Each paper in this volume, except where noted, has been blind refereed by two members of a panel of academic peers appointed by the Conference Committee. The Conference Committee would like to thank all those peers of the society who gave their time and expertise to the refereeing of papers.

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Conference Location
QT Hotel
Surfers Paradise Queensland

Host Institution
Griffith University (Urban Research Program)

Institutional Sponsors
Griffith School of Environment and the Griffith Sciences, Griffith University
Urban Research Program, Griffith University

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Front cover images: Gold Coast now and then (Left: Surfers Paradise looking north, 1957 - image courtesy of City of Gold Coast Local Studies Library, image number LS-LSP-CD003-IMG0038); Right: Looking north from Q1 observation deck, A. Dedekorkut-Howes, 2012)

Formatting undertaken by: Emma Greenhalgh
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Introduction

The Urban History Planning History conference brings together people interested in the history and planning of cities from a range of disciplinary perspectives. Its purpose is to facilitate dialogue between those working in scholarly and public spheres, to build collaborative projects and to share ideas. The conference is held biannually either in Australia or New Zealand. This, the 13th, conference was hosted by Griffith University and held on the Gold Coast. Delegates come from Australia, New Zealand and internationally, from academia, industry and government; in discipline areas including Planning, Architecture, History, Landscape Architecture and Sociology among others.

The theme of the conference was Icons: The making, meaning and undoing of urban icons and iconic cities. The use of icons (projects, places, plans, people and/or practices) to tell stories of urban environments is longstanding. The stories which these icons produce tell us something about ourselves and our everyday urban lives, as well as the social, environmental, economic, political and cultural context of urban environments. They can also prompt questions about the histories and realities of the icons themselves. Moreover, cities increasingly strive for distinctiveness of some kind in an increasingly globalised world. This distinctiveness is frequently achieved through the making of new urban icons, visual, tangible, imaginary and or real. The striving for iconic status can be problematic when it marginalises and polarises people and ways of being. Meanings can also be ascribed which have little relevance to the wider urban context. This conference offered a special opportunity to explore these histories of iconographies — past, present, prospective. Sub themes related to the histories and/or planning of the following in urban and regional settings:

1. Critical appreciations of neglected and established urban icons & icon-making processes.
2. Planning and development of hard and soft infrastructures, including monuments, buildings, streetscapes, precincts, landscapes, plans and projects, branding etc.
3. The import/export of iconic ideas.
4. The environmental impact of urban icons and iconic landscapes.
5. Dealing with the heritage of icons (cultural, natural, indigenous).

The Gold Coast provides a perfect example of an environment with a history constructed around the creation and representations of iconic forms. It has striven for 'iconic' status through adaptation from places such as Florida and California. It has sought hallmark events like the Commonwealth Games in 2018. Its light rail project emulates the global turn to sustainable transport infrastructure. And there are less glamorous stories below the glittering surface.

The enthusiasm and diligence of so many conference participants to the Iconic theme is demonstrated in the Proceedings. The conference was well received and presentation topics covered all five sub themes. The two keynote speakers started each day with engaging and thought provoking presentations. On day one Don Watson argued persuasively for the iconic landscapes of Brisbane City and on day two, Kevin Rains argued equally strongly for the Gold Coast as an iconic city. The final plenary was artfully wrapped up by Aysin Dedekorkut-Howes’s paper on the making of the Gold Coast, derived from various planning schemes, and Danny O’Hare’s aptly named paper “Transport: from cream cans and campers to city centres and commuters” which closed the formal presentation sessions.

We are pleased to present this collection of papers presented at the 13th UPHP Conference on the Gold Coast. All contributors to this volume make interesting and insightful contributions to Urban Research. This Proceedings, we are certain, will provide useful reference material for researchers, the profession and other members of the public. We thank everyone involved in making this conference happen, and in particular the conference delegates and participants.

Caryl Bosman, Chair, Conference Organising Committee
## Conference Program

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**Wednesday 03 Feb 2016**
Almost anything – unbuilt, built, demolished or about to be built - can be iconic and the iconic status self-assessable. I’ve no proof for the status of what follows but I’ll probably be wiser after the next few days.

I’ll look at some Brisbane icons:

- the original landscape;
- timber building tradition;
- some roads;
- government buildings resulting from competitions;
- the creation of squares where there were none;
- and finally views.

Some illustrations will be post cards, a traditional shortcut to finding and communicating what is iconic.

My interest in architectural history dates from a study of the Queensland House undertaken¹ for the National Trust in the late 1970s.² Question 1 was why were Queensland houses timber? The answer was because there were forests of hard and softwoods and joinery timber, throughout south-east Queensland, now long gone.

From reports of exploration and settlement³ it was apparent that they were of two different types—open eucalypt forests (of hardwoods) and so-called ‘scrubs’ (of softwood). Scrub was not used for

² Included in the findings was the key role played by SEQ’s original forests, arguably an iconic benefaction.
worthless vegetation as now, but depicted rainforest. Their co-existence was fortuitous as a necessary basis of a timber building tradition.4

For someone from Brisbane, the descriptions of the landscape were a surprise. So completely had the forests vanished that their existence was unexpected. They were also visually spectacular: ‘...It looked as though some race of men had been here before us and planted this veritable garden of Eden...river banks lined with foliage whose beauty it were almost impossible to describe...’ Images which matched written reports were hard to locate. Behind the house Kelvin Grove in 1868 is rain forest in what was called the Three Mile Scrub. The road in front is now a main road in Brisbane’s inner north.

At the University of Queensland in the late 1980s I proposed a means of reconstructing the extent and distribution of these forests. The most useful sources were surveys, generally undertaken after, but occasionally before, settlement. In 1866, Six Mile Creek in the Mary River catchment was surveyed in anticipation of settlement for agriculture rather than grazing. This was a year before gold was discovered nearby. The mosaic of scrub (shaded) and the open eucalypt forests is easily seen. For squatters’ the scrub-bounded paddocks of the open forests needed no other fences. On the right is an attempt to reconstruct the pattern from later Portion Surveys. Top right is the Parish of Glastonbury (where the Lynch sisters were brought up). Below is Portion 1, Parish of Noosa taking in Mill Point, on Lake Cootharaba. The patterns seemed artificial. This was a manicured landscape.

A natural fire-resistance of the scrubs had been harnessed over millenia by aboriginals who regularly burnt (at low temperature) the open eucalypt forest to encourage green pick (the nutritious regrowth) to attract game. Bill Gammage spoke two years ago about his book The Biggest Estate on Earth: How Aborigines made Australia (2011) which tells this story for Australia as a whole. I presented my research at the first National Forest History conference at Canberra in 1988. The proceedings are cited in Bill’s book, but not my paper.5

The forest juxtaposition proved ideal for timber construction: hardwood for framing and softwood for linings. The landscape was significantly altered in other ways. Extensive wetlands along the river were drained, hills cut down and valleys filled. Adelaide House was rented as the first Government House in 1859, but when Adelaide Street was cut through6 the front door was left 15 metres above its previous address.

After two floods in quick succession in 1893, it was proposed to improve the flow of the river by building training walls of stone from the high river banks at Kangaroo Point and Petrie Bight. These quarry faces which are often assumed to be natural, are now regarded as iconic.

Brisbane’s timber houses are referred to as Queenslanders. The Queenslander on the left was built in 1910 as Workers Dwelling No 1 of 23,515 houses built in the 30 years of this Government housing program but they represent only a small proportion of Queenslanders built before World War 2.

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4 Philip Cox, John Freeland and Wesley Stacey (1969) Rude timber buildings of Australia, an influential text, ignored the predominance of soft rather than hardwoods in timber dwellings.
6 From 1876 (Telegraph, 2.6.1876, 3)
They were single storey, simply planned with verandahs, timber framed and sheeted, on an elevated floor supported by hardwood, ant-capped stumps, with a corrugated iron hipped roof. Many of these aspects were shared with dwellings elsewhere but in its ubiquity and popularity, they are iconic. In the 1970s, the Queensland house was seen as the closest Australia came to producing an indigenous style of architecture. The practice called outside studding deserves to be iconic.

Early timber houses also schools and churches were sheeted externally but otherwise unlined and unceiled. Lining only the internal face of the frame used no more timber but resulted in a finished interior. Schools were the responsibility of a Board of General Education with parents required to contribute to the cost. In 1865, English architect RG Suter experimented in Benjamin Backhouse’s office with outside studding before developing the idea in his own office as architect to the Board. Erected in settlements which often comprised makeshift dwellings – tents, slab and unlined framed houses, the new schools and teacher’s residences (or the plans which preceded them to encourage fund raising) came as a surprise...we’ve seen nothing like this... said one report. The timber was painted to match the natural colour – cream for hoop pine lining, and dark red brown for the hardwood frame – a colonial half timbering, reminiscent ‘of home’. Subsequently the framing was simplified, to studs only at door and window jambs and corners, with one or two horizontal rails. Tests at UQ in 1987 demonstrated that the simplified form was the strongest as well as the most economical.

In seeking to prove that Suter’s schools and churches were the earliest intentional use of outside studding, I discounted as being later, early examples designed by German-born Richard Roericht, including Stanwell Station on the Great Northern Railway and stations for the Southern & Western Railway.

But 15 years later when I received a call from Margaret Strelow, mayor of Rockhampton and a local historian, saying that she had an earlier example, I guessed it was the relocated offices of the GNR built slightly earlier. I knew of them, but not what they looked like. In a subsequent talk about the rival origins of outside studding, I argued that it was a case of convergent evolution. There are cultural precedents for Suter’s work in Britain and NZ; and Roericht in Germany, but the idea for Roericht came from the rolling stock supplied for the GNR – models of which arrived in Rockhampton just before the offices were designed.

Prefabricated timber dwellings were important from the 1860s until World War 2. Brown & Broad was one of two major manufactures in Brisbane in the twentieth century. If you have sharp eyes, you can pick out the unbraced frame. These coloured images illustrate another iconic quality of Queenslanders: their consistent colouring: including red roofs, first undertaken in imitation of

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7 JM Freeland, Architecture in Australia: a history (1968); Philip Cox and John Freeland, Rude timber buildings in Australia (1969)
9 Don Watson (2009) Was Queensland’s Architecture changed on the night of August 3 1865? Adjunct Professorial Lecture, Department of Architecture, University of Qld.
10 Tim O’Donnell with the architect Russell Hall undertook structural testing of various sheeted frames: framed and braced; framed, braced and gang-nailed; and framed only. The lightest but strongest was the last. Bracing and gang nail plating concentrated the load at joints, fracturing the frame. The framed only case deflected slightly to take up shrinkage between tongued and grooved boards, then proved almost indestructible. O’Donnell, Timothy Shane. The Fassifern connection: Russell Hall and the exposed stud frame. B. Arch thesis, University of Qld. 1987.
terracotta tiles, but stimulated by iron shortages during World War 1 when painting prolonged the life of rusting roofs and improved their appearance. Thereafter new iron was painted red. This consistency (with interesting local variations) was still in place when the house study was undertaken.

Could a visual suburban unity be encouraged by developing an environmental colour pallete? You may be familiar with French environmental colourist Jean Phillipe Lenclos who in 1984 had recently produced his *Colours of France*. A grant to bring Lenclos to Brisbane lapsed when he was unable to come. These colours are now seldom used.

Thirty years on, this idea is laughable. Pyramidal roofs are no longer red and their form obscured by geometrically unrelated solar collectors. Redevelopment, large extensions and backyard infill have resulted in a significant loss of mature trees. New Farm doesn’t look like this anymore.

Thirty years ago, most back yards had a mango tree – now few survive.

Next I’ll look at some roads.

The site chosen for the penal settlement in 1824 was easily defensible: a narrow peninsular protected by a line of steep hills, shown in this survey, one of several prepared prior to free settlement. In Henry Wade’s chosen layout (1843) roads were 1 chain (66’) except Queen Street which was 80’, without provision for public squares. Roads to outlying districts followed ridges, avoided wetlands were generally radial but hardly iconic.

Until the 1930s the only bridge was the Victoria Bridge(s). An early action in 1925 of the Greater Brisbane Council was a Cross River Commission, the city’s first transportation plan, whose primary purpose was to determine where additional cross river bridges should be built. The first of 12 recommendations, a double layer, low-level bridge from Kangaroo Point to Petrie Bight was conditional on a shipping canal cut through the highest part of the Point, intended also as flood mitigation. Neither were built. Instead the Grey St bridge was constructed as the first stage of an inner ring road but hardly iconic.

The report was reviewed by the council’s pioneering town planner William John Earle (Report of the City Planner, March 1926). Earle proposed bridges at Grey Street and East Brisbane (2nd and 4th in the Commission’s recommendations) as part of a ring road around the CBD in the manner of Vienna’s ringstrasse. These bridges would make possible the replacement of the Victoria Bridge (3rd priority of the Commission). Earle revived a rejected proposal from the Railways Department for linking railways on the north and south banks of the river by a double decker bridge with road vehicles below and trams and trains above. Earle envisaged New Farm as Brisbane’s warehouse district linked to the CBD by a low level road below the cliffs at Petrie’s Bight to Adelaide Street. Earle’s second river crossing was a transporter bridge from New Farm to East Brisbane.
Gilchrist Ave, a landscaped parkway through Victoria Park which was part of the proposed ring road and which continued the alienation of what were originally generous reserves north of the city. When the Story Bridge14 was built at Kangaroo Point, it was at high level and built less to relieve congestion than to create employment during the Depression. Its designer, JJC Bradfield (a Queenslander in the chauvinistic world of icons) reused a balanced cantilever which he previously rejected for Sydney’s Harbour Bridge. Of six lanes (considerably wider than any road in the city) and with distinctive profile, the bridge has served Brisbane well, functionally and as an icon. Studies to relieve congestion at Petrie Bight continued. After the war, a proposal to partly underground trams15 was deferred only by post war shortages of steel and engineers. Brisbane might then have been compared with Washington DC where trams (or streetcars) were undergrounded from the 1930s. In both Washington and Brisbane trams were threatened by buses.

At the top are Brisbane’s trams queued on AB Brady’s hog back iron Victoria bridge of 1897. At an academic conference, it’s worth recalling a thesis of two UQ engineering students which demonstrated that the Bridge was overloaded leading to limits being placed on the number of trams per span and eventually replacement of the bridge. The demise of trams was accelerated in 1962, when fire destroyed he Paddington tram depot. The tram system closed in 1969.

Were other Brisbane roads iconic? To honour George VI, River Rd upstream of the city was renamed Coronation Drive. Described as ‘a boulevard which isn’t’, upgrading commenced during the war and in 1948 in anticipation of a royal visit that didn’t eventuate. But by 1952 after work by Harry Oakman, manager of Brisbane’s Parks and Gardens, it was described as one of the loveliest spots in Australia.16 When the Queen visited in 1954, and for the State’s Centenary in 1959 floodlighting of the Grey St Bridge and trees along Coronation Drive caused traffic jams. With road widening, the coral trees and red gravel aprons are long gone.

For arterial roads, the contours flatten beyond the inner suburbs and were more easily widened after World War 2 when Oakman laid out these extensive rose gardens on Gympie Road.17 With neither trams nor gardens, Gympie Rd is now eight lanes. More shameful is the fate of Ipswich Road. Visitors approaching from the south are led into the Clem 7 tunnel with through-traffic pushed to the left on a twisting and temporary diversion.

Outside Brisbane, memorable but apparently inexplicable incidents occur on main roads such as on the Warrego Highway. From 1933 a landscape engineering branch was established within the Main Roads Commission overseen by Frederick Parkes who was responsible in 1950 for planting this avenue of bougainvillea ‘trees’. Building of a dual carriageway wiped out those on the left, but some on the right survive.

14 A recommendation from Walter Doak for a high level bridge at Kangaroo Point was rejected by the Commission, but the idea persisted. In 1930 Doak revised his estimates for an assessment of a franchise proposal for a high level bridge submitted by the English steel manufacturer Dorman Long (contractor for Sydney’s Harbour Bridge). New balanced cantilever variations of the bridges to Centenary Place and Bowen Tce were considered before a decision was taken to proceed with the bridge to Bowen Terrace which had less impact on existing development. By then construction of the bridge was an important job creation project in the Depression.
15 A tram tunnel to Woolloongabba was a recommendation of the Cross River Commission
16 By Cobden Parkes, President of the RAIA, Courier-Mail 11.11.1952, 3
17 leading to a decline in the planting of annuals, a run on polyanthus roses and the arrest of pensioners who helped themselves
From 1920 the Main Roads Commission\(^{18}\) was responsible for roads between towns not within them. Municipalities were not eligible for funds until a road plan was approved. This map (of 1963) summarises work towards a plan for Brisbane:

- an inner ring road with viaducts along both reaches of the river;
- a new bridge at Gardens Point,
- radial arterial roads and
- an eastern by-pass.

The Co-ordinator General of Public Works\(^{19}\) commissioned the American transport planners, Wilbur Smith and Assoc\(^{20}\) to finalise the plan. When it was completed in August 1965 recommendations were wide-ranging but proposals for the CBD were a refinement of work already done by the Council. Viaducts along both river banks provided primary access: from the north and east by the Petrie Bight Expressway, and from the south and west by the Riverside Expressway over a new bridge at Gardens Point. As an improvement, the inner ring road was broken at the Gardens.

Roads in the CBD were reorganised as one-way couplets. The comprehensive plan for freeways throughout Brisbane was approved to be implemented in 4 five-year plans between 1965-85. Work started immediately but apart from work around the Story Bridge and an extension of Turbot St, only the Riverside Expressway\(^{21}\) and south-Eastern Freeway (now Pacific Motorway) were built before funding for urban freeways was cut in the 1970s. What distinguishes the Expressway is its role in effectively adding an additional block to the narrow width of the CBD, its compact layout\(^{22}\); its

\(^{18}\) *Brisbane Courier*, 11.11.1920, 6

\(^{19}\) In 1932 William Forgan Smith’s Labor government established a Bureau of Industry within which was a Roads, Mining and General Works Committee. The Bureau advised all state government departments on capital works and undertook planning to reduce unemployment during the Depression. In 1938, the committee became the office of Coordinator-Genera (COG). The position was first filled by JR Kemp, the first and still Commissioner of Main Roads. The COG was able to co-opt any state official, and by arrangement, any local government engineer whose services might be required. The Coordinator-General’s power was further increased in 1940 to include authority to construct works for both state and local authorities. The office prepared an annual co-ordinated plan of works for all State Departments and Local Authorities. The COG became the most powerful public official in Queensland. These arrangements served well during the Second World War when Kemp was also Queensland’s Deputy Director-General of Allied Works. In 1950 engineering staff within the Bureau were amalgamated under the engineer James Holt who succeeded Kemp as Co-ordinator-General in 1954. The engineering branch of the COG became an elite organization.

\(^{20}\) Wilbur Smith and Associates (WSA) were an American firm with wide experience and had recently been retained for similar surveys in Melbourne and Hobart. The Brisbane Transportation Study was overseen by a Committee drawn from the departments of Main Roads, Railways and Transport and the Town Plan Section of the Brisbane City Council. Members included Syd Schubert, Assistant Engineer Research and Planning; Erik Finger, Technical Secretary and Liaison Officer and LV Guthrie of the BCC. The study was directed by James E Hamm of WSA. A citizen’s committee ensured that there was widespread knowledge of the issues which would facilitate acceptance of the study. Progress was reviewed by a sub-committee comprising Hamm, Schubert and Guthrie.

\(^{21}\) Detailed design commenced in June 1965 and the expressway was completed in 1974. Geometrical constraints were grade separated connections to six city streets, clearing both the proposed and existing Victoria Bridges, avoiding a coaxial cable crossing of the river, maintaining access at least to Alice Street in floods and minimizing encroachments to reduce impacts for navigation and flood run-off. The original alignment was based on the approach to the Gardens Point Bridge being filled embankments. This was found not to be feasible due to excessive settlement and it proved necessary to use viaducts for the entire Expressway. This allowed an alignment which avoided the recently completed morgue but, in doing so, the river crossing at Gardens Point was considerably skewed.

\(^{22}\) In a kilometre and a half between Alice and Turbot Streets there are four on and five off ramps, 6 of which turn through 90° at a radius of 36m while crossing over or under the freeway, the river and other roads. Changes from the initial design eliminated weaving manoeuvres; increased lengths for acceleration, deceleration and storage; relocated to the left hand side as far as possible ramps exiting the through road; changed the parapet design; and increased the width of breakdown lanes.
proven functionality, its sculptural quality and the excellence of its detailing. The design quality includes: circular or oval piers with all pile caps kept below low water mark to reduce the risk of snagging flood debris (compare all other more recent bridges) and black skirtings to mask tidal staining; consistent roads depth of 5’ despite varying conditions, minimised by integration of head stocks as an inverted “T” (again compare subsequent designs). Concurrently a new Victoria Bridge was designed.

By then balanced cantilever construction had enhanced the performance and economy of prestressed concrete, culminating in the Medway Bridge and Ulrich Finsterwalder’s Bendorf Bridge over the Rhine. When tenders were called alternative designs were permitted but the COG’s official design was strongly preferred. In any case pier an economical design in steel was difficult. For aesthetic decisions architectural advice was sought from former-Melbourne architect Stuart McIntosh, in Brisbane after winning a competition for the University’s Great Hall. McIntosh advised on the design of cutwaters, expression of the road deck, colour scheme and lighting. The bridge was immediately popular and has remained so, unlike the Riverside Expressway, but both were designed in the Co-ordinator General’s Office at about the same time with comparable care and aesthetic intentions.

Integral with the Expressway and its largest individual structure was the Gardens Point (now Captain Cook) Bridge, with an overall length between abutments of 1820’ in five spans. When it was built, the largest span was the third longest prestressed concrete span in the world. For a bridge at New


25 The COG was also overseeing construction of the University.

26 BM Wilson, President of the Qld Chapter of the RAIA wrote to the Co-ordinator General: “... At its last meeting, my Chapter Council unanimously commended the qualities of the new Victoria Bridge. I am therefore, very pleased to express this Chapter’s congratulations on the design of the bridge and its lighting, both of which we believe make a significant contribution to the environment of this city. Would you please extend the congratulations of the Chapter to your officers and other members of staff who have been closely involved with the project. We strongly support a continuation of this quality of concept and fulfillment...”. (UQFL F3179/1, 25.11.1970).

27 The Bridge was on the Register of the National Estate (ID 19838, File No. 4/01/001/0350). When the bridge was threatened with the addition of pedestrian shading, the architectural historian Paul Jolly made a detailed nomination for its inclusion in the Queensland Heritage Register which was surprisingly unsuccessful. In part he argued: “The bridge was designed and built in the 1960s when exuberant belief in the unbridled development of Brisbane was running high. The bridge catches these feelings. Recently developed materials and techniques were used in its construction, and these, together with the efficient functionalism of its forms, spoke of success and progress. It is also a very simple and beautiful structure with its graceful curving deck and three long cantilevered spans resting on two piers. The whole bridge slopes gently towards the south and provides a sweeping connection between the two banks. The piers are elegant elongated hexagonals and extend beyond the limits of the roadway to express something of the flow of the river. The transition between the sharp vertical of the piers and the smooth curves of the deck are made via simple triangles seemingly sliced into the top of the cutwaters. The hand railings and lamp standards are simple and discreet and enhance the elegant, unbroken profile of the bridge. The original architect, Stuart McIntosh, did everything he could to promote continuity: ‘nothing should stop the progress of the roadway’. Brilliant white lighting is supplied at night by continuous neon tubes placed behind the edge beam of the footpath. The bridge looked, and still looks, strikingly modern and elegant. A better symbol of progress can scarcely be imagined...”

