the masterplan from October 2023 to January 2024.
- A neighbouring farmland has been purchased which will provide space for additional car parking and a stormwater runoff and filtration site.

The Committee acknowledged the outstanding universal values of the National Park and sought clarification around the estimated visitor numbers and how patronage will be managed to minimise the impacts to Country.

Members discussed the potential for adaptive reuse of the existing buildings on site, ways to reduce the development footprint and the need to consider the impacts of the skywalk, accessibility options and carpark design. Examples of well-designed carparking which provide for high visitation at significant places were cited, including *Stonehenge*, the *Columbian Ice Fields* and *Taronga Zoo*.

The Committee welcomed the co-design approach and the Aboriginal community engagement that has informed the design and reflection and respect of Country.

#### Resolution 2025-10

The Heritage Council Approvals Committee:

1. **Supports** the vision and direction of the draft master plans for the Dorrigo Arc Rainforest Centre (DARC) and the Dorrigo Escarpment Great Walk (DEGW).
2. **Provides** the following comments on the project proposals:
  - i. Any detailed proposals must be sensitively designed to minimise impact on the outstanding universal values, in particular the significant views, landscape setting and cultural values of Dorrigo National Park as part of the *Gondwana Rainforests of Australia*.  
Final proposals should be informed and supported by visual impact assessments, particularly on views to the DARC from surrounding vantage points within the Dorrigo National Park.
  - ii. The footprint and structure of the proposed DARC, including the new skywalk and the Dorrigo Escarpment Great Walk, should be informed by detailed arboricultural impact assessments, and geotechnical, ecological and structural advice to minimise impact on significant vegetation, geological features, and the biodiversity of the place.
  - iii. Landscape architectural advice should be considered in any future proposals to inform selection of new plantings. The proposal should be supported by detailed landscape plans.
  - iv. Any proposal involving excavation on the site should be based on an understanding of the archaeological resource (historic and Aboriginal) present on site and the likely impact of the proposal on that resource. The proposal should avoid impacts to significant archaeology present on site.
  - v. Any proposal should be accompanied by a detailed interpretation plan and should reflect the evolution of the site, its history from Aboriginal occupation to present times, and its significance. Aboriginal and community groups should collaborate with the preparation of the heritage interpretation to tell a broad range of stories, which would contribute to the project as it develops.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>vi. Any proposal should consider the maximum carrying capacity and the impacts of the skywalk, accessibility options and carpark design and potential to reduce the development footprint and opportunities for adaptive reuse of the existing buildings and building materials on the site.</li> <li>vii. Encourage NPWS to work with the Government Architect NSW in the design development and potentially consider a Design Review and Design Integrity Panel.</li> </ul> <p>3. <b>Notes</b> that NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service is progressing the development approval under Part 5 of the <i>Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979</i> which requires the preparation of a Review of Environmental Factors (REF) to assess environmental impacts.</p> <p>4. <b>Notes</b> that the REF processes will be completed prior to lodgement of the section 60 applications, to ensure the final designs are informed by public consultation and relevant environmental matters.</p>
Moved by Julie Marler and seconded by David McNamara

## 2.2 197 Church Street, Parramatta – s140 State significant archaeology

The Approvals Committee received a report from Heritage NSW on the status of *197 Church Street, Parramatta*, where an archaeological test excavation carried out under a section 140 permit has uncovered parts of State significant archaeology including two convict huts which formed the first school building in Parramatta.

Members discussed the archaeological finds encountered and considered options for an appropriate way forward including the potential for redesign of the basement and built form for *197 Church Street*.

The Committee were unanimous in their support for the archaeological remains to be conserved in-situ, noting:

- the assessment of significance is limited in its understanding of the history of the site, the broader social values and the high potential for truth telling and storytelling on the site
- the ‘convict huts’ were possibly not originally built for convict accommodation but were government related structures from the 1790s and remnant sites such as this are becoming increasingly rare and are likely to be of National significance, and
- the enormous public benefit in having public access to view the archaeological remains in-situ.