28 The website Structurae claims that for three months after its completion, the Captain Cook Bridge was the longest bridge of its type. If true is must be a particular combination of multi span, precast, prestressed concrete, cantilever bridge with drop-in mid-spans. As a single span there were others longer.
Farm (1974) on the proposed Central Freeway, the pin joint at piers was omitted making the bridge a framed structure rather than a girder and enabling the balanced box girders to be supported off the pier without falsework. It was not built when funding was cut but 15 years later an almost identical bridge was built in Portugal. For the Gateway Bridge towards the river mouth, minimum shipping clearances and flight path height limits precluded a cable stayed bridge and a box girder design was again used, but stretched to 260m – a world record. Without Federal funding, the bridge was built on a design, construct and operate basis transferring control to the successful tenderer who repeated his experience with the Capt Cook Bridge but without the refinements. The official design was more elegant, lower and economical, but untested, a variation on prestressed box girder bridges called a fin back with flat rather than arched girders, supported by tapering diaphragms above the deck. If built, it would have been iconic - a record span for box girders and the first major fin back bridge. Wilbur Smith is frequently denigrated for the Riverside Expressway. Forgotten are other reports prepared by the firm including a public transport study (1970). Among the recommendations (most of which were realised ) was an underground railway which was referred to the Greater London Council who thought it premature.29

Several iconic government buildings in Brisbane resulted from architectural competitions. They were held infrequently, at roughly decade intervals, in the nineteenth century and thereafter not until after World War 2. The process was seldom straightforward.33

In an 1864 competition for Parliament House, the preferred design by Benjamin Backhouse was rejected as exceeding the budget and the prizes awarded to Charles Tiffin, Colonial Architect and FDG Stanley, Tiffin’s deputy. The result was overturned and awarded to a fourth design from WH Ellerker whose entry was soon shown to also exceed the budget. The earlier decision was confirmed, but what was built was based on a design Tiffin made in 1861 for public offices. Its use of the French Second Empire style was for Australia, stylistically innovative. Only half what was intended was built (and that in two stages) but is still in use.34

Early in 1871, Charles Tiffin, the talented, hard working Colonial Architect was suspended after anonymously defending the Roads Branch. Soon afterwards with little publicity, a competition for the General Post Office was announced, run, not by the Works Department, but by the Post-Master General. Closing in four weeks, the only prize of £100 was conditional on a tender of less than £8,000. Surprisingly, the result went unreported except in the liberal democratic Queensland Express. Only six architects submitted entries, with Tiffin’s deputy, FDG Stanley, the winner. Tenders were so well within the cost limit that the building was stretched vertically with 2’ added to the ground floor, and 3’ to the first. The finished building was popular as a successful adaption of the

30 John Gralton claims the idea in 1973 was original. There are other claimants.
31 The siting under roads was realistic but the geometry of the intersection at Queen and George St looks optimistic.
32 It would have been concurrent with Melbourne’s City Loop constructed 1971-1981
33 In the nineteenth century, they averaged only one a decade. After1900, they almost never occurred. A characteristic of those which resulted in a building was their realisation in stages, in the case of one almost half a century
34 On the site of the later Treasury Building. COL/A19, 1861/2186, QSA
35 Soon afterwards, JH Wilson, a draftsman in Government’s Roads Branch, who drew the perspective of Parliament House won first and second prizes in a competition for Sydney’s Town Hall, the next advance in the use of this style in Australia.
36 Thomas Lodge Murray Prior
Italianate style to the sub-tropics. It was, at least influenced, by an earlier proposal by Tiffin\(^37\) for the same site, with duplication for the Telegraph Office (not called for in the competition but in the winning entry), a covered arcade where customers could await mail and a centre tower. As part of recovery after the present development onslaught, I’d like to see some of Brisbane’s unbuilt towers (such as the GPO) finished.

The third competition in 1883 was for Public Offices. First prize went to Grainger & D’Ebro from Melbourne with JJ Clark, newly appointed Colonial Architect an unsuccessful competitor. After a debate about the merits of the winning scheme, probably orchestrated by Clark, his scheme was preferred and built in three stages, 1888, 1893 and 1928. Staging is a useful means of achieving a more iconic idea, providing commitment to completion can be guaranteed, in this case nearly a half-century later.

A purpose-built Queensland Museum (1878-9) was intended to be extended. the river. Instead a competition was held in 1889, for a new museum and art gallery, won by Charles McLay, yet again of the Colonial Architect’s office. When tenders closed high, terracotta was substituted for stone details (shown here). As a recession deepened, it was deferred then abandoned in 1897. In 1900, the Exhibition Building (itself the successful outcome of a competition)\(^38\) was converted for the Museum with the original Museum renovated for the State Library.

The fifth and last competition in 1900 was also for the General Post Office. It was won by John Barr, formerly of Brisbane, now with WL Vernon, NSW Government Architect. Third was GD Payne with the Qld Government Architect (AB Brady). Both Government Architects were judges. While Payne’s scheme was well planned the elevations of Payne’s scheme were surprisingly poor, but his prize added legitimacy to an official intention that whatever the result, the building would be documented in Brady’s office. On the right is Payne’s developed design based on his own and Barr’s, but much improved. Commonwealth funding of capital works changed from loans to revenue and with revenue down in the severe drought of the time, the building was documented but not built. Despite another later attempt to replace it, the 1871 GPO survives.

Payne was an exceptional architect in an office which was the equal of any in Australia. When capital funds were cut, Payne and his colleague JS Murdoch left. Payne won a competition for St Andrew’s which is often held up as iconic. Briefly as Diocesan Architect Murdoch designed St Luke’s pro-cathedral, Charlotte St, less visible and not seen as iconic. A third major red-brick church, highly visible and iconic is St Brigid’s, Red Hill by Robin Dods (2\(^{nd}\) place getter in the GPO competition).

Brisbane was surveyed without any public squares but Murdoch played a pivotal role in achieving two. The first was Queens Gardens, originally the site for JL Pearson’s proposed Anglican Cathedral. With construction of the Land Administration Building imminent, but with a much compromised principal facade, the State acquired the cathedral site allowing the Anglican Church to buy a more appropriate site in Ann St. The church was allowed to remove St John’s Pro-cathedral (reused for a new St John’s Institute in Ann St) but on the pretext of a future duplication of the Land Administration Building, Brisbane gained its first public square, cluttered for more than 60 years by the former St John’s Institute retained as CIB headquarters.

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\(^{37}\) LWO/A26, 1865/2287, QSA

\(^{38}\) GHM Addison, 1888
The next square was associated with a new Town Hall\(^39\) which itself had a prolonged history. In 1883 a competition, won by JJ Clark, was documented but not built. In 1909 a direct commission to LG Corrie and Atkinson & McLay suffered the same. Fortunately, Hall & Prentice’s design built from 1920-30 was better than its predecessors. In 1936, a competition for the square in front (named after George V) was won by Perth architect, Reginald Summerhayes. Despite its small size, it was superior to its enlarged successors, the most recent of which, is arguably the worst.

JS Murdoch, by then Chief Architect of the Commonwealth was again crucial in the fourth square\(^40\), built for the First World War Memorial. The provision of a square in front of Central Station had long been proposed, but Murdoch is credited with a deal which saw an entire city block redeveloped, with State and Federal Offices to each side of Anzac Square. A competition for the memorial was won by Sydney architects Buchanan & Cowper with a Greek Doric tholos, which also (and skilfully) integrated subterranean access to central station. Each of the office components comprised six units. Interrupted by World War Two, the state completed theirs over 30 years. The Commonwealth after building two deferred the rest before building modern high rise offices instead of the last unit fronting the square. Subsequently John Grealy went some way to rectifying the damage.

The impact of World War 2 on Brisbane was substantial. The most interesting structures in the south-west Pacific were the so-called igloos. Often attributed to US engineers, they are certainly the work of a French engineer, Emile Brizay, a refugee in Australia from Singapore where he had been in practice. When Japan entered the war, Brizay was commissioned for structures to camouflaging parked-aircraft but the rapid Japanese advance precluded their realisation. In Queensland while air-supremacy was in doubt in 1942, Brizay’s lightweight, bowstring trussed and pinned-arches, made of nailed green timber of small cross section and short lengths, easily assembled and erected on site, were used extensively to support netting and other camouflage but it was quickly realised that if sheeted, these structures would be even more useful. The first igloo was built at Breakfast Creek by Brisbane contractor, Manual Hornibrook, contractor for the Grey and Story Bridges and later the ribbed roof of Sydney’s Opera House. What was the origin of Brizay’s idea? In France he worked for pioneering reinforced concrete engineer Eugene Freysinnet on aircraft hangers at Villacoublay and the Plougastel Bridge. Both the erection procedure using bowstring trusses and the trusses themselves were based on the temporary timber falsework used for casting Freysinnet’s concrete structures. Likewise, the igloos were temporary, but most were used long after the war, including as the passenger terminals as Eagle Farm where the igloo for Ansett was fitted out by Melbourne architect Stuart McIntosh in Brisbane after winning a competition in 1963 for the University of Queensland’s Great Hall.

The University of Queensland was designed by Hennessy & Hennessy, a Sydney practice with a Brisbane branch office. The main Forgan-Smith Building was centered on the assumed permanent approach from West End, by a road cut through Highgate Hill. After the war, construction was deferred, leaving access by St Lucia Rd to the right. The Great Hall was intended at the right hand end of the main building, balancing the library on the other – the central tower was to be a carillon. By the 1960s, it was clear that the Hall as proposed would not proceed and instead a competition was held for a site which addressed the now permanent St Lucia Rd approach.

\(^39\) The original town hall designed by William Coote in 1863, was also the outcome of disputed competition.
\(^40\) The third square was Centenary Place at Petrie Bight, built for the centenary of Brisbane’s settlement in 1924.
It was won by McIntosh with an elegant glass temple raised on a grassed plinth which contained the ancillary accommodation. The roof and wide cantilevers were supported by lozenge shaped beams aligned with the long axis of the building, appropriately focused on the stage but with a cost penalty. Under the competition conditions McIntosh closed his successful practice and relocated to Brisbane. When tenders came in high realignment of the beams was suggested but no building eventuated.

The commission later went to Robin Gibson in whose Mayne Hall, the beams, not surprisingly span the short axis (and with most of the ancillary accommodation deleted). Despite its symbolic importance, Mayne Hall had a limited life. Graduations (and Obama’s talk at the G20 meeting in Brisbane) are now held in a larger multi-purpose building, hidden to the side of the campus, and whose primary role is as a gymnasium. More successfully, Mayne Hall was converted for the University Art Museum. Gibson went on to win a well-run competition for the Queensland Art Gallery in 1973. The winning design was not built when in highly political circumstances, the commission was expanded to include the entire Queensland Cultural Centre.

Since Europeans settled on the banks of the Brisbane river, the main buildings for government have been built on the high bank aligned with George and William Sts, bookended in time by [Old] Government and Parliament House to the south-east; and the Supreme Court to the north-west. I want to look at the post-war history of this area. During extended post-war shortages, development by EJA Weller and Roman Pavlyshyn, took the form of urban infil, conserving and upgrading the utility of existing significant buildings. Ukrainian-born Pavlyshyn trained in Vienna and completed his education in 1946 at Darmstadt where staff were interested both in modernism and contextual romantic nationalism. After working on post-war reconstruction, he migrated to Queensland in 1948, working for the Austrian-trained modern architect Karl Langer before joining the Commonwealth. After joining the Works Department in 1958, he rapidly designed this addition to FDG Stanley’s Supreme Court, retaining its garden setting, visible and accessible through an undercroft below a slab block, more Brazilian than French, instantly overcoming a short-fall in accommodation with offices, a watchhouse and underground parking. It also connected commercial development in Queen and George Streets. Eventually, Pavlyshyn gave up his prolonged fight to save Stanley’s courthouse and designed its replacement, documented by Bligh Jessup & Bretnall, and recently demolished.

Also in 1958, Pavlyshyn designed an addition to the former State Saving Bank (then the Taxation Building shortly to be vacated by the Commonwealth). This proposal had comparable merits to his court design, more than doubling the office accommodation, basement carparking and a shop-front for government services, sympathetically related to the existing building and enclosing for the first time the north-east side of Queen’s Gardens. It was entirely up-to-date, skilfully adapting ideas from the Italian Rationalists and Brazil to the problems of scale and sun control of the principal south-west facing façade. Pavlyshyn’s addition would have made this building viable. Instead it was later sold at a bargain price and promptly resold at a large profit. Concurrently, Weller was working on the opposite side of Queens Gardens extending the State Library for the State Centenary in 1959.
Again, the strategy was a sympathetic but modern addition, also Brazil-inspired. Weller worked with a team of talented assistants including a very talented Dutch structural engineer Hendrik de Jong.

The building was well known for its unpopular mural by Lindsay Edwards – the result of a competition in which I’m sure the architects hoped for something like Candido Portinari’s murals for Oscar Neimeyer in Rio de Janeiro. In the aftermath of delayed completion, Jim Weller was sidelined, but Roman Pavlyshyn quickly rose in a bureaucracy based traditionally on seniority. His appointment as Supervising Architect was appealed and although confirmed, the hearing destroyed Pavlyshyn’s chance of successfully operating in the position and he resigned. In partnership with Hugh Beck he was commissioned for the GMH Assembly Plant at Acacia Ridge, probably (aside from mining) Queensland’s largest ever industrial building. It’s forgotten, but could easily be seen as iconic. Once the plant was completed, Beck & Pavlyshyn were without work and after an absence of a few years, Pavlyshyn resumed his role in the Works Department, but now as an efficient bureaucrat presiding over a period of well-directed government patronage.

While Pavlyshyn was working at GMH, urban infill gave way to urban renewal. Extensions to the Savings Bank were deferred in favour of three office towers and a new Square on the site of the Bellevue Hotel whose iconic status was on the rise. Inspired by Stockholm’s Normalm urban renewal, the towers were modelled on Ken Woolley’s State Offices in Sydney. Only the first tower was built, but lacking the elegance of Sydney’s tower and soon surpassed by higher buildings in Brisbane, the Executive Building never enjoyed iconic status.

When it was time for a second tower, Pavlyshyn had returned and attitudes changed again. In the 1970s, there was less interest in height and more in context with an emerging interest in conservation. Engaged as urban designers, UDPA proposed clusters of low to medium rise offices on a site extended to the river. With approval in principle, Lund Hutton Newell were engaged as architects while UDPA retained their urban design role. To resolve a conflict over the feasibility of retaining the Bellevue, the architects proposed engaging Walter Netsch of Chicago office of Skidmore Owings & Merrill, probably the best known architectural firm in the world. Away from New York Head Office, Netsch in seeking an alternative to the firm’s pure modernism, devised what he called field theory, formulation of a project-specific, three-dimension lattice based on context and brief (which could have included retention of the Bellevue, but didn’t).

In what is interpreted as a deliberate move to discredit the Bellevue, shortly before the scheme was presented the cast iron verandahs were removed, causing outrage. Belatedly, thought was given to the problem: GHM Addison’s brick Mansions was to be reconstructed in an historic village and the

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41 With the landscape architect Harry Oakman at the Brisbane City Council, there was a serious interest in Brisbane as a sub-tropical city.
42 Ury Stukoff, David Davies. George Thain, John Wheeler and Peter Prystupa.
43 Narrower, longer and lower but with a larger floor plate and without low rise annexes which related the building to existing development.
44 Urban Design & Planning Associates, a planning division of Bates Smart McCutcheon. None of the buildings later identified as heritage were retained.
45 In particular, Netsch was known for a recently built chapel at the US Air Force Academy in Colorado and the Circle Campus at the University of Illinois where University Hall was a primary source for Ken Woolley’s Black Stump offices.
46 Known particular for the work of Gordon Bunschaft from their New York office.
facade of the Bellevue re-erected half a block along Alice St, as a facade to a hospitality component of the proposed scheme. The proposals pleased no-one. While the first stage (which was clear of heritage buildings) was documented, protests continued as did disagreement on the feasibility of reuse. Finally, the Premier Joh Bjelke Petersen had had enough and agreed to its demolition, guaranteeing the Bellevue, iconic status and Joh yet more notoriety.

To conclude, I’ll speak about views. I came to think that almost anything could be iconic but with a minimum requirement that the icon is, was or will be visible. Clearing the scrubs revealed views making evident the interesting topography of the inner suburbs and D’Aguilar Range to the west. In the last decade of the twentieth century and since, this process reversed with horizons contracting as development blocked views, frequently the result of government action through sponsored development or the sale of ‘publicly-owned’ land, such as the perimetry of the Exhibition Grounds.

Many early postcards were taken from the convict-built observatory. The view on the right is blocked by a wall of apartments built over part of the Roma Street rail yards. Increasingly, the city depends on the quality of individual buildings rather than any synergetic relationship between them or their setting. For a second tier metropolis with lesser budgets, this is unlikely be successful. Looking in the opposite direction, on the horizon to the left is Bowen Hills on which was built Brisbane’s Luna Park with its central attraction Cloudland Ballroom. Forgetting for a moment the elliptical arched entrance, the exterior was surprisingly modern for 1940 – boxed spandels and fascias framed and sheeted like a building of 30 years later. What was the origin of the arch?47

The best known elliptical arch, but a decade later, is Eero Saarinen’s competition winning Gateway to the West at St Louis in 1947. Saarinen denied that the arch was based on one planned for an exposition at Rome in 1842 to mark the twentieth anniversary of Italy’s Fascist Government. Almost certainly the Roman arch is the source for Cloudland’s entrance. The ballroom closed in 1941 and was occupied from 1942 by US Forces. If the Roman Arch wasn’t the source of Saarinen’s idea, might someone in Saarinen’s office have been in Brisbane during the War? Cloudland re-opened after the war but in 1982 soon after the demise of the Bellevue was also demolished. In the absence of heritage legislation, Joh was blamed for it also. Occupying a cut-down hilltop in the centre is Dara, the Catholic Archbishop’s Palace and future site of the proposed Holy Name Cathedral.

Archbishop James Duhig, is credited with more than 400 Catholic churches and institutions, which occupy many of Brisbane Hill tops including St Brigid’s shown earlier. Duhig is the single most important architectural patron in Brisbane’s history. Many are landmarks. The culmination of his work was to be the Holy Name Cathedral on the site of Dara. Designed by Hennessy & Hennessy, construction started in 1927 on what was to be one of the largest cathedrals in the southern hemisphere.48

The Cathedral was originally to have been polychrome brickwork but in 1928, Duhig acquired the rights to a US process called Benedict Stone, cast masonry composed of pulverised stone (in this instance multi-coloured Brisbane Tuff) and cement. The insurance company CML provided Duhig with a mortgage on properties which included the Benedict plant, inducing the company to make

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47 It’s not an arch but a cross section through an elliptical vault within which was a colonnaded, semi-circular apsidal entrance with over-scaled Corinthian capitals
48 It was as long as St Patrick’s Cathedral, Melbourne but the nave was wider but not as tall.
use of it for their own buildings, landmarks not only in their Brisbane office, designed by Hennessy & Hennessy, but also elsewhere in Australia and overseas. The Cathedral site overlooked Centenary Place, built to mark Brisbane’s centenary in 1924. Previously, a site on its eastern flank was proposed for a new Town Hall, and later the circus associated with the bridge from Kangaroo Point occupied part of this space. After the boundary walls and crypt were built, construction stopped.

The Benedict Stone Plant was occupied by US Forces during the war, but with continuing post war building restrictions, the plant was sold. It was a signal that the Cathedral would not proceed, provoking a dispute over fees won by Hennessy & Hennessy. As townscape the relationship between the city’s two cathedrals would have been memorable. St John’s shown here with only one bay of the nave, has now been completed, after more than a century. It is iconic as would have been the Holy Name Cathedral.

Views have been of sufficient concern to justify studies from which the following illustration is taken. The large yellow triangle is the view from the Riverside Expressway, one of the best remaining panoramas in the city.

The middle triangle is the view from Highgate Hill Park (another spectacular view) as is the narrow view to the lower left. The red arrows identify other views but not comprehensively (there was a panoramic view of the CGBD from the blue oval). I assumed that the study reflected an interest in protecting views. Now I think that only yellow patches are to be protected. The Southbank Corporation was a major contributor to the loss of views – building a wall along the western side of Grey St (the dotted blue line).

When Robin Gibson spoke about his design for the Queensland Cultural Centre, he emphasised a relationship between the complex and the D’Aguilar Range. The massing affinity was clearly evident from the Riverside Expressway. Uncharitably I wondered if this was post justification, but recently I’ve seen design drawings where the relationship was anticipated. Speculative highrise apartments are continuing the Southbank Corporation’s wall further along Grey St and this relationship is disappearing.

This is a favourite post card - one of the best views of the river. On the right is the Customs House skillfully massed asymmetrically to suit the varied approaches. Riverfront land to the left of the Customs house was owned by the Council who in 1924, built the Maritime Building which blocked this view. In the 1980s when Brisbane ‘rediscovered’ the river, there was an opportunity to reinstate the view as part of a Council and State Government development called Admiralty Quays, but construction of a new building was allowed several storeys higher, despite opposition from the Commonwealth who still owned the Customs House. When I was looking for name of that building whose address is 443 Queen St (it was the Prudential Building), the web delivered this shock since the New Year now well known and the subject of a court case which promises to be interesting. The Customs house is dwarfed to the lower right. The words of the proponents speak for themselves.

The only thing missing is iconic but I’m sure it’s only a matter of time.

Don Watson, 1.2.2016
Keynote Speaker Abstract

Gold Coast Icon
Gold Coast architecture and development from 1945 to the present

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This paper outlines the Gold Coast Icon project, a research project being undertaken by the Council of the City of Gold Coast that aims to explore and reveal the places and spaces that tell the quintessential and important stories of the Gold Coast’s development during the post-war era.

The period from the end of World War II to the present has been a time of extraordinary growth and invention for the Gold Coast. It was when the Gold Coast as we know it today came into being. The Coast was transformed from a string of early seaside villages and rural settlements into a tourism and lifestyle mecca of international renown. Swamps were transformed into canal estates, farms into shopping centres and suburbs.

Fibro beach shacks and motels sprang up along the highway, and they in turn have given way to gleaming high-rise and resorts. People from all nations and walks of life settled here, drawn by the city’s economic opportunities as well as its mild, sunny climate. Most chased a dream, and many have literally given their dreams physical form through the shaping of their homes, businesses and public spaces. In doing so, the residents of the Gold Coast have often demonstrated playfulness and lack of inhibition, encouraged by the city’s culture of entrepreneurialism and relaxed social attitudes.

Developers, architects and property owners have drawn from a rich pallet of ideas from around the world. Some have turned to future-looking International Modernism, others to suburban conventionalism or architectural fantasy based on imagined pasts and exotic lands. This cherry-picking has combined with economic booms and busts, successive waves of immigrant wealth, and the continual reshaping of the city’s tourist attractions to create an eclectic and dynamic built environment.

To many observers the Gold Coast remains a very new city that appears to be devoid of a history. However the past 70 years has been a significant span of time in terms of human activity and it has established a richly layering of places, stories and artefacts that depict the evolution of a unique place and one that is important in Australia’s national culture.

Despite the importance of this post-war history, its very recentness means that much of it is unappreciated and under threat of loss. Given that the Gold Coast is still constantly changing, the
reality is that these linkages to the past may disappear unnoticed and undocumented. Through the process of recording and discussing this built heritage, public appreciation can be sparked and efforts focussed to conserve key sites and collect important histories.
The Tullamarine Airport in the 1970s
A lost icon of the jet age

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The 1960s signalled the onset of the jet age and cities worldwide rushed to accommodate this new modernity. The jet age spawned the construction of the Tullamarine Airport in Melbourne: Australia’s first purpose-built jetport. Although now considered purely functional in the 21st century, in 1970, Tullamarine was the height of modernity and progress. Its design was truly minimalist. Built in prefabricated concrete, its brutalist buildings sat like sentinels in the sparse surrounds of Macedon basalt plains. It had Victoria’s first complete freeway while Tullamarine was Australia’s first airport connected by freeway to its city. It was the envy of all Australia.

Melbournians had long waited for Tullamarine’s opening with visitor numbers exceeding travellers even until the mid-1980s. People visited its cinemas, restaurants, bars and other facilities as day trips or on as an attraction on its own accord and the use of such facilities in such a comprehensive fashion to generate revenue from the travelling and non-travelling public made Tullamarine truly distinctive amongst airports of the late 1960s and early 1970s.

The airport was an icon of 1970s Australia through its vibe, its facilities, the architecture and interior design. Much of this is now lost in the 21st century. This paper explores the lost iconography of the Tullamarine Airport through four areas of analysis. It first looks at Tullamarine as a monument to the ‘jet age’ in Australia. The paper describes Tullamarine’s initial sublimity from multiple perspectives – the public, the media and academia. The iconic facilities that made Tullamarine a visitor attraction are also noted, particularly the Astrojet Centre, its cinema, the Top Air restaurant and the observation decks. Finally its cutting-edge interior design and minimalist architecture are also described.

Keywords: Melbourne; Airport; Tullamarine; Icon; Astrojet
Introduction

According to the ACCC [Australian Competition and Consumer Commission], Melbourne Airport is gaining rapidly on Sydney in the key indices of outrageousness and gouging, and now is actually the most expensive airport in Australia if you want to park for three hours.

Why do we put up with it?

My theory is that the entire experience of air travel is a conspiracy of petty humiliations, designed subtly to erode the self-esteem of its human clients ...

In this article by journalist Annabel Crabb (2010), one of the main complaints against Melbourne Airport, otherwise known as Tullamarine, is enunciated. Crabb’s derision over costly parking, traffic jams and poor functionality and service is now commonplace. In its Airport Monitoring Report 2013-14 (2015:x), the ACCC revealed that both Melbourne and Perth Airports had ‘the equal lowest overall average rating of any monitored airport’ for quality of service. This was not what Tullamarine’s designers had originally intended.

This 21st century revelation is in stark contrast to the lost icon that was Tullamarine in the 1970s. Tullamarine’s construction was a result of Essendon Airport being unable to expand to cater for the Boeing 707 in the 1950s. In response, the Commonwealth set up the Melbourne Airport Panel (MAP) in 1958 to decide the site of a purpose-built jetport with the main contenders being Essendon, Tullamarine and Laverton. Built from 1963 to 1970, its principal planner, Dr Bill Bradfield of the Department of Civil Aviation, allowed for many facilities such as the Astrojet with its exhibition centre and cinema, first class restaurants and bars which were open late, seven days a week, and were all designed to raise revenue to make Tullamarine self-sufficient. This concept is now described in the 21st century as the Airport City (see Kasarda and Appold 2010). Its brutalist architecture, designed by architects from the Department of Works, and bright interiors were also at the height of cutting-edge 1970s design.

This iconography has been lost in the modern day, a result of airport constantly expanding and changing. This paper describes in four sections what made Tullamarine an icon of the 1970s. It also describes the public’s and the media’s admiration for the airport through the lens of the glamour of air travel in the 1960s and 1970s, particularly of jet aircraft, which was also used as a lure for not only travellers, but people who would visit the airport as a destination in its own right as well. The facilities that made the airport an attraction are assessed, as these were principal to the airport’s popularity. Lastly, the modernistic design features of the built environment will also be discussed. Key sources used include archival material from the Civil Aviation Historical Society, popular press & professional journals as well as sources related to its current reassessment eg “Jet Set Melbourne” exhibition and online blogs.

Tullamarine and the Jet Age

The late 1960s and 1970s was a tumultuous time for aviation and technology throughout the world. Man had landed on the moon in 1969; the design of the Concorde and the Boeing SST (Supersonic transport) were well underway, and the Boeing 747, an aircraft that would revolutionise air travel,
had its first commercial flight in January 1970. Jet aircraft were an icon of 1960s modernity and were principal to the concept of modern air travel that fundamentally changed the way people travelled around the world (Vantoch 2013:91). By carrying twice as many passengers at twice the speed of their piston predecessors, jets instigated the ‘era of mass air travel’ by increasing accessibility and facilitating a decrease in fares (Davidson and Spearritt 2000:283). The B707 was pivotal in paving ‘the way for the world to travel [in this] new way’ (Sutter 2006:64). Such commercial aircraft were making the world a smaller place: ‘modern travel was going to bring everyone closer together – and jets were the vehicle of choice’ (Heimann and Silver 2010:257).

The arrival of the first commercial jet airliner, the de Havilland Comet 1 in 1952 heralded the ‘jet age’: an era that was characterised by speed, modernity and glamour (Lubin 2003:136-137; Vantoch 2013:91). The jet age created the jet set – a group of aspirational, mobile, sophisticated international travellers who pursued the glamour of jet travel (Gregg 2014). Jets and their propeller driven predecessors also helped bring migrants to Australia during a time of significant population growth in the 1960s (Limnios-Sekeris 2015) while aircraft were important in fostering ‘a sense of interconnectedness’ between nations during the post-war era (Robertson 2014).

The introduction of jets had an immediate effect on the way tourism was conducted. An absence of a jet airport was considered by the American tourism industry as a ‘disadvantage’ as tourists preferred jets to other air travel modes:

The question of prestige is one which cannot be regarded lightly. From the tourist point of view a city without a jet airport must be regarded as being not readily accessible … A city is rated much higher by the international air traveller if it is served by pure jet aircraft (Tullamarine Jet Airport Committee 1962:18-19).

Although the jet set pursued the jet age in the 1960s, flying was still a fundamentally expensive means of travel during this time. A flight from Sydney to London in 1965 represented five months of average earnings, which was around $1140 (Australian Government 2008:39). This inaccessibility further fed the glamour and attraction of jet travel. Nonetheless, the ascendancy of jets was unstoppable, which led to Tullamarine being constructed as Australia’s first jetport. To meet the public’s intense interest in aviation, Bradfield designed Tullamarine with a multitude of facilities that would not only service the travelling public but visitors as well. This policy was hugely successful as by the late 1970s, the airport was still captivating some 250,000 sightseers weekly as well as accommodating 120,000 actual travellers (Department of Transport c.1978).

Tullamarine – the people’s choice

The Herald declared Melbourne had joined the “international [jet] set” with Tullamarine’s opening (Herald 1/7/1970). The public was allowed a preview of the terminal building during the weekend of 27-28 June 1970, one week before the official opening and Melburnians flocked to the debut of Australia’s new edifice to modernism and the jet age (SMH 29/6/1970). Over 80,000 people visited the new jetport with traffic so congested along the Tullamarine Freeway that many cars were turned back with pleas for visitors to “stay at home” on local radio (SMH 29/6/1970). Tullamarine’s opening weekend was “the biggest public attraction since Victoria’s Art Centre” opened in August 1968 (DCA News 1970).
The public and the media deemed the new airport a “wild success” (Architect 1970b). Jack Percival, aviation writer to the Sydney Morning Herald (SMH), described Tullamarine as “the airport with the lot” and “a glamour international airport” (Percival 1969). Melbourne’s Age described Tullamarine as a “magnificent air-terminal complex” that promised “so much for the international traveller” (Age 30/6/1970a). The West Australian newspaper reported in 1967 that Tullamarine was an “Aviation Showpiece”: “Melbourne looks like becoming Australia’s No 1 city for international flying” (Johnstone 1967). The Herald reported Ed Clark, the former American ambassador to Australia, declared of Tullamarine: “Man, that airport’s really something” (Herald 1/7/1970).

Melbourne’s new jetport was awe-inspiring. It was one of the biggest single building projects “yet undertaken in Australia” according to Minister for Works, Sir Reginald Wright (Wright 1970). Tullamarine was also described as “the largest and most important airport terminal to be constructed in Australia” (Osborne and Jack c.1964). The sheer magnitude of the structure and the materials used was sublime. Almost three miles (4.8 kilometres) of carpet was laid in the terminal, while over 800,000 square feet of plasterboard and 40,500 square feet of ceiling tiles were used (Age 30/6/1970b; Age 30/6/1970c). The completed terminal building was massive:

The floor space for all the terminals is 821,000 square feet which is about eight times as much as is found in a large, 16-storey office block in the city (Age 30/6/1970a).

Reflecting on its iconic nature and its importance as an international staging place, Australian Country and Western singer, Kevin Shegog, was inspired to write a song, which was released in 1971: Melbourne Airport, Tullamarine:

- Melbourne Airport, Tullamarine,
- Melbourne Airport, Tullamarine,
- Flying up there looking down on the international scene,
- At Melbourne Airport, Tullamarine.

**Tullamarine – iconic facilities**

The facilities built at Tullamarine to serve not only the traveller, but to be an attraction to visitors in its own right was unsurpassed during the 1960s/1970s. No other airport in the world, apart from Orly Paris, came close to the range of facilities at Tullamarine. There was also another purpose of the diverse range of amenities at Tullamarine. These were all on airport land and thus became a source of non-aviation revenue, which would allow Tullamarine to become self-sufficient from a business perspective. Most important to this plan was the Astrojet Centre, its cinema, the observation decks and the Top Air restaurant.

The Astrojet Space Centre was central to the concept of Tullamarine being a place to visit. A 30-year lease was given to Astrojet Exhibitions Pty Ltd to run the centre with facilities including an exposition hall, art gallery, cinema, food outlets, a chemist, offices, a post office with a florist/giftshop and a bottle shop (Gilchrist 1970; Concept 1970). The Astrojet Centre was a large complex with an area of over 50,000 square feet (Concept 1970). A cinema, named the Astrojet Cinema, was operational between 1970 and 1978. From 1971 it showed contemporary feature films such as Beneath the
Planet of the Apes, 2001 Space Odyssey and Airport. The cinema was open Wednesdays-Sunday nights, showing double features at 7.45pm with matinees Saturday and Sunday afternoons.

The exposition hall of the Astrojet was the main part of the space centre’s attraction. It was a unique educational amenity – built as part of an airport facility, and unlike any other resource constructed as part of any airport during the 1960s and 1970s. Described as a window to the “Space Age”, it was designed to “increase the awareness of the general public, especially youth, to the potential of international air travel and the achievements and aspirations of the international space programme” (Space Vision 1970:3). The main attraction was an electronic model of Tullamarine and the City of Melbourne, which was the biggest of its type in the world (Gilchrist 1970).

The aim of the airport model was to give the visitor an accurate impression of airport operations:

The controller ‘flies’ around the hall some twenty planes representing many international and domestic airlines and brings them into landing patterns along Perspex ‘flight paths’ simulating actual airport procedures (Space Vision 1970:7).

A number of airline companies had exhibits around this installation including BOAC, QANTAS, United Airlines and Alitalia amongst others. The mezzanine level had major exhibitions from NASA, the French Space programme and the Commonwealth Department of Supply. The NASA exhibit was displayed outside the US for the first time. An art gallery contained works from various sources: Australian Bark Paintings, Italian art works presented by Alitalia Italian Airlines and a special NASA space painting exhibition ‘Eye Witness to Space’, which was on loan from the Smithsonian Institute (Herald 14/8/1970). A hair dressing salon, a dentist, a chemist and a GP clinic were also available. The courtyard garden was called the Planet Garden and was “designed to fit the space age theme of the centre” (DCA c.1970).

A bottle shop, which was known as the Liquor Locker, was situated on the outer northwest corner of the Astrojet Centre. Wine tastings showcasing Australian wines were regularly conducted in the cellar of the bottle shop, which was open to the ground level in the form of an atrium (Space Vision 1970) (Figure 1). The bottle shop was part of the overall plan of the Astrojet, as patrons of the airport would also visit the bottle shop as part of their airport experience. It was always the intention of the DCA to have a range of shopping facilities accessible to the public and travellers: “The shopping mall will include all the facilities normally found in a regular shopping centre” (DCA 1970). A supermarket was also planned for the Space Centre but this was not built (Space Vision 1970:4,38).

The combination of the observation platforms and the Astrojet Centre provided a whole day’s entertainment. “Bruce”, a blogger whose father used to take him to visit Tullamarine, describes this experience:

My dad used to take my brother and me to the airport for a day out. We would spend an hour or so watching the planes take off and land, from a balcony upstairs where you could watch with the aid of large binocular stands. We would then head back inside for a bite to eat, then across the road to the Astrojet Cinema. Then we would head back to the terminal to watch a few more planes then go home. A great day’s entertainment (Perkin 2010).
The jet age was made an exciting visitor experience by the Astrojet. Matt Morgan, who also visited Tullamarine when young, described the experience of visiting the centre:

I can remember going with Dad in the ZG Fairlane to the Liquor Locker to stock up for many an upcoming Lions Club do, and I remember going to see Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid with the whole family at the Astrojet. The one thing I clearly and happily recall is getting out of the car at Tulla and smelling the jet fuel; to a wee lad that was mighty exciting (Morgan 2013).

The Astrojet Centre is now a lost icon of modernity and the technological sublime. Its exhibition space was flooded by a hailstorm in 1974 and the cinema closed in 1978. Local Melbourne artist Zoë Meagher has recently used the derelict Astrojet building as a backdrop to her performance named Astrojet (2014), which was “part bus tour, part audio guide … to the secret location of Melbourne’s forgotten Astrojet Space and Science Centre” (Meagher 2014). Meagher’s “original inspiration came from a copy of the Space Vision (1970) book at [her] parents’ house, and discovering that the Astrojet building still existed but had been largely forgotten”. Reflecting on the impact of the Astrojet performance, Art Critic Joanna Gould stated:

As soon as the audio began I committed to the fantasy of being a patron in 1970. I imagined visiting the centre for the first time, eager and hopeful. When our personal headsets encouraged us to daydream about a technology-filled future of wonder, I did. When it explained the many sights of the Astrojet Space Centre, I got excited. I imagined exploring the Lenton Parr sculpture ‘Astra’ on sight and eating at its restaurant. I allowed the 70s disco backing music to wash over me as I saw the Melbourne city in a new light – a futuristic urban environment, idyllic and bright. I was seduced (Gould 2014).

As part of the attraction, food and beverages were served at many retail outlets throughout the airport. The catering at Tullamarine was provided by the concession Aerojet Caterers Pty Ltd, whose holdings included the Top Air International Restaurant, VIP rooms, the second floor cocktail bar and lounge, two quick service restaurants, two cocktail bars in the domestic terminals and milk bars on the observation decks. Observation decks were an integral part of the jet age experience with many overseas airports, including Orly and O’Hare, having many visitors. Like Tullamarine, Orly was designed for the visitor with grand viewing platforms on multiple levels. In 1965, it was France’s most attended monument with four million visitors (Repiquet 2005:194). Orly also had a cinema, the “Publicis Cinema”.

The Top Air was the flagship of Tullamarine’s dining facilities and was a major attraction. Located on the second floor of the international terminal adjacent to the cocktail bar, the Top Air had seating for up to 320 guests and a small dance floor (Bang and Gorrie 1970). The inaugural executive chef was Emile Jung from Luxemburg. On arriving, Jung stated that “the new airport will serve the best food in Australia or I go home [sic] to Luxembourg” (Ryan 1970). This was a profound prognostication as by 1971 Jung went to France to take over the Au Crocodile restaurant in Strasbourg. Jung’s main concern and probably the reason he returned to France, was the lack of appropriately trained staff in Australia (Ryan 1970).
Jung was a culinary rising star. Au Crocodile was in decline when he bought it in 1971. Jung received one Michelin star a year later in 1972, two in 1975 and Michelin’s highest honour: three stars in 1989. Therefore Jung’s presence at Tullamarine was a sign of the intentions of the Top Air and its owners. As with the Astrojet Space Centre and cinema, the Top Air was designed as a destination for a unique dining experience, thus reinforcing Tullamarine as a place to visit. Consistent with the choice of chef, the Top Air was a fine dining restaurant when it opened: a “prestige” dining experience (Space Centre 1970:38). The crockery was made by Allied English Potters, which also manufactured Royal Doulton and Crown Derby China (Age 30/6/1970d). Tullamarine was an unusual site for this style of fine dining in 1960s Melbourne, which was generally restricted to larger hotels and high-class inner-CBD restaurants. The Top Air utilised the spectacle of the airport and its planes

Figure 1 – Architectural drawings of the Liquor Locker showing the cellar atrium c.1968. Source RMIT Design Archives.
as a dramatic stage: the jet setter’s podium upon which many a memorable dinner could be had and was publicised as such.

**Tullamarine – an iconic built environment**

Tullamarine’s buildings, which were distant from the city, were like sentinels rising out of the sparse Macedon plains. This “pleasantly rural” setting complimented and highlighted its built environment (MacDonald 1970). Architectural critic Robyn Boyd, who initially disapproved of the lack of striking architecture and avant garde design, reflected on the minimalist appearance of the setting: “Tullamarine was built on one of the most beautiful sites of any metropolitan airport anywhere. A very fine $30 million freeway carries you only 13 miles from Melbourne to a great flat valley surrounded by low hills” (Boyd 1971).

Architect David Watson assessed the architecture of Tullamarine for the *Architect Journal*. Watson, like Boyd, lamented the lack of style co-ordination between some of the buildings however, he did acknowledge the simplicity of form that the architecture created, which was both reasoned and functional:

The symbol of place is clearly defined by the plan form: dictated by the logic of road curve on one side of the building, and aircraft marshalling on the other ... By and large, the building is a simple workable answer to complex technical and functional problems (Watson 1970).

The terminal, water tower, control tower and services building were examples of modernist, brutalist architecture with tinted glazing, béton brute concrete and precast concrete elements predominating. We have seen in this paper the iconic nature of the terminal’s size and sublimity, and this was complimented and contributed to by its architectural qualities. Many components of Tullamarine’s design were dressed in raw concrete including the water tower, large portions of the control tower and the elevated roadway and bridges. The appearance of the curvilinear roadway against the concave terminal resembled the International Style departure hall of La Guardia, New York (1964) and this defined for Tullamarine, according to the National Trust:

The 'modern' concept of convenient intermodal travel ... with the potential for the public to travel directly from the city to the elevated departure terminal entrance and then directly onto the planes via aerobridges, without ever stepping outside (National Trust 2010) (Figure 2).

Much to the lament of Boyd and Watson, many of the ancillary buildings were also of a striking modern design, which highlighted the lack of co-ordination with the terminal structures. The $2 million Astrojet Centre was a modernist, glazed white brick structure designed by architect Kurt Popper, a Jewish immigrant from Vienna who arrived in Australia in 1939, which was centred on a garden plaza (Popper n.d:5; Edquist 2000:11). The southern face of this building was adorned by the Astra (1970), which was a welded steel sculpture by artist and Director of the Victorian College of the Arts, Lenton Parr. The Astra was Australia’s “biggest welded steel structure” and was intended to symbolise flight and travel (Age 1/4/1970) (Figure 3).
Another ancillary building was the Travelodge Hotel. This $3 million motel was the first Travelodge to be designed in Australia with three concave curves forming a ‘tri-arc’, a design based on an American standard Travelodge plan (Architect 1970a). It was considered ‘the new jet age look in accommodation’ (Age 30/6/1970e) with the internal décor, the height of late 1960s interior design. The original colour schemes varied between floors and consisted of lime, aqua and burnt orange tones. Suites had a ‘Spanish theme’ with a built in bar with wall-to-wall shag-pile carpet (Concept 1970).

The terminal’s internal fit-out was equally striking and chic for 1970s Australia. The Australian Women’s Weekly described Tullamarine as “Colormarine”: a “bright joy amid the grass fields” and as “handsome, immensely colourful and efficient”, highlighting the vast array of colours and contemporary design used in the facility (Bang and Gorrie 1970). The terminal and the fingers were minimalist in their fit out. In stark comparison were the bars, cocktail lounges and restaurants. The Top Air restaurant was decorated in bright crimson and purple, with full-length windows allowing views of the aircraft.
One of the main designers used by concessions was George Kral. Kral was a post-war immigrant from Czechoslovakia who was a constant of Melbourne’s interior design scene during the 1950s (Edquist 2013). A highlight of his work was the cocktail lounge and VIP rooms:

The VIP lounge at Tullamarine … was dark and luxurious with carved timber screens, purple sandblasted timber lining boards, and an extraordinary sculptural ceiling composed of copper-lined inverted cones, with square apertures providing for concealed lighting and supply and return air conditioning (Edqvist 2013) (Figure 4).

The end product of the VIP lounge, however, was not Kral’s complete vision for the space. Potted trees were to be placed with their foliage in between the cones “producing a grotto-like effect” but this concept never came to fruition, probably as a result of high cost (Edqvist 2013). A facility completely fitted out to Kral’s design was the Liquor Locker. The interior’s earthiness reflected the materials used: sandblasted concrete pillars and slate floors (Edquist 2013). The predominant feature was a “unique” floating ceiling made from over 14,000 amber bottles (Concept 1970).
Conclusion

Today, we don’t associate Tullamarine as an icon of 1970s Australia unlike the Sydney Opera House, Mad Max, Paul Hogan or Holden cars. To those in the 21st century, Tullamarine is just an airport, but in the 1970s it was much more, relying on the novelty of air travel for commercial gain. It also aided the cultural and ethnic development of the State of Victoria, growth of which was previously enhanced by events such as the 1956 Olympics and post-war migration. The opening of Tullamarine, however, was a turning point. Kevin Shegog and many other commentators considered that with Tullamarine, Melbourne had entered the “international scene”.

The Tullamarine Airport represented the height of modernity when it opened on 1 July 1970. It was an icon of the jet age – with its many facilities, it brutalist architecture and dazzling interiors. Tullamarine was a place to visit. Many of the facilities, which were popular with the public and the media, are now lost in a time when air travel is purely functional without any of the glamour or sublimity seen in 1970. With bloggers and artists lamenting this bygone experience, Tullamarine is now a lost icon of a time when aviation became more accessible and the joy and awe of flying was at its peak.

Airports are dynamic facilities and Tullamarine is no different. A new phase of expansion and growth is currently taking place. A recently developed budget terminal and multistorey carpark – terminal four, has been constructed as an extension of terminal three and the planning of a new third
runway, first described in 1958, is now underway. The Travelodge, now a Holiday Inn, is ever present with its ‘tri-arc’ curves still prominent as is the Astrojet, but this is now an abandoned building awaiting a new lease on life. It was the forethought of Bradfield’s blueprint that allowed so much land to be available for lessees not only in 1970 but in the current day. Tullamarine is waiting to become an icon again.

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Melbourne Chinatown as an Iconic Enclave

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Chinatowns as iconic enclaves exist in several Australian cities. Among them, Melbourne Chinatown is the oldest, which dates back to the gold rush in the 1850s. Early Chinese migrants settled along the Little Bourke Street on the outskirts of the city, which served as a staging post on their journey to goldfields. Lodging houses were established providing cheap accommodation for sojourners. Gambling houses, opium shops, and brothels also emerged, resulting in the notorious reputation of this ethnic precinct. It was common for the general public to stigmatize this area as a fearful slum. This paper examines the transformation process of the Melbourne Chinatown from a ghetto in the past period of segregation to a well-received popular tourist destination nowadays. The distinctive characteristics and rich heritage of the urban fabric are regarded as a symbol of difference and a valuable asset to multicultural Australia.

Keywords: Melbourne Chinatown; Iconic enclave; Ethnic precinct; Urban heritage

Introduction

Among various Chinatowns in Australia, Melbourne Chinatown is the oldest. It emerged during the legacy of gold rush years of the 1850s. The discovery of gold in Victoria was officially announced by the Gold Discovery Committee on Melbourne Morning Herald on 16 July 1851 (Annear 1999, p.9). After two years, Chinese gold seekers began to arrive at Melbourne in considerable numbers. In early 1855, the number of Chinese passed 10,000 and increased to 17,000 by June of the same year (Serle 1963, p.323). The Chinese population was estimated to reach a peak of 45,000 in 1859, representing nearly 8.5% of the total population of 530,262 in Victoria (Young 1868, p.21; Serle
1963, p.382). Little Bourke Street was a lower rental area on the outskirts of the city within walking distance from the Turning Basin of the Yarra River where Chinese immigrants disembarked, so it served as a temporary staging post for Chinese on their journey to goldfields. Once a Chinese settled in this street, others preferred to live in close proximity to one another for social bonding within the overall western environment. Compared to their European counterparts, it was difficult for Chinese immigrants to integrate into mainstream society due to language barriers and cultural differences, resulting in an ethnic enclave there. Lodging houses offering low rents and shops providing essential commodities emerged for Chinese gold seekers. According to The Age newspaper in 1863, there were “fifteen board and lodging-house proprietors” along the Little Bourke Street (The Age 10 April 1863, p.7), providing short-term accommodation for transient Chinese sojourners. A majority of them were Cantonese (coming from the so-called “Sze-Yap” or the four districts: Toishan, Sunwui, Hoiping and Yangping) in the southern province of Guangdong in China (Jupp 2001, p.197). The physical appearance, customs, and mode of living of Chinese contributed to the unique character of the precinct, resulting in a “Sze Yap Town” in Melbourne (Huck 1967, p.16). “One-half of Little Bourke Street” was even considered as “not Melbourne but China” (The Argus 9 March 1868, p.5).