Resolution 2025-11
<p>The Heritage Council Approvals Committee:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Notes</b> the report.</li> <li>2. <b>Confirms</b> the remains of the convict huts and public charity school are of State significance and must be conserved and interpreted in situ, as a first principle, at 197 Church Street, Parramatta.</li> </ol>
<p>Moved by Caitlin Allen and seconded by Sally Barnes</p> <p><i>Dr Nicholas Brunton left the meeting for this item.</i></p>

*Caitlin Allen and David Burdon left the meeting at 10:45 AM.*

## 2.3 Callan Park (SHR 00818) – pre-lodgement consultation – proposed sporting fields and tidal baths

The Approvals Committee received a report from Heritage NSW and a pre-lodgement presentation from the Inner West Council and their design consultant team on the proposed tidal baths and replacement of two natural turf sports fields with all-weather/synthetic soccer fields at *Callan Park* (HMS 9545). Whilst the tidal baths are located outside the SHR curtilage, the connecting walkway is partly located within the curtilage.

### Key points noted

- Site and concept plans were presented for the Callan Park Tidal Baths and Sporting Grounds at Waterfront Drive and Balmain Road.
- The *Parramatta River Masterplan* identified Callan Park Tidal Baths as a potential new swimming site and aims to activate the harbour with a recreational community facility.
- Upgraded facilities are required to meet the increased community needs and ongoing support of local sporting clubs.
- Assessment of the potential heritage impacts were outlined including consideration of visual impacts, archaeology, significant buildings and landscape elements at Callan Park.

*Sally Barnes left the meeting at 11:45AM.*

The Committee sought clarification on the proposed mix of natural and synthetic turf sporting grounds and referred the local council to the [DCCEEW best-practice guidelines for sporting fields](#) published in January 2025 which provides guidance for climate resilient playing surfaces in NSW.

Members discussed the design elements presented and thanked the Inner West Council for the opportunity to provide prelodgement comments to inform the project.

### Resolution 2025-12

The Heritage Council Approvals Committee:

1. **Notes** the presentation by Inner West Council.
2. **Notes** the significant historic, aesthetic and social values of Callan Park Conservation Area and Buildings (SHR 00818) as listed on the State Heritage Register.
3. **Supports** the continued activation of the Waterfront Drive sports field and the Balmain Road sports field.
4. **Supports** the introduction of new tidal baths that maintain the existing configuration of the foreshore area.
5. **Notes** that the Callan Park Landscape Structure Plan includes sports fields and a harbour pool in the proposed locations.
6. **Provides** the following comments to Inner West Council:
  - a. Having regard to the exceptionally significant landscape setting of Callan Park and the recently published [DCCEEW best-practice guidelines for sporting fields](#) which provides guidance for climate resilient playing surfaces in NSW, the Approvals Committee has a preference for retention of the existing turf as the playing field surface.
  - b. Any change to the proposed playing surface would require greater justification and more detail.
  - c. Where new plantings are proposed, ensure they are of a historically appropriate species and planted in locations that do not impact significant views.
  - d. Address the impacts of the tidal baths on Aboriginal cultural heritage and bushland at Callan Point through appropriate consultation and consider softening the pathway and approach to the baths.
  - e. Include with any future application:
    - i. A detailed Statement of Heritage Impact that addresses the endorsed Conservation Management Plan and the Landscape Structure Plan.
    - ii. Detailed plans, sections and elevations (including landscape plans) that clearly define the extent of works.
    - iii. Lighting and signage plans.
    - iv. Visual assessment, including photomontages of the proposal from significant viewpoints.
    - v. An arborist report, if necessary.

- vi. Where it is deemed there is potential for maritime items and impacts (eg. former jetty), a Maritime archaeological assessment for the works both within the reclaimed land and the off-shore seabed areas, with a maritime-focused statement of heritage impact. Include a Maritime Archaeological Research Design and methodology that addresses identified impacts to maritime heritage.
- vii. Consideration of any potential Aboriginal or historical archaeological impact.
- viii. An interpretation strategy.

Moved by Julie Marler and seconded by Alan Croker

### **3.0 General Business**

#### **3.1 Forward agenda**

The Approvals Committee discussed the forward agenda, and the A/Chair provided a verbal update on various matters currently being dealt with by the Heritage Council.

Members reiterated the importance of Aboriginal representation on the Committee and noted that the *Caring for Country* guidelines and potential to develop a policy framework were discussed at the March Heritage Council meeting.

#### **4.0 Meeting Close**

There being no further items of business, Nicholas Brunton, A/Chair, declared the Approvals Committee meeting closed at 12:30 PM.



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Dr Nicholas Brunton  
A/Chair, Heritage Council Approvals Committee  
Date: 6 May 2025