**Figure 1:** Chinese Quarter, Little Bourke Street
The Australian News for Home Reaers, October 21, 1863. State Library of Victoria, image no. IAN21/10/63/5.

**Stigmatization**

Apart from being labelled as a Sze Yap Town, the Little Bourke Street area was an iconic enclave in the early days under stigmatization. As claimed by The Argus newspaper in 1868 regarding such a
Chinese quarter in Melbourne, “most of the places were used as lodging houses and as resorts for thieves.” (The Argus 9 March 1868, p.6). Crimes, such as murder and brawling, were occurring there (The Age 13 August 1857, p.5; The Argus 22 June 1858, p.6). Douglas Gane described the Little Bourke Street area as the “Chinatown” of Melbourne and “a hotbed of crime and vice of the most revolting description.” (Gane 1886, p.66). Hume Nisbet further emphasized its distinctiveness with notorious reputation by stating that it is “a world apart from the city of Melbourne” having “every little hole and corner laden with its own burden of depravity and crime.” (Nisbet 1889, pp.77, 80).

Melbourne Chinatown became a centre for sinister and illegal activities. Gambling houses, opium shops, and brothels proliferated to serve the lonely addicted Chinese. Alexander Sutherland offered a vivid description about the gambling environment at that time:

...in a room scarcely bearable for fetid breaths, a silent crowd is gathered round the gambling table, whereat sit two men clad in blue blouses and solemnly pushing and pulling heaps of coin with a sort of rake, now this way and now that, as the fortunes of the game happen to go. The crowd, four or five deep, put forward their skinny hands, from time to time, and pass their coins to be staked, but with rarely a word spoken; they watch with stolid looks while the ceremonial of the gaming takes place, then you hear a sound as of deeper breathing all round, and the cash is promptly pushed to this side and that, and is silently gathered up. It is hard for the outsider to appreciate the interest of
this melancholy business, but there they linger all through the evening hours, and far on into the night, beneath the flaring gas or the flickering oil lamp (Sutherland 1888, pp.557-558)

As the gambling houses were illegal in nature, they were guarded by sentinels. Despite security measures, they were under vigilant surveillance and raided by the police occasionally as reported in The Argus. Gambling appliances were seized and Chinese gamblers were captured for examination at the City Police Court. (The Argus 18 May 1857, pp.5 & 23 October 1865, p.6).

Another characteristic establishment in Melbourne Chinatown was the opium shop. The famous journalist, Marcus Clarke gave a detailed account of what he observed in an opium shop:

> There were some, twelve or fifteen persons in the place when we entered, and the peculiar acrid smell of the burning opium was almost unendurable for the first few moments...The scene in the house we visited was of the usual kind. Couches, or rather benches covered with straw matting, are placed in little alcoves. On each bench reclines a brown and withered figure, whose unstrung muscles, leaden eyes, and corpselike visage, proclaim him a slave to the influence of the drug... All the men we saw in the establishment were old and hardened smokers, and they were lying in full enjoyment of their brief respite from pain (The Argus 9 March 1868, pp.5-6; Hergenhan 1972, pp.119-122).

In Little Bourke Street, there were manufacturers of crude opium. Some lodging houses also provided accommodation for opium smokers. Apart from being used for alleviating pain in medical practice, opium was substantially consumed by the Chinese in Victoria (The Age 10 April 1863, p.7). Based on the Report on the Condition of the Chinese Population in Victoria in 1868, the proportion of Chinese opium smokers in some goldfields, such as Ballarat and Ararat, could reach up to 90% (Young 1868, p.29).
Some opium shops were linked to dens of infamy and immorality. Since Chinese gold seekers were almost adult males, a severe imbalance of the sexes existed (Cannon 1993, p.54). As commented by Rev. W. Young, the abnormal condition of the great mass of Chinese adult males without wives or families led to great immorality (Young 1868, p.25). Abandoned European women could be found in brothels attracting Chinese customers as described below:

...as soon as a girl gets rather faded in one house she goes to a house of lower grade and down and down...and then she goes down amongst the Chinamen, then to the hospital and then into the grave. The support of the Chinese could stave off the last two stages in this downward spiral (Davison, Dunstan & McConville 1985, p.66).

In association with gambling, opium smoking, and sexual immorality, Little Bourke Street was often portrayed as a hideous spot and a sink of iniquity in Melbourne (Gane 1886, p.66). Chinese, occupying an isolated position within Australian society, were commonly regarded as “immoral, avaricious, and devious” (Melbourne City Council 1985, p.11). Their common intention was to stay temporarily, seek their fortunes, and send their savings back to their families in China. Within one year between July 1856 and June 1857, a total of nearly 117,000 ozs of gold were exported from Melbourne to China (William 1967, p.19). As such, they were criticized by William Howitt as “a very worthless class of immigrants” (Howitt 1858, p.200). In parallel to the increase of Chinese
population, general resentment against them increased. They were negatively depicted as a “very undesirable race” (The Age 16 June 1857, p.4) and “a cloud of human locusts” (The Empire 26 February 1861, p.5).

Amid the potential threat of Chinese immigration, the Victorian government passed a restriction act in June 1855 by imposing a £10 head tax and limiting the number of Chinese passengers in any vessel to one for every ten tons of registered tonnage (Willard 1967, p.21; Cannon 1993, p.56). However, this failed to halt the influx of Chinese gold seekers as they simply landed in South Australia and walked overland to goldfields. In 1857, the government further added a residence tax of £4 per person (Willard 1967, p.28). Facing the anti-Chinese sentiment, the Chinese community leader, Louis Ah Mouy published the pamphlet, The Chinese Question Analyzed with A Full Statement of Facts to address relevant allegations (Ah Mouy 1857). He actively fought discrimination against the Chinese in Australia and co-authored the pamphlet, The Chinese Question in Australia, 1878-79 with the other two Chinese leaders, Lowe Kong Meng and Cheok Hong Cheong (Kong Meng, Cheong & Ah Mouy 1879).

Furniture Production and Fruit Wholesale Centre

With the decline of gold mining in Victoria in the 1860s, Melbourne Chinatown was gradually transformed from a lodging place for transient gold seekers to a furniture production hub. Chinese furniture makers were renowned for their high quality workmanship and competitive pricing. They commonly lived and worked in the Chinatown (Davison, Dunstan & McConville 1985, p.65). In 1891, there were 525 Chinese furniture makers in Victoria and such number was increased to 620 in 1901, accounting for 10 percentage of all Chinese working in Victoria (Jupp 2001, p.200).

Besides furniture production, Chinese fruit wholesalers boomed in Little Bourke Street. Through an international trading network, Chinese merchants actively participated in the fruit wholesale market, which did not merely serve the Chinese community, but the general public (Melbourne City Council, 1985, p.11). Queensland was the dominant exporter of bananas and Chinese farmers there provided a cheap and assured supply of bananas to Victoria. At the turn of the nineteenth century, Little Bourke Street was even a focal point of the banana wholesaling industry in Melbourne until the Queen Victoria Market was expanded as a wholesaling market in the 1930s (Couchman 1995).
Against the severe competition from their Chinese counterparts, Australian furniture makers urged the government to protect their own interests. The Factories and Shops Act was enacted by the Victorian Parliament in 1896. Under this Act, furniture was required to be stamped with the details of the manufacturer for encouraging customers to buy Australian products (Markus 1974, p.2). Following the White Australia Policy in favour of European migrants, the Commonwealth Parliament
passed the Immigration Restriction Act in 1901 requiring applicants to pass the dictation test (Char, 1932; Yarwood, 1964). This was an effective way to keep away unwanted Chinese immigrants. Chinese residents were not allowed to bring their wives and children to Australia for family union. Under legal restrictions, it was difficult for young Chinese workers to pass the language test and aged workers to be replaced after retirement. Mechanization also led to the decline of Chinese handcrafted furniture. Similar to the protective measures for the furniture production industry, the Banana Industry Protection Act was enacted by the Queensland Parliament in 1921, requiring all banana farmers and their workers to pass the language test. This was effective to exclude Chinese from this industry (Blake 1975, p.73).

Under the White Australia Policy and the Great Depression in the 1930s, Melbourne Chinatown was shrunk to a handful of shops. (Melbourne City Council, 1985, p.12). The number of Chinese population in Victoria was significantly reduced from around 25,000 in 1861 to a mere 2,000 in 1933 (Chou 1995, p.59).

Cafes and Restaurants

Lodging houses, furniture makers, and fruit wholesalers previously existed in Little Bourke Street were gradually diminished. The former residential, manufacturing, and wholesaling functions of Melbourne Chinatown were replaced by cafes and restaurants, reflecting the popularity of Chinese cuisine among western customers (Blake 1975, p.85). In 1920, eighteen Chinese cafes and restaurants were listed in trade directories (Nichol 2008, p.10). Since the majority of Chinese immigrants came from Southern China, so the distinctive Cantonese cooking style was prevalent.

Among them, the Chung Wah Cafe was a representative example. Located in a four-storey detached building at Heffernan Lane, it was an important landmark in this precinct. The building was erected in 1891. It was first occupied by the Wing Ching Cafe (1892-1900), then the Quon Che On Cafe (1900-1915) before the Chung Wah Cafe, which was continued to operate until the 1970s. The successful Chung Wah Cafe was frequented by westerners, including intellectuals and students, helping them “to wean...from European cuisine” as commented by the historian, Weston Bate (Gerner 2008).

During the Second World War in the 1940s, Chinese restaurant sector flourished, reaching over 300 numbers in the city and suburbs by 1945 (Nichol 2008, p.11). The Chinese cafe boom was mainly due to the increasing numbers of people working in war-related industries, particularly thousands of Australian and allied troops. They preferred to dine out instead of eating in their barracks. This provided a significant boost to the economy of the city away from the depression over the last decade.

The change of immigration policy also facilitated the ongoing development of Chinese restaurant sector. Restrictions on Chinese immigration were loosened in the mid-1930s, enabling Chinese cooks and cafe workers to enter Australia under a Certificate of Exemption from the Dictation Test. This arrangement was vital to the industry as the Chinese population was declining (Nichol 2008, p.11). The Immigration Restriction Act 1901 was repealed by the Migration Act in 1958 and the dictation test was no longer required (Choi, 1975, p. 60). The long-standing White Australia Policy was even abolished by the Whitlam government after the victory of the Labour Party in 1972 (Anderson, 1990, p. 141), attracting a new wave of immigration. Due to the increase of population, Melbourne
Chinatown in the centre of the city was subject to considerable pressure from developers for redevelopment.

**Preservation and Revitalization**

In order to preserve the existing heritage and fine-grained urban fabric against extensive redevelopment, the Chinatown Historic Precinct Act 1984 was enacted. The Chinatown Historic Precinct Committee has also been formed to oversee the ongoing management, development, and promotion of the Chinatown (Melbourne City Council, 1985, p. 7). Under the Act, new development applications have to be reviewed by the Committee, which can also issue directions to owners for maintaining the external appearances of buildings to be consistent with the character of the precinct.

Besides preservation, the Victorian government initiated a revitalization scheme for Melbourne Chinatown in two stages. For the first stage of redevelopment in the mid-1970s, four Chinese arches were suspended across Little Bourke Street facing Swanston Street, Russell Street, and Exhibition Street to define the entrances of the precinct (Anderson, 1990, p. 143). The Melbourne City Council and the Victorian Tourism Commission further released the Chinatown Action Plan in 1985. The Action Plan provided a detailed proposal for paving pattern, light fittings, and street furniture for enhancing the characteristics of the place. Following the Plan, the four suspended arches were converted to free-standing gateways. A new gateway was also erected at the Cohen Place, which was transformed into an open plaza to cope with the opening of the Museum of Chinese Australian History. The museum serves as a cultural heart for presenting the local history and customs to visitors and tourists.
A Symbol of Difference

In 1989, the “National Agenda for a Multicultural Australia” was promulgated by the Commonwealth government. The aim is to “encourage different cultural groups to share their distinctive heritage with their fellow Australians” (Office of Multicultural Affairs, 1989, p.47). Apparently, Melbourne Chinatown is a symbol of difference and a valuable asset to multicultural Australia. Nowadays, it is a popular destination for tourists, local residents, and international students, offering a variety of cafes and restaurants, ranging from casual noodle bars, dumpling houses to gourmet restaurants. They are not only located along Little Bourke Street, but also scattered across adjoining intricate laneways (Chau, Dupre & Xu 2015).
Cultural activities and festivals are regularly organized to continue the dynamic traditions and enhance the street vitality. Among them, Chinese New Year celebration is the most high-profile annual event. Lion dance, dragon parade, and martial arts performance under the rhythm of pounding drums and chiming gongs, as well as the sound of firecrackers, all contribute to the unique identity of this precinct. The iconography of the distinctive streetscape and the liveliness of cultural events promote urban ethnic tourism.
Conclusions

Melbourne Chinatown has been an iconic enclave throughout history. Since the Victorian gold rush in the 1850s, it has been organically evolved. From being a temporary staging post for Chinese gold seekers to a fearful slum with notorious gambling houses, opium shops, and brothels, it has maintained its uniqueness in Melbourne. Under various restrictive policies, it has demonstrated its resilience and successfully transformed from a furniture production and fruit wholesale centre to a vibrant hub for cafes and restaurants. The value of its continual existence is not merely a way of historical preservation or a marketing strategy for city branding, but is in fact a genuine contribution to cultural pluralism in Australia against discrimination and segregation in the past as well as homogenized and globalized cityscape in the present.

Reference List


“Grow Your Own”
Home vegetable gardening as a tool for resilience in the face of climate change

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Increased anxieties over contemporary crises such as climate change are generating interest in urban agriculture in Australia. The connection between suburban food producing environments and the urban environment is complex and often misunderstood. The food system is multi-faceted and frequently intersects with economic, political and cultural aspects of society. By looking at historical events, we can see how the important connection between food and cities was once well understood and appreciated.

This paper explores the historical importance of food in cities by demonstrating the actions of the Australian government to promote urban agriculture during the Second World War in response to a crisis in food supply. Overall, we argue that during the Second World War home vegetable gardening was used as a performative action for salvation during a time of national distress. Further we argue that by imagining this historical example and replacing it within a contemporary context, we are potentially able to calibrate and contextualise urban food growing as a response to climate change.

Keywords: Home vegetable production; the Second World War;

Introduction

Historically the supply, storage, trade and consumption of food has formatively shaped cities. Cities have always located around a central market place, in order to make food accessible to all. Despite having an important role, food has appeared intermittently as a concern for planners during the twentieth century. While once being one of the foremost considerations in city design, the growing of food is no longer as important a policy consideration in our 21st century cities. Physically, this shift is marked in Melbourne by the inner city suburbs such as Brunswick, Northcote, and Preston, which once flourished with market gardens and backyard vegetable plots, are now covered with high-density residential growth. Furthermore, the Australian backyard has now shrunk and has been
transformed into an extension of the living room, where activities of leisure and recreation commonly take place (Hall, 2010; Budge, 2013). While the notion of urban resilience has formed a backdrop for planning action in much of the 20th century, and was of great assistance particularly during the depression and two World Wars, in recent years the longer term survival of the world’s largely urban civilisations has become a topic of concern because of climate change and peak oil, re-focussing the attention of planners and other policy makers on food (Burton et al., 2013).

History provides a useful means to contextualise these shifts but also shows how different actors can plan for food in the face of a crisis. This paper explores how the historical importance of food within cities demonstrates that our current society has lost sight of the crucial impact the natural environment has on the urban environment. By repositioning food as the central component of our city’s alignment via its inclusion in political policies and educational campaigns, we would be able to expose people to the potential value such an activity can have. Home vegetable production was used as a performative action to generate resilience in the face of a national threat (Kjellberg and Stigzelius, 2014). By tracing the historical link between food and cities we are also able to add to some of the existing literature on the relevance and importance of food in cities.

In the following we begin by demonstrating the importance of food in shaping cities. While the provision of spaces for the production of food is a relatively minor concern for contemporary planners, when compared to transport and land use for example, through the literature we highlight how town planning pioneers acknowledged and recognised the importance of food in cities. We then focus on the Second World War and the pressures that the Australian Government faced, which prompted a focus on home vegetable production. The research is derived from a number of government archives from the National Archives Australia. These archives included letters of correspondence between the Prime Minister and various Government bodies including the State Department of Agriculture Melbourne, posters of publicity campaigns, newspaper articles and meeting minutes. Information was also via the use of the Australian Home Beautiful Magazine from the years 1925-1960, viewed at the State Library of Victoria. The use of this magazine has allowed us to trace the changing attitudes towards home food production.

Our history highlights Melbourne and is divided into three distinct phases. In the first phase, the motivation for growing food in cities was chiefly economic and the growing of food had to compete with the creation of an aesthetically pleasing garden. Nonetheless as others have noted (Lewis, 1999; Gleeson, 2006), Melbourne was one of the World’s pre-eminent suburban cities, with a government program that strongly encouraged home-ownership. While the motivations for this were varied, the government’s promotion also influenced albeit indirectly, the spaces that would later become useful for growing vegetables.

Finally, we conclude by suggesting that there is the potential for home vegetable production to be effective in combating a contemporary crisis such as climate change. The use of home vegetable production, a seemingly insignificant practice, can have the potential to effectively manage such unpredictable threats.
Historical Understanding of Food in Cities

Growing food within and around cities is not new particularly for settler colonial societies where food has played a local role to support colonist survival (Vitiello and Brinkley, 2013). Securing a sustainable and continual food supply is not only a basic need for cities, but also can help to explain the reasons why the market place has always had such a central role in shaping and influencing the growth and development of cities (Budge, 2013; Steel, 2008).

The importance of food and the interconnections between urban agriculture and the development of cities was recognised by key Victorian town planning pioneers at a time of rapid urban growth and intense interest in colonial settlement. Patrick Geddes, Ebenezer Howard and Lewis Mumford all drew connections between town planning, cities and food. All three advocated that local food production was a primary need for survival and acknowledged the crucial role that the natural environment plays within the urban environment (Meller, 1990; Mumford, 1956; Pothukuchi and Kaufman, 2000; Sandercock, 1975). They were close to and understood the upheaval caused by the rapid improvement of transportation technology which greatly improved, the distribution, production and purchasing of food and was able to uncouple urban expansion from the limits of local water and food supply.

Whilst these early 20th Century planning visionaries were thus alive to food production as a crucial component of urban survival, today food is rarely included within the planning system. Instead planning focuses on consumption, which ignores how food has historically intersected with planning (Lyons et al., 2013). Urban agriculture is not only part of the broader food system that provides food for cities - it is interconnected within other urban and global systems and it is important to acknowledge these interactions. The food system connects social, economic and biological aspects of life, in turn creating a complex web of actions and actors (Tansey and Worsley, 1995). As Budge argues, the invisibility of the potential for urban agriculture derives from the belief that the food system is only associated with rural activities (Budge, 2013). Indeed in some specific cases, land use zoning and residential neighbourhood amenity concerns directly reduce the scope for urban agriculture (Morgan, 2009). Laws such as the provision of the Victorian Local Government Act 1958 and the Health Act 1958, enables Local Government to enforce regulations regarding the keeping of certain animals on residential property. Such laws have immediate implications for the potential that urban agriculture can have within urban areas (Huxley, 2008).

Garden Food Growing in Melbourne Pre 21st Century

During the early 19th Century as with most cities around the world, Melbourne had substantial land available along its city boundaries, close to market gardens and livestock (Burton et al., 2013). By the 1870s Melbourne was already a sprawling, suburban city, with most residents living on blocks with a small garden. Supporting this pattern of development was the need for subsistence gardening, as bigger blocks were associated with more capacity for home food production (Hall, 2010). The ideal of the Australian backyard included vegetable and fruit production as core elements, facilitating individual self-sufficiency (Gaynor, 2006a). The backyard gave people hope that if they continued to garden they would be able to make something good out of a bad situation; with land and a vegetable patch, you would be able to “avert the worst blows of fate” (Lewis, 1999).
The Australian Home Beautiful magazine provides a primary means of tracing the shift in attitudes towards home vegetable production during the inter-war period and through the Second World War. Prior to the war, articles on home gardening were focussed on educating citizens how to plant their gardens with flowers (Anonymous, 1925). The ‘importance of the suburban garden’ was aligned with that of aesthetic pleasure, with little to no emphasis on allowing space for a vegetable plot within the backyard (Pornett, 1931). Beyond aesthetics, gardening was supported by a discourse of rugged self-sufficiency and independence through government schemes launched in 1925 to “Own Your Own Home” (Rampling, 1925). Yet, as the Great Depression unfolded in the 1930s, the interest in home vegetable production began to increase. Home vegetable growing was put forward as a viable response to save money and combat high food prices, with mushroom growing being encouraged for example, as it required little effort and low investment (Kay, 1933; Flay, 1939).

The use of vegetable growing for economic survival during the depression was completely taken over by the need for national survival as the Second World War unfolded. Urban food production campaigns such as ‘Dig for Victory’ and ‘Grow Your Own’ successfully forced citizens to alter their attitudes and behaviours in order to make a difference. Kjellberg and Stigzelius argue that intensive campaigns such as these provides the right information needed to motivate people to not only change the way they perceive a situation, but to alter their behavioural practices to reflect these changing values (Kjellberg and Stigzelius, 2014). According to this frame of mind being resilient through urban food production comes from an individual’s pursuit to understand the role food has in enabling resilience through modifying various everyday practices.

**Home Vegetable Production & The Second World War**

Wartime agricultural production in Australia during 1939-1941 was a period of agricultural uncertainty. Faced with a surplus of produce because of shipping shortages and changing demands from the United Kingdom and under the threat of invasion, the Australian Government moved to classify agriculture as a war industry in 1942 (Crawford et al., 1954). However the situation then lurched to one of shortage as the Government struggled to meet the ever-increasing demand from Australian civilians and the war allies. As vegetable production came under strain, Government departments began to think of ways to increase vegetable growing (Anonymous, 1944). While not at risk of starvation, Australia had an obligation to increase its vegetable production so as to feed British civilians and allied fighting forces (Curtin, 1943a).

**Government Influence**

Governmental interest in the growing of vegetables began with an attempt to make the army more self-sufficient in vegetable production. While soldier health and the strengthening of supply lines were the obvious advantages, such a program was also intended to foster the beautification of the army camps. A proposal was submitted in 1941 by a Major General in the Australian Army to provide three different kinds of spaces for growing food, which included a unit private garden; a unit subsidized garden and even army farms of up to 50 acres in size (Major General, 1941).
At the level of the citizenry, the interest in home vegetable gardening prompted the creation of the Vegetable Production Plan by Prime Minister John Curtin as a response to a lack of vegetables production. The plan focused on “stimulating the development of domestic gardening as a national duty during war” (Curtin, 1943b). Various other Commonwealth Government Ministries such as those for Commerce and Agriculture and Food Control also supported the need for the plan, as did the State Departments of Agriculture in Melbourne (Massey, 1945). Furthermore it was agreed that the success of such an ambitious plan relied heavily on home garden vegetable production. The collaboration of these Government bodies formed the creation of the ‘Grow Your Own’ campaign which aimed at encouraging, educating and influencing citizens to partake in home grown vegetable production (Curtin, 1943a).

As commercial vegetable production numbers continued to decrease rapidly, the urgency of the need for citizen assistance was heightened and became well known. Several Departments became part of the national effort to increase vegetable production. The Prime Minister, John Curtin stressed the importance of the cooperation of the Home Security Department to the war effort of home food production. Mr Curtin assumed that the many citizens who had patriotically given their services to the defence force over the past few years now required assistance on home food production (Curtin, 1943a). The Civil Defence Organisation was engaged to be involved to foster home vegetable production (Anonymous, 1943a). The use of the Civil Defence Organisation was considered advantageous due to the connection they could have directly with householders (Anonymous, 1943b).

While the government initiated a mass citizenship education campaign to support the vegetable production plan, more direct pedagogical methods were used. The Commonwealth government’s Office of Education, within the Department of the Prime Minister and the Ministry of Instruction, also assisted with the Vegetable Production Plan, leading to a scheme to encourage schools to grow their own vegetables, the establishment of a Children’s Garden Army and a compulsory policy for all schools to be provided with vegetable plots. While this strategy was assumed to increase production, an additional benefit was to give children a sense of personal responsibility (Anonymous, 1943c). In addition, both the Commonwealth and the Office of Education were able to foresee the large influence children who were encouraged to grow their own vegetables at school, would have upon their parents growing vegetables in their own backyards (Osborne, 1943).

Other methods to educate the public included the production of a film that aimed to generate public awareness on the need for home vegetable growing (Anonymous, 1943d). The film was called ‘The Farmer Comes to Town’ and connected the emotive idea of “a nation fighting for its very existence” with home vegetable gardening through the narrative of an actor posing as a farmer (Anonymous, n.d).

Broader Responses

Government efforts to increase home vegetable production were also disseminated as propaganda through radio propaganda, educational pamphlets and newspaper articles. Articles produced by the Department of Commerce and Agriculture explained “Why you should grow your own” (Department of Commerce and Agriculture, 1943). An article published in the Sydney Morning Herald encouraged all of those citizens “with a piece of land, in half day sunshine, who [had] a few hours leisure” to
start contributing to the national interest of home vegetable growing (Waratah, 1942). Another article in The Courier Mail stated food shortages could easily be overcome by turning your garden into a vegetable plot (Anonymous, 1943e).

These propaganda attempts were further magnified by Governmental support for civil societies. The government enlisted the support of the Y.W.C.A’s Garden Army to assist with vegetable shortages (Walling, 1942). Similarly, The Royal Horticultural Society launched the Women’s Garden Army in February 1942 in response to the urgent shortages in manpower and scarcity of vegetables. Along with the ‘Grow Your Own’ Campaign, there were several other initiatives started in order to promote and encourage civilians to partake in home vegetable growing, including the opening of a communal vegetable plot in the center of Melbourne. This area was for the purpose of demonstrations, to educate, and inspire residents to grow their own (Hon. Secretary, 1943).

Discussion

The Second World War marked a watershed in the support for urban agriculture by the Australian government and marks a shift in the meaning of the Australian backyard. At first a space for aesthetic pleasure and beautification, the backyard was transformed into a productive space during the depression and then into a space where citizenship and patriotism could be expressed through the growing of vegetables.

By 1944 the home vegetable gardening campaign had begun to fizzle out. During 1944-1945 the Australian Home Beautiful turned its attention to the planning of a “Peace Time Garden”, with new suburban areas now encouraged to accommodate a “commonsense” garden as well as one that was aesthetically pleasing and would fit in with the streetscape (Mellor, 1944). More seriously, vegetable growers became concerned that there was a vegetable glut (Anonymous, 1945). As an indicator of the shift in the governmental attitudes the 1946 edition of the booklet “Vegetables in the home garden”, published by the Department of Agriculture promoted home vegetable gardening as “a profitable hobby and an excellent form of relaxation”. It focused on providing people with information on how to grow vegetables that were less commonly consumed and that would not be able to be supplied commercially (Kinsella, 1982).

Yet, while the efforts of the government were assumed to have entrenched a healthier diet among the citizenry, the broader impact of the campaign was to be felt in the unlikely area of international relations (Bulcock, 1944-1945). The implementation of the ‘Vegetable Production Plan’ led to the substantial reorganisation of food production control. The Commonwealth Director of Agriculture and the State Department of Agriculture were establishd to work together and co-ordinate activities of the State. A District War Agricultural Committee was also established to control activities of numerous voluntary local War Agricultural Committees (Anonymous, 1944).

The experience of setting up and running this form of organization and planning for food was channeled into the establishment of the Food and Agriculture Organisation at the Hot Springs Conference (1943). Australia was invited to attend by the Government of the United States of America to consider strategies for the global post war reconstruction of food and agriculture, production and consumption. The Australian representative H.C.Coombs, Director of Post War Reconstruction and a keen enthusiast of planning, played a significant role at the conference and
was eager to ensure that strategies on improving world health and nutrition via ensuring a continual and stable food supply for all, were pursued and achieved (Amery, 1945). The conference itself also fed into other domestic efforts to raise awareness of health and nutrition through food. The Department of Health released a ‘Food Facts’ pamphlet to educate citizens about typical food values. These efforts were echoed by the Red Cross Society and the Commonwealth Nutritional Council, who worked together to organise nutrition lectures for all those responsible for food control (Flay, 1943a). The scarcity of food during the war meant that some foods were not always accessible and articles in the Australian Home Beautiful encouraged citizens that the best way to maintain adequate nutrition was through growing their own vegetables (Flay, 1943b).

Internationalism in food growing is also found in the cooperation between the New Zealand and Australian governments. Morris argues that the popularity of wartime home food gardening in Christchurch can be explained as one of a range patriotic actions performed by ordinary citizens (Morris, 2006). Posters in the National Archives of Australia exhorting women to join the Women’s Land Service and to respond to a “Call to Farms” are actually those of the National Service in New Zealand. The sharing of this material between the New Zealand and Australian governments and the alignment of motivations and positioning within the British Empire reveals potential for the further exploration of planned Australasian responses to the Second World War hostilities.

Conclusions

Gaynor discusses how throughout the 1940s the various motivating factors for people to grow their own vegetables included economic viability, leisure, and the ability to maintain “manly independence” (Gaynor, 2006b). This research has uncovered that while these factors for motivation may have existing during this period of time, the main contributing factor to the overall rapid growth in popularity, is attributed to Government propaganda.

Similar to the Australian use of food to reinforce civic duty and even patriotism, the events that occurred during the Second World War provide us with an interesting model that explains how urban food production was used to increase security during a time of crisis. The historical importance of food within cities demonstrates that our current society has lost sight of the crucial impact the natural environment has on the urban environment. By repositioning food as the central component of our city’s alignment via its inclusion in political policies and educational campaigns, we would be able to expose people to the potential value such an activity can have.

While the term ‘resilient cities’, contains a set of interventions to respond to contemporary problems we would argue that contemporary large scale problems such as climate change require a response from a broad set of actors at different government levels and even the invocation of a wartime mentality. Such ideas are echoed elsewhere, with Amin et al arguing that accomplishing this goal is only possible with Government intervention and education (Amin et al., 2011). A growing concern exists with the vulnerability of cities to a number of existential threats.
How can vegetable growing assist in combating climate change?

Home vegetable production has the potential to combat climate change through altering people’s attitudes towards the increased consumption of fruits and vegetables. In the 21st Century where the number of people consuming animal products is increasing dramatically it is important to realise the impact this has upon the environment. In 2006, the Food and Agricultural Organisation released the report titled ‘Livestock’s Long Shadow’. The report explains how animal agriculture is one of the leading contributors to global climate change, ranking higher than the global transportation sector. The animal agricultural sector alone contributes 9% of carbon dioxide via deforestation for the purpose of livestock grazing; 65% of nitrous oxide emissions via crops used to feed livestock; and 37% of methane gas emissions via livestock waste (Bristow and Fitzgerald, 2011; Steinfeld et al., 2006, p. 272). The inclusion of urban agriculture within cities has the potential to lessen our individual demands for livestock production, and therefore create gradual reductions in greenhouse gas emissions/climate change. Home vegetable gardening has the ability to change the way people rely on livestock as a main food source and in turn generate a solution to climate change. However, our research shows that such a strategy is only possible with strong political commitment. The theme of nutrition and community building stands out as a key contribution of urban agriculture now, as they did during World War II. This position is highlighted by the invisibility of the real problem of agriculture – livestock raising. As utopian and committed to urban agriculture as the world war planners were, they were not willing to move livestock raising into the city again. Similarly, there are limits to urban agriculture as a solution to climate change as the report by the FAO indicates.

The potential for home vegetable gardening to play a major role in combating climate change is often further limited by the small role it plays in people’s lives both historically and currently. For the most part, prior to the Second World War, home vegetable gardening played a small role in peoples’ lives. It was typically practiced as a hobby or to combat rising food prices. There was not a strong focus on food within cities as a matter of survival or as a matter of land use policy. The lack of appreciation of urban agriculture is also attributed to increases in technological advancements and consumerism. These two factors are some of the aspects that are most influential to the current development of Australian suburbs. This pattern of development does not acknowledge the potential for urban agriculture to make a contribution to creating a resilient society.

Increased housing densities are often to blame for the lack of ability of people to grow their own vegetables in the home garden. However, there are several examples that indicate that even in high density residential areas growing your own vegetables can be done. The provision of community gardens within higher density areas is becoming popular within cities like Melbourne. The ‘Dig In’ community garden located in Port Melbourne adjacent to the Beacon Cove housing development is home to one of the more successful community gardens. The area includes 5 high-rise apartments and 40 standard houses. The community garden has earned its popularity through providing a place where residents can interact (Kingsley & Townsend, 2007).

Food production is typically seen as solely a rural activity. But this fails to acknowledge the contribution that urban agriculture has for creating resilient cities that are flexible and responsive to unpredictable threats such as climate change.
While home vegetable production continues to remain a small-scale productive activity, the ability for it to make a significant contribution to a contemporary crisis is evidently limited. However the example of the Second World War shows that government intervention can be used to prompt a global shift in peoples’ attitudes and behaviour towards home vegetable production. This demonstrates that if a similar approach were applied within the 21st Century, it would increase the ability for home food production to effectively address growing anxieties over climate change.

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Putting Swan Hill on the Map
Roy Grounds, the People of Swan Hill, and the Pioneer Folk Museum in the 1960s-1970s

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In 1972 artist Robert Ingpen, writing of Swan Hill’s Pioneer Folk Museum, suggested that “seeing how our forebears lived, we discover how they fitted themselves into the new land and established a balance which we must maintain for the sake of future generations.” For fifty years, the Museum has been a key element of the Rural City of Swan Hill’s suit of tourist attractions. Its creation, to a design by Roy Grounds in collaboration with Victorian National Gallery director Eric Westbrook, coincided with both men’s research work on the Victorian Arts Centre in Melbourne. Inspired by Stockholm’s “living Pompeii” of Skansen, its example would go on to inform the creation of numerous historically based “folk villages” around Australia.

This paper uses newspaper reportage and previously unexamined material in the Folk Museum’s archives. It examines the role of the museum within Swan Hill, its creation as a “by-product” of Grounds’ and Westbrook’s (and the people of Swan Hill’s) interest in furthering a founding narrative. It also positions the iconic Folk Museum in the space between Grounds’ fame as a modernist architect of consequence in Australia; the mid-20th century expectation or understanding of pioneer life; and the desire of progressive regional cities such as Swan Hill to make its way in the automobile age as a tourist destination.

Keywords: Swan Hill; tourism; Roy Grounds

Swan Hill, a rural city of 10 000 in Victoria’s north west located on the banks of the Murray River, invested in two major tourist attractions in the decades following the Second World War which distinguished it as a beacon of extraordinary initiative and purposeful self-promotion. These differed significantly in form. The first was a wildly successful Shakespeare Festival that brought tens of thousands of Australians to Swan Hill; the second a historically-themed open air museum that harked back to the early days of pioneer colonization and settlement. By the 1960s, the fortunes of both were linked by their economic, cultural and social significance to Swan Hill at a time when car
ownership and domestic travel for leisure in Australia was rapidly expanding. This paper charts the
forgotten story of the city’s Folk Museum – later re-named the Pioneer Settlement – which in its
eyearly days attracted the serious attention of architect Roy Grounds, among others, as an important
site of historic interest in a new era of nationalism.

From the Shakespeare Festival to the Folk Museum

The Swan Hill Shakespeare (often referred to as “Shakespearean”) Festival was an informal initiative
drawing on the local enthusiasm for amateur theater when it was first established by playwright and
director Marjorie McLeod in 1947. McLeod had strong links with the National Theatre movement,
which broadly aimed to improve training in theatre and music across Australia and to foster the arts
as a key element of national cultural development. The Shakespeare Festival gained official support
from the Swan Hill Council in 1950 and was transformed into a yearly extravaganza usually taking
place in the first weeks of March. By the mid-1950s it included full plays featuring actors of national
(and occasionally international) stature, alongside affiliated sporting, social and artistic events. It
was strongly supported by Swan Hill’s business community for its contribution to the local economy
through tourism. As the largest Shakespeare Festival in the southern hemisphere, the Festival also
gained the patronage of Prime Minister Robert Menzies, and was covered extensively in the local
and national press (Darian-Smith, Nichols, Grant forthcoming 2016).

In contrast, the opening of Swan Hill’s Folk Museum (later, Pioneer Settlement), with its centerpiece
the iconic river paddle-steam the Gem, turned community attention to the history of the early non-
indigenous settlers of the region. While it had many parents, its present form was the brainchild of
Council employees Town Clerk Bob Pugsley and Town Engineer Noel Scofield. External direction via
Melbourne came from National Gallery of Victoria’s Director Eric Westbrook and architect Roy
Grounds. Swan Hill resident and actor Brett Freeman remembers that the impact of the Settlement
“turned Swan Hill from a two to a nine motel town in 15 years” (2013). He explained:

Pugsley and Scofield went down to [Melbourne] to see Westbrook and ask him what to
do up in Swan Hill, and he was just back from an overseas trip and he said “I have just
come back from Europe and a place called Skansen in Norway... a folk Museum”. They
said “What’s a Folk Museum?” And that’s what kicked it off (2013).

Freeman is, or Westbrook was, slightly misremembering: Skansen is, in fact, in Sweden. It was
described in 1897 as “a living Pompeii.” (Rentzhog 2007, 6). Established by a teacher, Artur Hazelius
(1833-1901), in 1873, it challenged the convention of history as “mainly about politics, wars and
great men”. As Sten Rentzhog writes:

The great thing about Hazelius’ new museum was that he collected items to do with
ordinary people, the cultural development of his own country, from the nobility to the
very poorest. It became an enormous success, leading to a democratization of history,
and an example to follow in the founding of folklife and ethnographical museums in
many other countries (2007, 4-5).

It is unclear when Pugsley and Scofield visited Westbrook, but it may be assumed it was early in the
1960s. Two articles side-by-side in the Swan Hill Guardian – the city’s paper of record and a key
source for this research – on page five of the 27 April 1962 edition, and headed “Easter tourists spend huge sum in Swan Hill” and “Move to buy Gem for Folk Museum”, are surely a strong formative element of the story. It is one of the earliest mentions of the mooted “Folk Museum” but also, notably, shows a shift from purely Shakespeare-oriented attractions in the area.

Certainly the scene was different a year before when the Swan Hill Borough Council agreed in principle to provide land on the city’s northern edge, on Nyah Road, for a “Globe Theatre” (“Move to establish…” 1961). Although there are many suggestions of an ongoing commitment to Shakespeare as a key element of Swan Hill’s tourist strategy, the “folk” theme began to rear its head. In February, Swan Hill celebrated its 125th year as a settlement with a “Back to Swan Hill” event. Arising in the 1920s, “back-to” festivals in country towns welcomed past residents for activities that honoured the pioneers and the “old days” of colonial settlement and recognized the “old-fashioned friendliness” of rural life (Davison 2000: 204).

In 1961, the organizing committee of Swan Hill’s “Back-to” sought a Cobb & Co coach, hansom cab, bullock team and even a camel to join a range of floats in a procession on Monday morning. An arts ball, re-union picnic, photographic exhibition, gymkhana and cricket match were all enacted in the subsequent week for this “important and historical occasion for the district”. The “Shakespearian festival” was incorporated as part of the “Back-to,” and thereby continued to be consolidated as a key event in Swan Hill’s annual festivities (“Colourful procession”, 1961).

By April 1962, the idea of a “folk museum” had become a key initiative of the Swan Hill Historical Society. Calls were made for artifacts in the Swan Hill Guardian, and the Society was determined to track their provenance diligently: “It is important to obtain the full history of each item, such as date of manufacture and maker’s name, purpose of use and by whom used…” (“Material Wanted”, 1962).

Things quickly converged, no doubt spurred on by what appears to have been fruitful cooperation between city employees and private citizens. An array of items were donated, including a “solid wooden wheeled log jinker… in good repair”; “pioneer farm implements including a Mallee roller, or rope making machine” and a “collection of mounted, stuffed birds of this district” (“Donations of items…”, 1962). However the focus of the collection was to be the paddle-steamer, the Gem. Constructed in 1876, and then substantially lengthened in 1888, the vessel had ceased active use in 1952 and was a tangible reminded of Swan Hill’s initial raison d’etre as an inland port.

A section of land to the immediate north of Swan Hill’s centre was set aside the planned folk museum (the city’s administration and retail heart effectively converges on the Murray River flatlands, with all suburbs and industry to the south, east and west). The swimming pool, picnic grounds and caravan park were all nearby, and this area had long been a place for community and recreation space.

Roy Grounds at Swan Hill

The Gem was already a key element of the Folk Museum when Eric Westbrook visited Swan Hill in February 1963. He advised the Swan Hill Guardian that:
The next stage is to advise on two aspects of the general layout of the whole scheme, and the special problems of the conversion of the Gem for a theatre, art gallery and display purposes.

One of the most important problems that will face any architect engaged in the second aspect of the scheme and in one general design of the museum will be to retain the character of the Gem, otherwise future generations would not know how this once beautiful vessel looked during the time of its working life on the Murray.

I say this because we have now reached the stage in our national history when people seem too easy to forget what our forebears faced in the tremendous task of conquering a new and often hostile country. Only through the folk museum will future generations see the actual means by which much of this was achieved. (“Museum project”, 1963)

Roy Grounds also enters the picture at approximately this point. The early 1960s were heady days for the already famous architect. He had unveiled his plans for the Victorian Arts Centre, which was to include an “‘Eiffel’ tower (‘probably... the highest structure in Australia’) under which there will be three theatres... The main gallery building surrounded by a pool of reflection [and a] two-storey triangle housing the Art School” as well as “three large courtyards... the Oriental, the Sculptural and the Australian” (Melbourne Herald 21 February 1961).

In 1962, Grounds disassociated himself from Frederick Romberg and Robin Boyd following his partners’ disapproval of his Arts Centre design; he was to maintain his relationship with the Centre until his death in 1981. The connection to Swan Hill and the Folk Museum no doubt came from his apparently very convivial and fruitful partnership with Westbrook. The two men had travelled globally researching the best form and approach to the Arts Centre; when they visited Swan Hill in 1963, the Guardian announced Grounds had been the first private citizen to contribute to the fund to purchase the Gem. Grounds also pronounced on the project’s importance to the nation, claiming he had “inspected a number of such museums throughout the world” and that each was nationally “of great importance... as it presented the people of the particular country to the world.” (“Noted Architect”, 1963).

April and May 1963 were months of great activity as Grounds prepared, then presented, his plans for the museum. The exact role the Gem was to play in the complex was confusing from the outset. So wedded were the civic fathers and mothers to the idea of Swan Hill’s key tourist appeal as theatrical (and Shakespearean), the notion of the boat and a theatre became parallel, an ambition Grounds quickly moved to eliminate.

On the 30 March, accompanied by his staff members Bruce Douglas and Alan Nelson, Grounds gave a three hour “explanation and talk” to the museum’s planning committee on his scheme, in which attractions were to be strategically arranged to the view so that “no more than two or three objects of interest are revealed at one time.”
Rather than remake the Gem as a theatre, Grounds proposed a second icon nearby: new 200-seat theatre building including revolving stage, placed within the Folk Museum and using what he described as a “drop log” process similar to American log cabins but with a “definite difference” (“Folk Museum Master Plan…”, 1963). He described this as a variety of construction “used in the early days” and it was presumably Grounds who designed a log cabin “built as it would have been a hundred years ago” which was opened at the Folk Museum in March 1966 (“Log cabin display”, 1963). Marjorie McLeod was positive about the element of the scheme which sought to create a theatre in the same style, telling the Swan Hill Guardian:

I realise that the establishment of a little theatre on the Gem would have been unique, but there is more to be thought of than that. The future must be considered and action taken now to provide something adequate which will not only be beneficial to National Theatre but to the Swan Hill district and future generations… (“Draft Plan of Folk Museum…”, 1963).

The Gem had multiple functions for Grounds and, in a concrete “cradle” surrounded by water, was crucially the entry point to the complex:

Mr Grounds explained that the “Gem” did not contain sufficient room for all the things the committee desired… He explained that during his 27 tours of the world in connection with his vocation he had not found drop log construction being used.
Swan Hill district was unique in this aspect and this would be responsible for many thousands of tourists visiting the area to have a look at it.

[...]

Referring to the “Gem”, he said this would be in a land-locked pond and would contains such things as art gallery, historical display room, kiosk and refreshments, director’s office, committee room, subscribers’ club lounge, toilets and on the top deck living quarters for the director.

The remainder of the project was to include a richness of artifacts and active and passive attractions, not least a locomotive ("old D3-688") as well as a “traction engine, portable steam engine, farm implements, blacksmith shop and tools, shearing shed and exhibits, dairying display, irrigation channeling, and pumping equipment.” (“Folk Museum Master Plan…”, 1963). There is a chance that Grounds was less interested in the theatre than the museum: he “told the committee he was fascinated by the unique approach being made to display the life of the Mallee pioneer and he was sure the museum would gain National importance.” Grounds and Douglas had paid close attention to the Folk Museum’s site, on the banks of a deviation of the Murray known as the Little Murray and were particularly interested in locating areas into which the museum could expand. ("Draft Plan of Folk Museum...” 1963).

Douglas also, it was reported, gathered “information on town planning in the near vicinity of the site so that the scheme will be planned in harmony with the surrounding residential areas and parklands” (“Progress Report...” 1963). In the production of the museum’s layout and execution of its replication of a rural town its “plan” is, in the final analysis, one of its greatest peculiarities: Swan Hill itself, like most regional towns produced in colonial Victoria, conforms to a highly regulated grid pattern. The Folk Museum’s replication of a town, however – comprising, in the main, rescued buildings from the surrounding district – is random and fractured (Fig 2) perhaps following Grounds’ desire to lay the components of the settlement out to the visitor in limiting the visible number of attractions at any one time.
In 1964 Ross Holloway was appointed the museum’s director. A marine engineer, Holloway had studied modeling in Sydney under the sculptor Rayner Hoff; he was not only the foundation president of Swan Hill’s Historical Society, but had also served as the president of its National Theatre (“Ross Holloway…”, 1964). In the previous decade Holloway had aspired to create a local museum in the cellar of his property, Tyntynder, housing “old documents and letters and tape recordings of tales told by old people” (Marshall, 1955). By the time Grounds alighted from a well-publicised flight (part of the “Moomba Air Race”) to Swan Hill from Melbourne, in 1966 (“Centre Court”, 1966), the Folk Museum was an acknowledged work in progress and in many respects – given that its principle purpose was to excite interest in the pioneers of the Swan Hill district – already a success. The Gem paddle-steamer in particular was a major local attraction, exciting the attention of thousands each year (to a degree disturbing to the Swan Hill Guardian which feared that a lack of caution amongst teenagers visiting the boat might at some point result in a tragic accident) (“Gem attracts visitors”, 1966).

From this mid-1960s point, however, two important developments eventuated which served to dissipate Swan Hill’s importance as a tourist destination. Explanations for this are numerous, and largely devolve to speculation. Notoriously, international travel has become a cheaper option since the early 1970s and the novelty of the motoring holiday has faded. Pioneer history, itself, has lost some of its sheen and become complicated.

The Pioneer Festival

McLeod’s withdrawal from the Shakespeare Festival in the late 1960s saw that event lose much of its drive; many locals also suggest the arrival of television to the region in 1963 led to waning volunteer interest in producing plays and supplementary events. However, from a contemporary standpoint it is the mixing of messages that seemed to act as the greatest problem in Swan Hill’s “branding”. The assumption that visitors would come for the Shakespeare Festival and stay for the Folk Museum (or, indeed, visit the Folk Museum at any given time of the year) was based on shakier ground than it might have seemed.

1973 – a decade after the original excitement and preliminary plans for the Folk Museum – appears to have been a catalyst and the time at which Swan Hill overreached. When Councillor T. R. Mellor was awarded an OBE in large part for his work promoting and managing the Folk Museum, by now renamed the Pioneer Settlement, he observed “that Swan Hill was…being used as a link point by people travelling to various parts of southern Australia” (“Many visit…” 1973). At the same time, a move towards professionalization of the Swan Hill “experience” was to prove ill-fated. Promotions group Festival Planners was invited to prepare a spectacular program for the 1973 Festival, which now honoured the town’s pioneer past and the colonial career of Major Thomas Mitchell, ostensibly the first explorer in the district. Although the company was heavy on rhetoric and spin, they were unable – largely due to circumstances outside their control – to deliver an event that delivered the anticipated economic return.
Two of Festival Planners’ principals, Alan Sussein and Tony Freeley, saw the capacities of an annual event in Swan Hill sorely underexploited, including attracting international visitors (which they opined “could prove profitable to a degree”). Sussein noted that the Pioneer Settlement was “similar in many ways to America’s Disneyland.” However many tourist visits were brief, and Freeley believed a “pioneer festival” would play “a vital role” in encouraging visitors to “Stay another day.” In Festival Planners’ vision the Pioneer Festival comprised a Major Mitchell Pageant, “Shakespeare play, pioneer church services, a bacchus festival, musical shows, an Australian film festival, horse racing and trotting, water sports, and a variety of other entertainments” (“Organisations hear plan”, 1973). The reduction of the formerly unassailable Shakespeare to merely one in a range of components in this reimagined festival is telling.

Swan Hill’s biggest problem as a tourist destination since the 1970s has, however, not been the demise of the Shakespeare Festival (the legacy of which, incidentally, is still strong in the town, where local drama maintains a high profile). Rather, the issue was that the fine idea of the Folk Museum and Pioneer Settlement was too good to not be adopted by other regional centres. Sten Rentzhog writes that the people of Ballarat were inspired, in the late 1960s, by the Folk Museum’s achievement: “What Swan Hill had managed surely Ballarat could do” (2007, p. 289). Just as the Gem celebrated Swan Hill’s initial incarnation as a port, dependent on the river, Sovereign Hill (the name itself sounds purloined, given its inspiration) evoked the first ten years of the colonial gold-rush town of Ballarat, prior to arrival of the railway.

The Swan Hill Guardian recorded the visits of burghers from other Victorian towns seeking to glean the secret to the Folk Museum’s alchemy. In the same month that Festival Planners were concocting their Major Mitchell Festival, councilors from the former coal mining town of Korumburra visited the Pioneer Settlement (“Visitors...” 1973). Living or open air museums were established across Australia; Balladong Farm, at York in Western Australia, was purchased by the National Trust in 1974 and reinterpreted through the sensitive ministrations of Feilman and Associates (“Balladong” 1979). Meanwhile, Swan Hill’s Pioneer Settlement moved with the times as best it could. A “sound and light” display was incorporated into the complex (Ingpen, 1972 p. 54) and through this and a range of publications artist Robert Ingpen – well known to Australians for his heritage-themed paintings and his 1970 designs for stamps commemorating the 200th anniversary of Cook’s expedition – created a vision of the settlement with visual appeal. Ingpen believed the Pioneer Village provided Australians with the chance to see “how our forebears lived” and thence “discover how they fitted themselves into the new land.” He even saw an environmental message in such explorations as it enabled examination of the way in which the pioneers “established a balance which we must maintain for the sake of future generations” (Ingpen, 1972 p. 6).

However by 1977, the Pioneer Settlement’s ubiquity was compromised. A report published that year questioned its resilience:

In the past Pioneer Settlement has established a favourable image due mainly to its pioneer role as the first outdoor museum/folk village in Australia. With the development of other outdoor museums in recent years and with the emergence of Sovereign Hill setting a standard of quality in presentation, Pioneer Settlement’s status has fallen somewhat and is likely to slip further over time. We think this is to a significant extent due to the quality of experience at Pioneer Settlement. In recent years little has been
done to add to the level of activation or number of buildings and there has been a perceptible decline in the quality of the exhibits and buildings themselves. In many ways Pioneer Settlement exhibits a “tiredness” due to resting on past achievements and any future visitor growth will only be based upon the launching of a vigorous qualitative redevelopment of the attraction. (Economic Research Unit, 1977, iv).

The report goes on to critique the “impression of piecemeal development” conveyed to the visitor, through “a somewhat arbitrary arrangement of buildings from time periods ranging from the present to the later 1800’s in close proximity of each other and with little consideration of spatial relationships,” as well as the haphazard placement of artifacts exposed to the elements.

This paper cannot give the full detail of subsequent events in the history of the Swan Hill Pioneer Settlement, which changed its name again to the Pioneer Village. It is important, however, to note that just as Grounds continued his involvement in Melbourne’s Arts Centre until his death in 1981, so too did he continue to work on revisions at Swan Hill – indeed his office remained associated long after his death. For all that, however, little of Grounds’ work is easily identifiable at the Pioneer Village today; certainly none of the major buildings he envisaged for the settlement were constructed. Two rotunda – unsympathetically adorned with faux lacework – are attributed to him.

The Gem paddle-steamer is still a part of the museum, and forms a backdrop to events held there, but it is largely unused, having proved structurally unsound for the various new functions envisaged for its retirement. A scheme to house Swan Hill’s Art Gallery on board the ship did not come to fruition, though the Art Gallery itself is located in close proximity to the vessel.
In the final analysis, the Folk Museum/Pioneer Settlement/Pioneer Village was at very least a brave and visionary move by Swan Hill’s council into the unprecedented Australian field of “living museum” (Fig. 3). Whereas Sovereign Hill, its most successful imitator, was created from scratch as a replica, Swan Hill was assembled from extant elements, and its creators thereby had less control over its constituent parts and greater responsibility to interpret that which was there – a task which in many cases, being untrained and working in a nascent field, they were often unable to fulfill.

It is easy to imagine that the rise of nationalism in the 1970s brought down the Shakespeare festival, and then became an unmanageable cliché in itself. Perhaps more truthfully Swan Hill’s largest handicap has been the difficulty of shaping a readily consumable narrative of its own history and development – though the Gem was for a long time, and to a certain degree remains, a tangible example of this. The involvement of Grounds and Westbrook is, perhaps, the strangest element of the story and one which, as yet, has little obvious explanation – other than that the two men were engaged in the possibilities of telling a story of a history and a culture back to its local people. It is this, more than anything related to the history of the Folk Museum, that requires further investigation.
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Oral Interview

Freeman B. January 17 2013 interviewed by J. Grant
Arcadia in Australia
The Nineteenth-Century Shopping Arcade

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During the second half of the nineteenth century, entrepreneurs eagerly built numerous European-style shopping arcades in Australia’s cities and regional centres. Popular throughout the world, they were ostensibly elegant shopping spaces for a genteel middle-class clientele. Such was the enthusiasm for them in Australia that both Sydney and Melbourne possessed arcades in a quantity that rivalled many other international cities.

Today only a few of these spaces survive. The best-known examples, restored to an approximation of their original form, have become iconic heritage sites that are drawcards for both locals and tourists. Marketing campaigns and tourist brochures invite shoppers to step back in time and encounter the bourgeois elegance of Australia’s retail past.

But these often idealised and simplified interpretations elide the far more diverse, complex, multilayered and sometimes uneasy histories of these sites. Arcades were not static spaces, forever caught in the nineteenth century, nor simply bourgeois shopping malls. Rather, they were significant social spaces that housed a variety of businesses and attracted patrons from all walks of life and underwent diverse historical trajectories.

For the handful that survives, many more have been lost, only living on tenuously in the collective memory. Looking beyond the imagined façade, this paper examines the forgotten histories of some of the Australian arcades, peeling back the layers in order to reawaken their hidden stories and the complexity of their role in the urban past.

Keywords: Shopping Arcades; Australian History; Urban History
Introduction

[the] arcades ... in their physiognomy, remind you, now of the Burlington ... and now of the Passage des Panoramas ... in Paris, but ... nevertheless, possess a distinctive stamp and character of their own. (Argus, 22 August 1885, 5)

English journalist George Augustus Sala, visiting Australia in 1885 as a correspondent for the Daily Telegraph, wrote a series of syndicated articles, “The Land of the Golden Fleece”, describing the land, peoples and cities of the continent. In Part Eight, “Arcadia in Australia”, he explored its shopping arcades, along with other public spaces, and their inhabitants, with a specific focus on Melbourne. In this passage Sala compares these arcades to several of the oldest and most elegant of their European counterparts and likewise sung the praises of some of the city’s other public spaces, where “you might, without any very violent stretch of the imagination, fancy on a fine night that Bourke-street was one of the Paris boulevards instead of being a road hewed not 50 years ago out of the trackless bush”. Sala’s narrative suggests that these were one of a number of sites through which public spaces and architecture in nineteenth-century Australia were seen to express a colonial identity that partly relied on an emulation of the European built environment and cultural forms (Davison, 2001; McCann 2004, 52-53; Schrader 2010).

Today very few of the Australian arcades remain. Some well-known examples, such as Melbourne’s Block Arcade (Figure 5), The Strand in Sydney and the Adelaide Arcade, have become iconic spaces in the urban landscape of Australian cities. In the collective imagination they are associated with elegant nineteenth-century architecture and middle-class consumption of luxury goods. This constructed ideal of a rarefied, exclusive shopping space was developed early in the history of the shopping arcade in Europe and has been reiterated over the last two centuries, not least of all by the owners and promoters of the arcades themselves.

But these sites were not only architectural constructions designed for retail and commercial use, they were also a significant form of public space with complex, multilayered and changing histories, inextricably connected with the metropolitan life that surrounded them. This paper, part of a larger study that examines the history of the shopping in Australia from 1853 to 1901, considers how the idealised representations of these sites were developed and perpetuated throughout their history and into the present. By delving deeper into contemporary nineteenth-century sources, particularly newspaper reports, that discuss the businesses and inhabitants of the arcades, it seeks to disrupt this viewpoint and demonstrate alternative representations and uses of these spaces than is generally presented in the sources and current histories. In doing so, it contends that these constructed stereotypes elide the complex, diverse and multilayered histories of shopping arcades, which frequently transgressed the idealised representations of these urban icons.
A brief history of the shopping arcade

In late eighteenth century Paris the years leading up to the Revolution were a time of extreme social and political change. New forms of public space were developed and some urban sites, some once the preserve of the nobility, began to be inhabited and enjoyed by a broader range of classes, including the increasingly influential bourgeoisie. In about 1786, a wooden structure, known as the Galeries de Bois, was thrown up on the south side of the Palais Royal. With its long central passageway, illuminated from above by clerestories and lined with rows of individual shops with large glass windows, it is considered as the antecedent of all subsequent shopping arcades constructed during the next century and a half (Geist 1986, 273-4; 452-460; Hollington 2011, 273-4; Mackeith 1986, 14-15).

The phenomenon of the shopping arcade has been examined in detail in several major publications, including Mackeith’s work (1985, 1986) on British specimens, Lemoine’s (1989) on those of France, and Geist’s (1986) seminal survey, which catalogued almost one thousand examples on five continents. Such works, even that of Geist, overtly privilege the European context but these arcades were continuously built from the end of the eighteenth century until the 1950s in hundreds of cities and towns throughout the world – in Europe, Russia, Turkey, South Africa, Asia, North and South America and Australasia – rendering them a truly global phenomenon (Geist 1986, Mackeith 1985, Mackeith 1986, Lemoine 1989). From the relatively humble Passage Enríquez in the small town of Quetzaltenango, Guatemala to the grand interior boulevards of the New Trade Halls in Moscow with 43,000 square metres of floorspace, they displayed an enormous diversity of size, shape and design.
They were sites of leisure that transcended the European metropole with which they are so often associated and reflect the desire to adopt urban forms of leisure and commerce that were seen as sophisticated and modern in cities and towns, both large and small, worldwide.

In September 1853 the first shopping arcade in Australia, the Queen’s Arcade in Melbourne (Figure 2), running between Lonsdale and Little Bourke Streets, opened to both fanfare and derision. Newspapers throughout the colonies reported on the opening celebrations, commented on the arcade’s fittings, and mused on its future. The Sydney Morning Herald (4 October 1853, 2) called it “a mere archway with a ranges of boxes either side” and “a shabby imitation of the Burlington and Exeter Arcades, which we all know so well”, while others celebrated it as a “fashionable promenade, which effects such great credit on its spirited proprietors” (The Banner, 27 September 1853, 7). As the reports attest, this new pedestrian passage of 313 feet long, with 80 shops, lit by clerestory windows and chandeliers, was directly influenced by European arcades with some Australian industrial innovations, including some of the first corrugated iron produced in the colony with a specially built machine (Argus, 30 August 1853, 5).

Over the next eighty years almost forty glass-roofed shopping arcades were built throughout Australia. The boom period of the 1880s saw the construction of the majority in the central business districts of the major cities of Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane (Figure 1), Adelaide and Perth, and they continued to be constructed until as late as the 1950s. While we think of an arcade as the preserve of the metropolis, they were also a feature of some suburbs, such as Prahran in Melbourne (Figure 6), as well as the regional urban spaces of Charters Towers, Townsville, Ballarat and Bendigo.
The idealized shopping arcade

A passage from the 1852 Illustrated Guide to Paris described the arcades as:

… a recent invention of industrial luxury … glass-roofed, marble-paneled corridors extending through whole blocks of buildings … Lining both sides of these corridors, which get their light from above, are the most elegant shops, so that the arcade is a city, a world in miniature, in which customers will find everything they need … they offer a secure, if restricted, promenade – one from which merchants also benefit. (Benjamin 1999, 31)

For Walter Benjamin in his Arcades Project, this passage captured the fundamental features that define the shopping arcade of the nineteenth century. It identifies the specific architectural features that define the arcade – a skylit pedestrian passage lined with shops that cut through the heart of a block. But it makes clear that, in addition to being a tangible architectural construction, the arcade was also a public circulation space in which, by extension, social and cultural interactions occur.

As it intimates, the ideal of the arcade was that of an elegant, modern bourgeois leisure spaces for promenading, where one could see and be seen and indulge in the consumption of luxury commodities. This idealized representation of the arcades developed early in their history and continued to be perpetuated with each new example constructed. The emphasis on luxury, elegance and modernity is seen repeatedly in descriptions of the arcades in literature and the popular press. Newspaper reports about the arcades in Australia often emphasized this ideal, describing in great detail their handsome architecture, rich fixtures and fittings, modern conveniences and engineering, and the elegance, variety and beauty of the stores, merchandise and visual displays to be found within.

This continued to be central to the image of the arcade in the popular and scholarly imagination, both in Australia and elsewhere. From websites to heritage assessments to more serious historical studies, an imagined view of the arcade is often presented, one which focuses on the nineteenth century context and eschews the afterlife of these sites. In histories of shops and shopping recognise the arcade’s importance to this broader history is usually discussed briefly, but is generally see them as prelude to department stores and shopping malls (e.g. Pollon 1989, Kingston 1994, Lancaster 1995, Henderson-Smith 2003, Davison 2006, Bailey 2010). Those publications that focus specifically on the arcades, almost all of them histories commissioned by the owners of the buildings (Lees 1988, Salisbury 1990, Stirling and Ivory 1998, The Block Arcade a. n.d) do take a more in depth look at their histories and their role within urban life, but continue to emphasise the nineteenth-century context and their roles as retail spaces for the elegant middle classes. Marketing campaigns (including websites and social media) for those arcades that still function as shopping destinations today focus heavily on such nostalgic perceptions, in order to promote them as unique shopping experiences (Royal Arcade n.d., The Block Arcade b. n.d, QVB 2013, The Strand Arcade 2013, Adelaide Arcade n.d.). Until recently, (the website was updated, in early 2016) the website of the Royal Arcade, Australia’s oldest remaining example, typifies the general tone of current popular discourse surrounding them::
Historical – Charming – Beautiful – Timeless. There are few words which can describe the feeling and olde-style charm captured in the Royal Arcade. Since 1869, the arcade has acted as a hub between Melbourne's, Bourke St Mall, Little Collins Street and Elizabeth Street; The Royal Arcade houses some of the most well-known and beautiful shops in Melbourne. (Royal Arcade n.d.)

One of the main purposes of this paper, and the project as a whole, is to look beyond these tropes, to examine the multiple layers of the histories of these sites and explore a more nuanced view of the arcade as a significant form of social and economic space.

While the popular perception of the arcades often envisages these sites as retail spaces, they provided a far more diverse social and cultural role within the city than as simply a place to shop. Truly intended to be cities in miniature, they were designed as idealized versions of the streets outside, housing an enormous diversity of tenants, including shops, refreshment rooms, wine bars, offices, studios, theatres, galleries, photographic studios ensuring that they were busy late into the night. They were also important centres of public leisure and pleasure with a diversity of activities occurring within, including musical entertainments, exhibitions and major public celebrations. They contained a wide assortment of spaces and tenants that made them a social, cultural and business hub – an extension of the street outside.

Retail heaven

The retail aspect of the arcades was incontestably a crucial one. Lining the pedestrian ways that were the heart of these buildings were individual stores that provided specialized goods and services intended to attract the custom of the better classes, to whose identity the conspicuous consumption of goods sold in such establishments was central (Davison 1984, 200-2; Young 2002, 88-94). While little records remain from the original owners and tenants of the buildings themselves, newspaper reports and city directories can provide valuable information on the types of stores and the goods sold within. The tenants of the Royal Arcade were listed in a lengthy article in the Argus that chronicled its opening on 3 May 1870 (7). They included shops selling a wide variety of household and personal goods for both men and women such as a fancy bazaar, watchmaker, a milliner, bootmaker, hatter, stationer, tailor, glover and bookseller, as well as a nursery and even a bird shop. Other tenants provided relatively costly foodstuffs including confectionary, tea and coffee, chocolate and wine.
The types of stores and goods available in the Royal Arcade are found repeatedly in each new arcade that opened in the Australian cities and exemplify both the diversity and intense specialisation of businesses within them, with a particular emphasis on the luxury, the exotic and the modern. The goods, both locally produced and imported, that were to be found in Australian stores is demonstrated through a brief examination of some of those on offer during the 1870s and 80s at the Eastern Arcade in Bourke Street Melbourne (Figure 3). Chinese merchant and importer Fong Fat, for instance “obtained all the newest novelties in China goods expressly for the Arcade” (Argus, 18 December 1872, 2), which included carved ivory pieces, crockery, silk and cotton, fans, firecrackers, tea, ginger, and possibly tobacco, coffee, sugar (Carter 1870, 54f); the India & China Tea Company, traded exotic sounding blends like “Emperor’s Bouquet” and “Mandarins Choice” (Argus, 3 January 1873, 3). Other shops stocked both imported and locally made household items, including Walkers Gas Stoves made in Melbourne (The Record and Emerald Hill and Sandridge Advertiser, 24 April 1873, 4; Symons 2007, 71; Victorian Intercolonial Exhibition 1875, 146-7); the Canadian Little Wanzer sewing machine (Australasian, 20 December 1873, 29); Blazey’s music salon, with the finest pianos from England and Europe (Argus, 19 December 1872, 8); and Hiram Crawford, the arcade’s owner, also imported large amounts of goods into Victoria from America for his store, such as velocipedes, furniture, and rocking horses (Argus, 10 June 1880, 4; 22 June 1881, 4).

Sites of leisure and pleasure

But the arcade was much more than just a place to buy goods – it was also a site for pleasure and social interaction. The list of businesses in the Royal Arcade also included restaurants, photographers and a Turkish bath and gives some indication of the variety of leisure activities available within. While it was a relatively small arcade, with only a handful of non-retail
establishments, as new, larger and more complex versions were built, the diversity of businesses increased. Most were truly intended to be cities in miniature, idealized versions of the streets outside, housing an enormous diversity of spaces including shops, offices, studios, theatres, galleries and more. Their role went far beyond their function as simply a space to purchase goods and extended to many forms integral to urban life.

Places of refreshment were essential features. At establishments such as Quong Tart’s refreshment rooms in the several Sydney arcades (Evening News, 26 January 1897, 5) and the five-storey Café Continental in the Block, with separate ladies tea and dining rooms and men’s dining and smoking rooms, patrons could rest, eat, drink and socialize with acquaintances. Alcoholic refreshments could be partaken of in pubs, saloons, wine bars and nightclubs, housed in onsite hotels, in shopfronts and basements (Illustrated Sydney News, 4 June 1892, 22; SMH, 10 May 1902, 10; Sunday Times, 1 June 1902, 7; Argus, 19 May 1883, 11).

The arcades were also an important site for the consumption of culture, with a diversity of constant entertainments, amusements and celebrations. The openings of the arcades were grand affairs with music, dinners, food, drinks and even balls but even after these initial celebrations, the arcades continued to be sites of a variety of amusements. Newspapers regularly advertised events such musical concerts in the central pedestrian spaces of the buildings or in purpose-built entertainment zones. The 1876 Victoria Arcade in Bourke Street Melbourne was part of the Academy of Music and Cafe complex, which included a hotel and opera house (The Maitland Mercury & Hunter River General Advertiser, 19 August 1882, 2). The Adelaide Arcade had billiard rooms managed by the father of the famous Walter Lindrum, while the Deutscher Fortschritts Verein (the German Progress Association) held balls and other entertainments in the adjoining Gays Arcade (Express and Telegraph, 15 November 1886, 3; South Australian Register, 16 July 1895, 6). As with exterior public spaces, the arcades were also sites for public gatherings and celebrations, such as Christmas, royal jubilees and New Years Eve (Figure 4. Forsyth 2011, 66-86; South Australian Register, 25 October 1886, 7; The Advertiser, 1 January 1890, 5).

Visual exhibits and displays also featured in the arcades as modes of entertainment and, purportedly, education. In March 1856 a Panorama of St Petersburg opened in the Queen’s Arcade (Argus, 16 March 1856) and a model of Broken Hill was displayed in the Adelaide Arcade in 1889 (South Australian Register, 28 August 1889, 6). In 1893 the Strand Arcade’s basement was home to a Crystal Maze, “which attained a large measure of popularity as a holiday resort” and featured other amusements, including “Madame Paula, the scientific palmist” (SMH, 9 December 1893, 7), while a more curious exhibit that took place in the Queen Victoria Markets was the New South Wales Cat Show of 1899 (Australian Town and Country Journal, 14 October 1899, 22).

As well as shops, most arcades also housed office spaces, often in upper floors and entrance buildings, and these represented a significant portion of the space available for lease. The Strand Arcade’s original tenants list gives some example of the variety of tenants in these rooms and included a public accountant, woollen merchants, manufacturers’ agent, Governesses’ & Tutors’ Bureau, North Coast Timber Co, the Master Bakers’ Association and a flour broker (Salisbury 1990, 102). The Block had the suffragist, Vida Goldstein, and the Victorian Football League as tenants (Argus, 25 April 1912, 5); Arthur Streeton had rooms in the Queen Victoria Market building (Evening
News, 17 July 1907, 3); and The Federated Seamen’s Union was based in the Royal Arcade, Sydney (SMH, 7 November 1886, 5).

Figure 4: The Royal Arcade, Melbourne, Christmas 1874. Oswald Rose Campbell (engraver). Published in the illustrated Australian News for Home Readers, December 30, 1874. State Library Victoria, IAN30/12/74/216.

Ladies paradise? Gender & gentility in the arcade

Newspaper reports and advertisements detailing the opening of each arcade and the shops within indicate that owners appealed to specific types of goods and traders to take up shops in the arcades and that they intended their buildings and tenants to attract a middle-class clientele with the allure of specialized, elegant, luxury, exotic, and innovative goods (Argus 3 May 1870, 7; Illustrated Australian News for Home Readers, 5 December 1872, 239; The Brisbane Courier, 3 December 1877, 1). But further investigation of newspapers and archival material from the period reveal a more complex story. The perception of the arcade as a middle-class haven from the street, particularly for women, disguises the many realities and nuances of the arcade and its inhabitants; the reality that people of various classes and sexes inhabited and used them for diverse purposes that often transgressed the boundaries of what the arcade was “supposed” to be for. In fact they were sites where a cross section of society interacted. This project, as well as examining the commodities and businesses that were contained in these buildings also intends to interrogate the presumptions about gender and class distinctions that stereotyped representations of the arcade present.
Middle-class women, are arguably the most visible inhabitants of the arcades in the discourse surrounding them. With the leisure time and money to afford such pleasures, shopping was regularly represented as a pastime for women, but inappropriate or unenjoyable for men. Fergus Hume’s narrative in Mystery of a Hansom Cab epitomizes this when he describes a mise en scène on Collins Street in which Brian Fitzgerald “who disliked shopping quite as much as the majority of his sex, [but] as a lover he felt a certain amount of self-abnegation to be becoming in him, waited for his Madge, who “was engaged in that occupation so dear to every female heart – shopping” (Hume 1886). But men didn’t simply kick their heels waiting for their sweethearts and wives. As The Star of 1 August 1860 (2) reported, in the Melbourne arcades, “successful diggers promenaded the place with a swagger, and bought toys by the bushelful, and jewellery, and many et ceteras” and they throng the footpaths outside The Block on Melbourne’s premier shopping street in an image from c1910 (Figure 5). Males are repeatedly represented in the newspapers as inhabiting the spaces of the arcades, shopping at stores that catered to their gender, accompanying wives and daughters and, additionally through other leisure pursuits: theatres and celebrations, eating at restaurants, playing in billiard rooms, drinking in saloons, working in offices, visiting the baths, and attending meetings.

Also missing from many idealised representations of the arcades are the myriad others who there. But the beadles, shopgirls, tearoom waitresses, shop managers, deliverymen, officeworkers, tradesmen and a variety of people can be glimpsed in the myriad small newspaper pieces, such as the classifieds that sought employees or in bigger stories, such as reports of thefts or tales of misdeeds by shopgirls, such as the sensational 1913 event where two women, one a saleswoman at Coles Book Arcade and the other a tea lady at Hopetoun Tea Rooms in the Block, were tried over an attempted murder after a love affair gone wrong (The Mercury, 16 June 5).
Stepping inside the boundary: control & disobedience in the arcade

Apart from the rare examples built by municipal governments, arcades were privately owned semi-public spaces with both written and unwritten protocols to regulate them. Rules for their use were posted at the entrances of some Australian arcades, as they were in Britain, for Sala tells us “that that prohibitions of smoking are conspicuously placarded about in the Royal, the Victoria, and the Eastern Arcade” (Argus, 22 August 1885, 5). The designated enforcers of these rules were the arcade beadles, as well as the police that Sala indicates patrolled the Melbourne arcades and attended disturbances when they occurred.

Ideally a visitor to the arcade would restrain themselves in their behaviour within these spaces, but the mere need to post these regulations in public view and the provision of officials to enforce them, reveal both the anxiety about the sort of people that might visit the arcade and that trouble might be expected. Of course, as contemporary accounts and documents reveal, the ‘wrong’ kind of people did come into the arcade and trouble was caused by all types. With the unfortunate lack of concrete statistics about who visited these spaces, newspapers, police reports and other documents are valuable to an understanding of these visitors, revealing that transgression of social norms and the ideal world of the arcade were commonplace – thefts, disturbances, assaults and even murders.

As with many locations in inner urban spaces in Australia (Sleight 2009; Bellanta 2012) complaints about larrikins were regularly reported in the newspapers in association with the arcades. In the 1890s the Hanover Hall inside the Eastern Arcade was a magnet for larrikins wanting a boisterous and boozy night on the town (Bellanta 2012, 19-21). One Tasmanian visitor, writing later in the Launceston Examiner (1888, 3) commented on their presence:

The larrikin element is very strong in Melbourne. I saw a crowd of 1000, principally of this class, at the entrances to the Eastern Arcade assemble one afternoon at 5 o'clock as if by magic, because two policemen were apparently trying to arrest some one.

In 1898, only six months after opening, the tenants of the Queen Victoria Markets complained that a Paddy’s Market that had developed in the basement, intended as a fruit and vegetable market had led to “the congregation of an undesirable class, larrikins and larrikinesses thus … the takings of the complainants were not what they ought to be” (SMH 1898, 3).

Numerous run-ins with the beadles are recorded in the newspapers, including in the refined surrounds of the Royal Arcade. The Argus records a number: “Margaret Myers was fined 10s. for insulting behaviour to one of the beadles” in August 1870 (6); Robert Watkins “was charged [and later discharged] with trespassing in the arcade, which is private property” (1872, 4) after loafing around the fountain then causing trouble with the beadle after being asked to move on; while the very same beadle with whom Watkins had his run in, had earlier been sued by one of the tenants for “for £19 damages, for assault and injury to plaintiff’s property” in 1871 (4). One night in 1876 Alderman Aarons, owner of the Victoria Arcade, upon reprimanding a number of volunteer soldiers about their behaviour, was “was rushed, knocked about, and kicked” (The Argus 1876, 4).

Reports of other supposedly less desirable types and activities – from minor shoplifting offences and property damage, to prostitution, assault and even murder – abound when one reads beyond the gloss of newspaper reports that talk up the arcades’ beauty and elegance and that of their fine
visitors. These few examples show that the reality of the arcades usage did not always live up to their ideal of a refined space inhabited by the middle-class. The intent and image that was cultivated in contemporary discourse about arcades was of middle-class leisure and consumption but, as we have hints of above, this was not necessarily the complete picture. The arcades were neither necessarily inhabited by the class of people intended nor used in the manner for which the proprietors may have desired.

The passage of time wrought immense changes on these sites. Like the Queens Arcade, which despite its early promise had failed by 1860, some arcades lost popularity relatively rapidly, while others, such as the Eastern Arcade, never quite achieved it. Often this resulted in changes to the physical fabric of the building and/or the mix of tenants in order to attempt to make them viable or in step with architectural fashion. The development of such historical layers does not just signify an architectural evolution but also indicates that clientele would naturally change. Gradually declining arcades might no longer pull the bigger spending shoppers and begin to attract less “ideal” inhabitants. But also the very nature of the changes in shopping in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries rendered it less of an exclusive middle-class leisure pastime and more an activity for the wider population (Kingston 1994, 52ff), completely changing the demographic of the typical arcade shopper.

Figure 6: Prahran Arcade, Melbourne, 1960s. It became Dan Murphy's in the 1960s and is now a JB HiFi store. Rennie Ellis. State Library Victoria, H2012.149/1088.
The stereotypes surrounding the nineteenth-century arcade disguise many aspects of their histories, rendering them in a somewhat one-dimensional form that masks the true colour and flavour of nineteenth-century urban life. As others have noted (Brown-May 1998, xvii), such stereotypes developed in the past continue to construct images of the city through continually repeated tropes, visions of nostalgia and the very desire for the preservation of sites such as these. Contemporary representations of these arcades in marketing material, tourist brochures and websites, travel guides, online discussion boards and popular histories, often subscribe to such ideas of nostalgia and represent these sites as iconic symbols of the nineteenth-century within the modern city (e.g. The Block b n.d.). This paper has briefly explored some of the hidden histories of Australia’s shopping arcades, revealing a discord between perpetuated tropes and the multilayered histories that were the reality of these sites. It has revealed the arcades as public spaces of both leisure and work, where people of all classes mixed, and it has peeled back some of the historical layers to reveal aspects of the Australian arcades that are in danger of being forgotten.

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Sydney
A Harbour of Sheltered Coves, Iconic Points and Communal Bays

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Harbour Bridge, Opera house - the harbour is Sydney’s most iconic landscape feature. Stretching from Parramatta in the west to Manly in the north. Sydney’s ‘ocean’ beaches maybe where the city escapes to, but it is the harbour that is at the heart of Sydney’s demonstrative public life, around which the city’s commercial and cultural activity primarily revolves.

The harbour acts not only as a large watery plaza but it’s convoluted jagged nature runs into a myriad of different coves that are public and intimate. The position, shape and size of these Coves create a diversity of topographical characteristics that provide a focus for different communities to gravitate to. It is proposed that Sydney as a city is unique in having public beaches that operate both to the internal (everyday) and external (escapist) life of the city with its harbour and ocean beaches in close proximity. While both Melbourne’s circular bay and the Gold Coast’s strip beach provide a coastal feature that unifies the city. Sydney Harbour however never provides one vantage point in which the city is understandable. It is a harbour of coves you must enter to view, unveiling its secrets and communities only as a process of discovery and searching.

The purpose of the profile is to show the importance of the cove’s points as iconic touchstones for the character of Sydney Harbour, and the cove’s bays in determining the social interaction of Sydney’s communities.

Keywords: Sydney Harbour, Icon, Topography, Public Foreshore

The Opera House and Harbour Bridge: Sydney’s iconic images derive their power from the harbour stage, but just as the harbour unifies and promotes, it also segregates and conceals.

Introduction

The harbour is Sydney’s most singularly recognized iconic image, projecting the image of Sydney and Australia internationally. Indeed the Iconic as defined by the Cambridge dictionary ‘the use of
symbols and images to represent ideas’ (Cambridge 2016) and Sydney, meet on the points of Sydney Cove. The topographical features of the harbour however, mould Sydney in more fundamental ways, it’s myriad of different coves nurtures diversity and it’s small bays encourage community.

The iconic requires viewability. Great metropolises with a singular Iconic image of the city, are relatively sparse. Those cities that achieve it have an iconic feature that is viewable from a distance. The City Icon needs to dominant the view: Rio - Christ the Redeemer, New York - Statue of Liberty, Paris - Eiffel tower, Sydney - Opera House. Other great cities without a singular iconic image, don't allow one feature to dominate the view of the city: Tokyo, London, Rome, etc. There is a correlation between viewability and iconictivity.

Sydney harbour’s large expanse of open water, provides unobstructed views. Points: the end of harbour ridgelines, push into the view, inviting the Iconicness. Thus the “view” has a pre-eminence in Sydney unlike any other Australian city due to the Harbours topography. In Sydney the Icon on Points and their importance to Views and thus property values are recognized in law by the NSW Land and Environment Court ...“Water views are valued more highly than land views. Iconic views (eg of the Opera House, the Harbour Bridge or North Head) are valued more highly than views without icons.”... (Tenacity Consulting v Warringah, 2004 ). Unfortunately Bays and Beaches that are more important to Sydney’s social and communal fabric find no such protection in law.
Methodology

The quantitative research methods used in the analysis of Little Manly Beach and Little Manly Point was a survey of the “intensity of use” conducted at 3pm on the 1st of January 2016. More generally Botany Bay and Sydney’s Ocean beaches were excluded from the study. The Harbour being quintessentially Sydney whereas the bay and the ocean beaches speak to larger Australian coastal typologies, of which Melbourne and the Gold Coast respectively exemplify.

The impetus for this paper is the current foreshore development opportunities opening up at the “Bays Precinct” near central Sydney. Previously the NSW government has sold off state foreshore at
Barangaroo and Darling Harbour. Manly Council has attempted to sell off council foreshore at Little Manly Beach. In the case of Barangaroo high rise casinos are being justified with words like Iconic attributed to buildings, and at Little Manly Beach it’s value is being undermined by a beach v. point equivalence of area argument. More generally there is a concern that our current political leaders are complacent about the importance of public foreshore to the economic and cultural life of Sydney. This is in contrast to our society building politicians of yesteryear who over 100 years intuitively recognized the need and protected our foreshore from private ownership. The rationale for this paper therefore is to attempt to make what was once intuitive, visible. An investigation of scholarly papers addressing the connection between foreshore, social activity and ownership was undertaken. There appeared to be a gap in the literature. This paper makes a start in addressing this gap.

**Paper Structure**

The structure of this paper is as follows. The harbour cove topography is defined. An historical analysis of the use of the harbour at First Contact given. Then a breakdown of the elements that constitute the features of a cove: elevation, slope, shape, morphology and material will be investigated against the example of an existing cove - Little Manly. The way these elements affect the use of Bays, Points and Fingers is then investigated, and from this knowledge the role these features play in the functioning of the city is uncovered. The Cove’s importance to the public realm and a socially well functioning Sydney is then highlighted.

**Harbour Topography definitions**

To understand the Harbour is to understand Sydney. Port Jackson is a heavily embayed drowned river valley. Ridgelines, spurs and gullys have become their harbour equivalents. Ridges are Fingers or Arms stretching out into the harbour. Spurs are Points or Headlands terminating in the harbour. Gullys are Bays (with or without Beaches) inviting the water in between these points and arms. The Cove here is defined as this set of topographical features; Point(Head), Fingers(Arms) and Bay (often with a Beach).

**Historical - Port Jackson, Sydney Cove, Bennelong Point and Manly Beach**

The importance of topography to settlement is an exercise in re-remembering the intuitive mental analysis Governor Phillip would have used in choosing Sydney Cove. First Contact history illustrates the importance of the particular topography of the harbour in the development of the Colony. From the original choice of the harbour to the choice of cove and then the impact of the social interactions at the points and on beaches.

Port Jackson, the Harbour was the choice of first settlement ahead of the Bay (Botany Bay). The topographical features of the harbour invited this choice, prioritizing the safety of ships for a colony that would depend on them. “...and had the satisfaction of finding the finest Harbour in World, in which a thousand sail of the line may ride in the most perfect security.”(Phillip 1789).
Within the Harbour the choice became which Cove. “The different Coves were examined with all possible expedition: I fixed on the one that had the best spring of Water, and in which the Ships can Anchor so close to the Shore, that at a very small expence, Quays may be made at which the largest Ships may unload.”(Phillip 1789). Sydney Cove is close to a model of an idealized cove, it has a strongly defined parallel arms, prominent points with a shallow bay (beach) at its head. Each of these features was to be instrumental in the success of Sydney Cove as centre of first settlement. The sides allowed ships sheltered anchorage, the points provided lookouts and protection, while the bay allowed settlers and aboriginals easy personal access to the water where they could walk down to the beach to fish, launch canoes, etc.

Governor Phillip’s first interaction with the natives of Port Jackson was with a community of aboriginals the “Kayeemy” that came out to him from a beach. A beach he would name ‘Manly’ cove based on their demeanour. It was also on this beach he met the first women of Port Jackson briefly changing the name of Manly cove to Eve’s Cove (Champion 2004). It is the same beach from which Colbee and Bennelong are kidnapped and they escape back to, and the one that Governor Phillip is once again asked back to for a whale feast where a member of the tribe spears Phillip in the shoulder in front of Bennelong. This was possible payback for Bennelong’s kidnapping (Clendinnen 2003). The harbour beach at Manly was obviously an important meeting place for this tribe if not their home base. Sydney Cove’s bay is used in a similar manner.
When Bennelong returns to Governor Phillip he is given a house at the end of the eastern point of Sydney Cove “Cattle Point” that he then renames “Bennelong Point” in Bennelong’s honour (Lawrence 1987) The point is used to honour Bennelong but it also literally isolates Bennelong from the activity of Sydney Cove and removes him from the Manly beach community he was a part of. Bennelong becomes an Iconic figure for the dilemma of an aboriginal trying to straddle two cultures (Dortins 2009). “Bennelong Point” becomes the site for Australia’s most Iconic building the Sydney Opera House projecting Australia to the world.

From the beginning of Colonial history the harbour’s topographical features are already determining where a settlement is established, where a community thrives and where the state celebrates (or controls ?) important assets of the colony. How do the features of a Cove determine social interactions?

Cove: Little Manly case study

An analysis of the Cove and how its topographical features have underpinned the prominence of Icons and Community within Sydney Harbour is followed in a case study of Little Manly Cove. Little Manly Cove is not unlike a quarter scaled version of Sydney Cove. Sydney Cove is about 320m across to Little Manly Cove’s 160m, yet Little Manly faces south-west rather than Sydney Coves north. Both had streams at their head and deep water access. Little Manly Cove is thus similar to the idealized cove that Sydney Cove is, but with an intact beach for study. I have rotated and mirrored Little Manly below for ease of comparison.

Sketch of Sydney Cove, Port Jackson, in the County of Cumberland, New South Wales, July 1788. Captain John HUNTER, William DAWES
Map of the Village of Manly, County of Cumberland, New South Wales, July 1908. Metropolitan Land District NSW.

**Coves: Positional and Scale Characteristics**

The Cove “topography” defines a Cove “typology”, a typology that engenders certain activities and social dynamics. The harbours convoluted jagged edge generates a great diversity of different cove characteristics. These positional and scale traits can be assessed as: position, aspect and size. And in themselves create cultures and communities of different characteristics.

Position: The most important position of a cove is how far it is from the ocean. The closer to the ocean the cleaner and sandier it is. thus the more it is used as a beach. Little Manly Cove is close to the Ocean and thus its beach is well used. Bays near the city or on the other side of the harbour bridge like Blackwattle bay may have sandy beaches but concern about cleanliness stop them being used. The more the beach is used the more informal the social interaction.

Aspect: The degree of exposure to the sun, wind and currents. Sheltered traits: the potential to get out of the elements and thus linger. Beaches like Little Manly are used right into a summer evening as it faces the setting sun (south-west), while Sydney Cove faces north making it inviting and sunny the whole working day.

Scale: The harbour is fractal, larger features scale down to smaller ones, there are large points within bays and bays within points, etc. Scale dictates the intimacy. (Big) Manly Cove is a bay for a village and accommodates fireworks and ferries while the smaller more intimate Little Manly Cove next to it caters to children and kayaks.

Cove: Topographical Elements
Little Manly Cove Diagram. Source of Map data: © Google, © Aerometrex. Imagery date: 1/1/2014

The topographical features of the Cove: Point, Finger and Bay are defined by their shoreline edge, the relationship between water and land. These topographical features can be re-ducted back to their topographical elements. Elements of the harbour edge that have different quantifiable values depending on the feature. The topographical elements investigated here are: Elevation of the shoreline, Slope into the water, Plan shape of the topography, Morphological form of the topography and the Material at the harbour’s edge. The points investigated above are calculus derived and were surveyed by the author.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Elements</th>
<th>Topographical Features of Cove Typology</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bay</strong> - Turning Minima</td>
<td><strong>Finger</strong> - Inflexion Point</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Elevation:</strong> height 5m inland from HWM</td>
<td><strong>Low</strong> - 1m high. Relatively close to water level.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Slope:</strong> deg.</td>
<td><strong>Shallow.</strong> 13 deg., allows easy access into the harbour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>steepest with in HWM 5m</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Shape:</strong> The plan shape of the harbour’s edge</td>
<td><strong>Concave.</strong> The land hugs the water. The focus point is on the water, surveyable over a 90deg. arc from the shore. As the <em>bay</em> brings the water furthest inland it is surrounded by land, thus well connected, and a natural destination. Paths run across a <em>bay</em>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Morphology:</strong> The contoured form of the surrounding topography</td>
<td><strong>Gully.</strong> A bay has an amphitheatre shape that reinforces the focus on the water in the vertical dimension, in the same way the concave shape does in the horizontal; correspondingly a bay has great</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Ridge.</strong> Defined by a ridge running parallel to the water. Prioritizes movement along the edge (the traverse) rather than across it (the transect). From the edge the land and water are equally weighted in the landscape.</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Spur.</strong> The edge of a ridge slopes/drops down to the water. The water dominates the surrounding landscape. The point is a natural lookout or stage into the water. The approach is distant and visible drawing you along the ridge then opening up with distant views,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Material: The texture/ material of the harbour edge</td>
<td><strong>Sand.</strong> Soft under foot. Bay is defined by sand (beach), and the detritus that washes up, seaweed, driftwood, plastic etc.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Morphology:</strong> The contoured form of the surrounding topography</td>
<td>Gully. A bay has an amphitheatre shape that reinforces the focus on the water in the vertical dimension, in the same way the concave shape does in the horizontal; correspondingly a bay has great visual connection back to the surrounding areas. Being a gully, the immediate neighbourhood is defined by the surrounding ridge. The water appears suddenly on approach when the ridge is breached. Land dominates the landscape yet the water remains the focus.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Material:</td>
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<td>The texture/ material of the harbour edge</td>
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Why do the Points and the Bays act differently and how are their roles used differently in the construct of the city?

**Bay: The Community maker**

So why does the bay beach work so well as a public space, are bays the ideal environment for the creation of neighbourhood and community? Bay (Beach) as community maker. The bay is close to an ‘ideal’ neighbourhood space. The special physical qualities of bays invite people to linger, play and interact - requirements for creating community space. On top of that residents are likely to engage in physical activity in a very informal way, adding egalitarian and health aspects to that communal space (as well as certain amount of hedonism).

A communal space that supports “optional and social activities” (Gehl 2001) with a breadth of activities is essential to creating “neighbourhoods” (Hester and Randolph 1976) and a strong sense of local “genus loci” or local identity (Dalby and Mackenzie, 1997). Jan Gehl highlights ‘activities in it’ and the ‘quality’ of those spaces. What are the morphological and material qualities of the bay that lend itself to creating great community spaces?

**Elevation:**

The citizen is at sea level; the invitation to immerse in the water is thus an open and tempting invitation. The potential to bathe and swim in water allows for a very different interaction with the natural environment than can be achieved on land (White 2008). Closeness to water and immersion
changes formality; the closer to the water the more we disrobe, the greater the degree of disrobement, the greater the informality, class and social status are literally stripped away. The bay has an inherently “egalitarian” forum in its engagement with the public.

Slope:

Bays have a wide, shallow sloped access into the water. This easy, broad and safe access supports a wide active engagement with the water.

1. Easy access means ease of entry, inviting multiple visits.
2. Broad access means that a range of water activities are supported: swimmers, boats, windsurfers, kayaks, divers etc.
3. Safe access means the whole age spectrum of the community can participate from children to seniors.

Most of these activities are physically engaging activities requiring more than one person and some co-ordination to engage in, they are inherently social activities. A bay and its activities are an ideal Whyte social triangulation feature (Whyte 1980), providing natural prompts for strangers to talk to each other, thereby creating shared stories in shared spaces and thus communal relationships.

Shape:

Bays are concave shaped and thus internally focused on the water. From anywhere in the bay you can see the water and everyone around it immediately, thus quickly identifying activities and previous acquaintances, and increasing the chances of engaging in unplanned meetings and activities. (Gehl 2001)

Bays reach deep inland and are unusual in being a destination with a transverse path. A destination, because it is the closest body of water to most people inland. A path, because it’s a pinch point for the most direct access to somewhere else. The bay is a natural obstacle to land based travel concentrating traffic around it. A bay is thus a desirable destination with high passing traffic.

Morphology:

Bays are gullies, sheltered from the wind and in the water from the currents, encouraging citizens to relax and linger within a bay out of the elements. The gully is shaped like a natural amphitheatre with high visibility into the surrounding neighbourhood extending its usage limit (Bangs and Mahler 1970) and generating a focus for that neighbourhood, a requirement for successful neighbourhood spaces (Hester and Randolf 1976). The amphitheatre form increases natural surveillance of the bay, making them safe social spaces and increasing their use by women and families.

Material:

Bays are made of sand and collect flotsam. Sand as a groundcover is hard to move across quickly, moulds to the body and can be engaged actively in play, it is also cleansed daily by the saltwater and sun. All these factors require you to slow down and invite you to linger. The special quality of sand itself is used to invigorate public spaces in European squares with the introduction of artificial beaches. (Kim 2015).
Bays are not insular or “local” places, they are the interaction points for the local community with the outside. Manly Beach was the first meeting point between the harbour aboriginals and British soldiers, but when Governor Phillip later returned and kidnapped 2 random aboriginals from the same beach, they were not even from the local tribe, Colbee was Cadigal from the Eastern Suburbs of Sydney (Smith 2008) and Bennelong was Wangal from Homebush Bay near Parramatta (Smith 2013) the bay has never been insular. Today it you were to take 2 random people from the shores of Little Manly Beach the chances of them being local would be just as slim.

A bay is open to those of all ages to engage in a diverse variety of passive and active activities in a very informal, safe and relaxed atmosphere. The physical characteristics of an ideal communal space. Important to the social health of the local and regional communities. Little Manly beach fits this type with people of all ages staying for much longer than 5 minutes often in couples or large family groups engaging in water/sand activities intermittently.

Point: The City maker

The Point is a complementary feature to the bay. While the bay’s prominence is in its relationship to the surrounding land, the Point’s prominence is in its relationship to the surrounding water. The Point plays on the larger stage of the harbour. Points are at once exposed but isolated, and it is from those characteristics that its roles within Sydney harbour is defined. What are the elements of the Point that lend itself to creating great city spaces.


Elevation:

Points provide elevated views of the surrounding water, allowing easy surveillance for people coming to view the harbour and in particular to see harbour celebrations: North and South Head for the Sydney to Hobart races, Blues Point and Barangaroo for the New Year’s Eve fireworks and Bennelong and Dawes Point for Australia Day activities, etc. It is also the reason they have
historically been used as military lookouts, being chosen as forts (Dawes Point), gunneries (Bradleys and Middle Head) and Artillery bases (North Head).

Slope:

Points are isolated from the water, not visually but in terms of accessibility. Point slopes are steep and are often cliffs, so direct personal water activities are curtailed.

Shape:

Points jut out into the water, becoming not just destinations to view the harbour but isolated point of land. A Points isolation means they attract no passing traffic and are unlikely to be places to accidentally meet someone thus attractive to the romantic and morbid, valued spots for romantic dates (Lady Macquarie’s Chair) and perversely suicide attempts (the Gap) and occasionally murder (North Head).

Morphology:

Points are exposed, being at the end of spur surrounded by water. Conversely from the water points become prominent and the bays disappear and become difficult to get to. The wind, waves and currents are strongest at Points, thus there is an element of danger that is exhilarating in short bursts but tiring over longer periods. This exposure limits the time people linger on points. The focus of an observer at a point is outwards and diffused into the harbour, from the harbour however a point is a singular focus. This visual exposure makes them ideal for promoting state institutions: cultural (Opera House - Bennelong point), state power (Admiralty House - Kirribilli point), state progress (Harbour Bridge - Dawes and Milsons point) or safety (Greenway’s Lighthouse - South Head).

Material:

Points are stone - cliffs, large boulders and now concrete. The ground cover does not encourage reclining.

A Point plays a role in the larger context of the Harbour and thus the city and necessarily needs to be analysed at the city scale. An interesting note about Points is that most of them remain in public hands. A Points isolation from community activity and its importance in projecting the state into the the city’s harbour plaza often ensures they end up in public ownership.

At the neighbourhood level points are ironically both where the community comes to participate in metropolis events and celebrations but also for privacy. Little Manly Point fits the type, it is most used when the Sydney to Hobart yacht race starts, yet is the most private part of Little Manly Cove indeed the most intimate cuddle in the survey was of a couple on the point (also the more dangerous after dark), right on the point no one stayed for much longer than 5 minutes after taking in the view due to its exposure to the wind and sun.

Cove: Activity
From the above spatial type analysis we could presume that each topographical feature enables, different intensities of use, for different social activities. A survey of Little Manly Beach, Finger and Point taken at 3pm on January the 1st 2016 bears this out. Videos and Photos were taken at this point in time, and activity and numbers counted from this documentation. January the 1st 2016 was 26°C with clear skies. The date was chosen because it is an annual summer holiday with a set date, but not a day of great celebrations, it is also a day that appears busier than a summer work day but not as busy as a summer weekend. While Manly Point west of Little Manly Point has greater views of the Heads and Spring Cove, it was not surveyed as they have been sterilized of public activity by private ownership.

The highlighted area is 7139 m². The Harbour edge is 160m long. This is the area surveyed on the 1st of January 2016 at 3pm. There were 392 people using the beach. 321 people were in the yellow area: beach and foreshore (232 on the sand, 89 on the grass), and 71 in the water (not highlighted in yellow but only accessible from the beach). The demographic appeared to incorporate all ages from “0” to “80”, with an even gender split. Activities spotted within the beach were: Picnicking, Reading,
Viewing, “Cafeing”, Sunbathing, Kayaking, Stand up Boarding, Swimming, Diving, Bathing, Inflatable playing, ball throwing, sand castle building, drinking, walking and chatting.

The highlighted area above is 7507 m². The Harbour edge is 264m long. It is the area surveyed for use on the 1st of January 2016 at 3pm. There were 46 people using the point. 27 people were sitting within 2m of the edge fishing and 19 people were picnicking, lying on the grass or walking around the point. The demographic appeared to be mainly young adults to middle aged, more men than women.

Though both places are roughly the same size, Little Manly Beach is used about 9 times more intensively than Little Manly Point. At both places the large majority of people were actively engaging with the water. At Little Manly Beach out of 392 people, the only people not in swimming costumes were about 10 people in the cafe and 20 people on the grassed foreshore near Stuart St. At Little Manly Point no one looked like they were going to swim, but the majority of them 26 were dangling a fishing line into the water.
The ease of access to the water’s edge increased the use of the harbour foreshore. In both cases the closer one got to the harbour’s edge in plan or sea level in elevation the greater the “intensity of use” of the foreshore.

**Points and Bays in a Harbour civic plaza**

In Sydney the great public realm is the harbour. Public space in the literature is normally defined within a strict urban context, the space between buildings (Gehl 2001), a structure created by streets where real life happens (Kahn 1971), with the great public realms of plazas and squares giving focus to a city. But the harbour is where Sydney goes to celebrate as a metropolis. The harbour is flatter and larger than any land plaza. Sydney’s city spectacles occur on the harbour: New Year - Fireworks, Boxing Day - yacht races, Australia Day - harbour performances, Vivid etc. Historically it has been the harbour too that has been the first point of introduction to the outside world as visitors and immigrants sailed into Sydney. Because citizens can’t actually walk through this plaza the foreshore at the Harbour’s edge becomes the necessary publically occupiable component needed for it to function as a city plaza.

Sydney’s interaction with the harbour as civic plaza relies on access to its foreshore to observe, celebrate and enter, without which the harbour as civic space dies. Kohn’s definition of a public space has three core dimensions: ‘ownership’, ‘accessibility’ and ‘a place that facilitates social encounters and interactions.’ (Kohn 2004) while Nemeth & Schmidt identifies ‘ownership’, ‘management’ and ‘use/users’ (Nemeth & Schmidt 2010). Sydney Harbour is an unusual plaza, as no physical interactions occur within it; it’s important public space is the edge. The degree to which this space is used by the public to engage with the harbour as observers, travellers or participants is dependent on the foreshores public accessibility. Foreshore accessibility depends on:

- Depth of open foreshore: greater the depth, greater the public engagement
- Accessibility: ease of greater Sydney access and ease of local use.
- Ownership: is the foreshore in public or private ownership

Bays are the connective tissue of community. In a well-functioning communal bay no one lives on the foreshore but back from it, in the surrounding ridges, they can only act as the ideal community gathering points if they are public and accessible. All citizens need to be able to occupy foreshore space, for an unlimited time, generating low-intensity contact (Gehl 2001) the genesis for a vibrant community. Where bays have lost their public foreshores they no longer exist as communal spaces, the bay the ideal community maker has been sterilized, even their names become lost to the general public. Few Sydney residents will recognize the names of Blackburn Cove, Felix Bay or Kutti Beach, Sydney Harbour bays without public foreshores.
Conclusion

Sydney Cove. Source: Destination NSW

The Opera house and Harbour Bridge are the gatekeepers to the city, unbuildable without the harbour points from which they spring, an iconic power derived from Sydney Harbour great civic plaza. A harbour that can both promote and reveal while simultaneously segregating and concealing. The Cove is the harbours defining typology. Coves with Bays that generate community and internal identity and Points that projects the City’s public face internationally and provides a forum for civic engagement. No other Australian city is as fundamentally defined by its topography as Sydney.

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Planning the Unplanned City  
The Story of the Gold Coast

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One of the distinctive features of Gold Coast urbanisation is its historically ad hoc approach to development with little or no strategic planning to guide it. Many have commented on the lack of planning on the Gold Coast calling it ‘an experiment in freedom’ or ‘free enterprise city’. Following a major restructuring of the Queensland’s local councils, the 1990s witnessed a shift from ad hoc decision making to more systematic planning on the Gold Coast.

Understanding the past is important for shaping the future. This paper reviews the history of regulatory planning on the Gold Coast, encompassing decisions affecting the form and development of its earliest settlements through to its periods of greatest construction and most streamlined decision-making. It focuses mainly on past planning processes, the problems identified in each planning exercise and the interventions introduced, asking whether these were implemented or not and why. The paper positions the Gold Coast as a physical embodiment of this history of decision making, assessing the effects on the city as a whole of specific measures either affording freedoms or insisting on accountability to various levels of regulation. It examines how the absence of some planning measures influenced the form of the city and its internal arrangements and considers how the shift from ad hoc decision making towards more systematic planning efforts affected the city’s urbanisation. The lessons that the Gold Coast example provides will resonate with places elsewhere in Australia and the world, if not always in scale definitely in substance.

**Keywords:** urbanisation, strategic planning, urban form

For full text see:


and
Healing the harbour foreshore
The making of Sydney’s new headland park

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Barangaroo Reserve, part of the redevelopment of the former container wharves at East Darling Harbour, Sydney, NSW, is a major project in an iconic location. Originally proposed to be a hard-edged landscape which retained evidence of the site’s industrial past, dramatic changes in the NSW government’s approach have resulted in the attempted reconstruction of the natural headland that existed there at British settlement. Justification by the government for the shift in design philosophy adopted a tone of moral redemption and obligation, proclaiming that the reconstruction of a natural headland would ‘heal’ the foreshore and ‘remove a scar’ from the city, and leant heavily on the perceived virtues of restoring a natural landscape over conserving the site’s maritime industrial cultural landscape.

The creation of Barangaroo Reserve reveals a peculiar icon-making process, one that throws into sharp relief the dichotomy at the heart of Sydney’s identification with its famous harbour landscape: the working industrial harbour on which the city grew and thrived, and the so-called natural landscape it replaced. It also invokes the question of what natural means in Sydney’s post-colonial landscape.

By tracing the making of Barangaroo Reserve, the paper reveals that its stated meanings may not be as morally straightforward as claimed, and this raises questions for a project touted as a major new icon for Sydney. It suggests that the replacement of one type of landscape with another, in the name of a moral obligation, is replete with complexities that demand consideration of the broader meaning of the landscape and its representation over time.

Keywords: landscape; restoration; urban design; cultural landscape

Introduction

The creation of Barangaroo Reserve is the story of a clash between competing narratives of Sydney and its iconic harbour. On the one hand, the physical fabric and form of the former container wharves of East Darling Harbour on the western side of Sydney’s CBD were described as a testament to thousands of working lives in the maritime trade which sustained the city until relatively recently.

On the other, the wharves were condemned as evidence of the destruction and vandalism industry wrought upon the original harbour landscape.

This paper explores the formation of the park using the theoretical frameworks of landscape and environmental or landscape restoration. In language and intentions, the Barangaroo Reserve project, designed by Peter Walker & Partners landscape architects with Johnson Pilton Walker, ostensibly sits within the international practice of landscape restoration, in which natural landscapes are restored or reconstructed based on assumed past conditions (Elliot 1997; Higgs 2003; Foster 2005). In cultural heritage terminology, landscape restoration is really ‘reconstruction’, the practice of ‘returning a place to a known earlier state...distinguished from restoration by the introduction of new material into the fabric’ (Australia ICOMOS, Article 1.8).

The discourse around such projects focuses on the moral implications of our relationship with nature, emphasising the duty to repair the natural landscapes that industrialisation and urbanisation have damaged or destroyed. In essence landscape restoration projects involve a judgement of value, of what is more important, and are therefore an expression of that value (Foster 2005). While the narrative for Barangaroo Reserve adopted the language of restoration to rationalise the removal of the site’s maritime industrial landscape, on examination the project’s justification is not as morally straightforward as claimed. This has implications for a project charged with being a new icon for Sydney, and for landscape restoration projects more broadly. It suggests that the replacement of one type of landscape with another, in the name of a moral obligation, is replete with complexities that demand consideration of the broader meaning of the landscape and its representation over time.

**Methods**

The paper explores the concepts of landscape and the moral value of nature and natural landscapes in a post-colonial urban setting using the case study of Barangaroo Reserve. The concepts are examined using the methods of discourse analysis and iconographical study. Discourse analysis provides the means of understanding how the natural headland design for the park came about, how it was justified, and what it may, in the end, mean as a landscape. Iconographical methods are used to examine how these meanings have been imprinted into the landscape as built. Archival research was used to investigate and test the claims made about Barangaroo Reserve.

**The Value of Nature and Landscape**

Landscape has been theorised as the product of the co-constitutive relationship of a physical thing in the world and our understanding of it (Mitchell 2000). This understanding or meaning is subjective, the product of our ever-changing ways of seeing and understanding the world and our place in it. It is mediated by culture and by its context in time and space (Massey 1995). For WJT Mitchell (1994, 2), the subjectivity of landscape makes it ‘an instrument of cultural power’, where its depiction and physical form can be manipulated to hide or normalise particular narratives and represent an artificial world as if it were ‘simply given and inevitable’. But to believe that a place or thing holds a single meaning at any one time can be an overly simplistic view of people’s relationship to landscape. While one narrative may dominate, or be made to dominate, this cannot control the
diversity of individual memories, attachments and experiences that may be associated with a landscape. Attempts to establish a ‘fixed and discrete set of meanings’ can be ‘inevitably altered, rendered mobile and open to alternative and even contradictory readings’ (Atkinson and Cosgrove 1998, 30).

Natural landscapes are loaded with cultural meanings and values that have sought to separate them theoretically from cultural landscapes. Natural landscapes are seen as inherently better—‘healthier, more durable, more beautiful and morally superior’—than cultural landscapes (Lowenthal 2013, 5). David Lowenthal (2013, 6) likened this belief to an article of faith, rooted in Judeo-Christian theological concepts of Eden as ‘the fruitful garden of an originally perfect pristine world’. Nature itself has been theorised as having an intrinsic value, with environmental philosopher Eric Katz suggesting that the value of nature (“the ecosystemic processes of the natural world” (1995, 274)), arises from its autonomy and independence from human intention. This value is inherent and cannot be created, and once humans intervene it is lost. Therefore any human intervention into nature is a moral act, in that it instantly transforms nature into a product of human intentions and prevents it from following its ‘unplanned courses of development, growth and change’ (Katz 1993, 230). Katz’s construction of value is not without its problems. It is difficult to reconcile it with a more nuanced understanding of the pre-colonial relationship between humans and nature, for example (Denevan 2011; Langton 1996). However, it remains a foundational explanation of the intrinsic value of nature.

Katz’s construction of nature’s value has the logical conclusion that natural areas have to be protected from human interference to be preserved in some kind of ‘pure’ state. Yet others believe that the value of nature can be regained and natural landscapes restored, and that the destruction wrought by development means that we have a moral obligation to restore natural areas that have been lost (Kane 1994; Higgs 2003). Landscape restoration projects are generally presented as honourable endeavours, morally beyond reproach (Elliot 1997; Foster 2005; Trigger et al 2008; Smith 2013). Jennifer Foster (2005, 336) notes that restoration projects often have ‘an undercurrent of redemptive motivation’. By restoring, we will atone for wrongs done to the environment in the past. Restoration can also be viewed as the response to an ‘inescapable obligation’ (Kane 1994, 79) to repair degraded natural landscapes.

Restoration places a higher value on what the landscape was like in the past and assumes that it had some intrinsic value of more worth than other landscape forms (Elliot 1997). The dilemma of what exactly constitutes this higher value remains unresolved. If the intrinsic value of nature lies in its autonomy, as Katz proposes, then restoration cannot recover this value once lost. Restorers argue that ecological accuracy, closeness to historical form and the participation of humans in landscape restoration can recover nature’s value, and that therefore restoration is a morally justifiable approach (Higgs 2003; Light 2002).

However, landscape practices have long struggled with historical felicity and the desire to make nature useful. Early versions of preserved nature in Victorian England, such as Hampstead Heath, saw nature arranged like a garden, ‘thoroughly humanised, intensely managed’ (Lowenthal 2013, 10). The restored landscapes were inspired not by wilderness, but by pastoral paintings, where the landscape was reformed to suit picturesque ideals. Landscape restoration projects, while having different aims and methods, have similar conceptual results, with nature arranged for aesthetic appreciation and usefulness as much as any ecological concerns (Smith 2013). The final product is a
type of cultural landscape, a particular vision of the world loaded with human intentions—not nature as it is, but nature as it should be.

Restored landscapes do not replace nothingness. A layered landscape, with its topography, structures and details developed over time, is a repository of public history which provides tangible evidence of past lives and values and attitudes to the world (Mitchell 2000; Hayden 1995). Thus an industrial landscape holds evidence of human, labour, struggle and achievement, while a Victorian parkland landscape like Hampstead Heath holds evidence of the twin beliefs in the good of nature and the need to control it. The diversity of meanings people associate with a landscape means that any intervention into it has a moral dimension. How robust are these associations and meanings if their physical traces are lost? As discussed in the next section, the landscape of Millers Point was a layered cultural landscape when the redevelopment of the East Darling Harbour wharves was announced.

The Remaking of Millers Point

The industrialisation of Millers Point began in the early nineteenth century. Due to the steep topography of the ridgeline that formed the western boundary of The Rocks, it was not until the 1820s that early colonial industries arrived at the point, in the form of stone quarrying (Galloway 2006, 10) and three windmills for grinding grain owned by John Leighton, ‘Jack the Miller’ (Fitzgerald 2008). A scattering of houses and tracks accompanied the windmills, forming a sparsely developed landscape. The steep topography of the point itself was a barrier to maritime industry and it was not until 1836 that the first wharf was recorded on a map (Figure 1).
By the end of the century, the shoreline of Darling Harbour, Millers Point and Walsh Bay had developed into a shambolic collection of privately-owned wharves and reclamation of the tidal mud flats. Following an outbreak of the plague, the shoreline was formalised and regularised by the NSW government’s Sydney Harbour Trust (SHT) through the construction of state-of-the-art finger wharves and shore-sheds. The topography of Millers Point itself was altered with its western and northern slopes cut away to create more wharfage, resulting in dramatic sandstone cliffs. Over time as the industry shifted to containers, the space between the wharves was reclaimed by the SHT’s successor, the Maritime Services Board (MSB) and in the 1960s and 1970s the whole became a single concrete apron for container ships. A harbour control tower was built at the point in 1974, providing a landmark for the point and an undeniable maritime industrial presence that looms over the western harbour.

By the time the major redevelopment of East Darling Harbour was announced in 2005, a cultural landscape existed there that described over 180 years of maritime industry and working lives in its built structures and landscape modifications. In recognition of this, the design for the East Darling Harbour didn’t begin with a natural headland in mind. The original design competition brief required the design to reflect qualities intrinsic to Sydney, particularly the prominence of the harbour and the way it had defined the city’s character and history since British settlement (SHFA 2005). The brief envisaged that the ‘working harbour’ uses of the site would remain to some extent, with the harbour control tower, an overseas cruise terminal and interstate ferry terminal retained. During the second stage of the competition former Prime Minister Paul Keating joined the design jury and it is to this moment that the reconstruction project can be traced.

Keating had a singular vision for Sydney’s famous harbour, which Barangaroo provided an opportunity to realise. He wanted to restore the ‘archipelago of headlands’ in the western harbour back to a state approximating what it may have looked like in 1788, when the First Fleet arrived at Sydney Cove (D*Hub 2007; Stephens 2009). To ensure that his vision prevailed, Keating set about redefining the history of the point and its value to Sydney. He created a new narrative by which the industrial history of the site was recast as an aberration, a meaningless interruption in a longer continuum of Sydney Harbour’s natural history. In an interview for the Daily Telegraph, Keating claimed that “if we restore the headland and take off extraneous pieces of building work, the unimportant industrial bits, the natural constellation of headland islands comes back” (in Vallejo 2008).

Keating had a direct influence on the planning process, being appointed to the development’s design panels, and his narrative was picked up and reinforced in successive planning documents, as well as by government ministers and premiers who made Keating’s words their own. The first planning approval for the project required ‘the reinstatement of a headland at the northern end of the site with a naturalised shape and form’ (Sartor 2007).

The narrative adopted the language of landscape restorers in putting the case for the headland’s reconstruction, talking of redemption and obligation. Barangaroo Reserve was cast as offering the last chance to repair or ‘heal’ the scar the container wharf and maritime industry had left on the
foreshore. This ‘scar’ was depicted with some violence by the then NSW Premier Morris Iemma who claimed ‘It’s been a wasteland and they started with the headland and carved it, killed it, turned it into an industrial site’ (Frew 2008). Keating tied the reinstatement of the headland to a moral obligation to restore what had been ‘destroyed’. In a piece written for the Sun-Herald in 28 February 2010, he characterised Barangaroo Reserve as the opportunity to heal a place ‘vandalised’ by its industrial past, ‘going a long way to remediating the wilful damage done by this self-serving authority [the MSB]’ (Keating 2010). The then NSW Minister for Planning, Frank Sartor, epitomised this narrative with the claim that the park would be a ‘healed, restored part of Sydney’ (NSW Parliament, 2008).

The reconstruction of the headland would see a lost natural landscape returned, and the true value of Sydney’s iconic harbour reinstated. Underpinning this was a belief in the inherent value of the natural landscape and the moral obligation to atone for the destruction that has been wrought upon it. Keating expressed his vision thus: ‘I believe there is only one compelling heritage interest...the natural topography—the pre-colonial configuration of the foreshore’ (D*Hub 2007). He argued that the natural features of Sydney are what define it—“the residual natural nature of the foreshore...characterises Sydney Harbour and defines Sydney with it” (D*Hub 2007). In a 2007 lecture, Keating set about connecting this natural landscape of the harbour to the very identity of the city itself.

It’s got a beauty; it’s old—you know it’s old. This is a very old—geologically, one of the oldest parts of the world; and, if you live in Sydney, of course you know it. Those of us who love the sandstone, the age of it, the fractures, the fissures, all the things that mark it out and give you that sense of where you are (D*Hub 2007).

The discourse around the development of Barangaroo Reserve enforced the idea that the reconstruction of a natural landscape had greater moral claims than other landscape approaches, and that the need for this reconstruction outweighed consideration of the site’s maritime industrial cultural landscape. But what exactly is the moral value of reconstructing the headland?

The Making of a Colonial Landscape

If the moral justification of the project rested on the belief in nature’s intrinsic value, the park’s design would have had to achieve at least two things necessary for landscape restoration projects: ecological accuracy and historical fidelity. Examination of the project’s planning documents and the park landscape now completed reveals that there is little evidence of these. The planning application documents for the project and statements by the then Premier Morris Iemma (AAP 2008) demonstrate that the shape of the headland’s shoreline was based on an 1836 map (Figure 1) drawn long after colonial development had come to Millers Point, and which recorded the first commercial wharf at the point. The documents also reveal that the headland’s form and landscape design were inspired by colonial imagery, particularly c1821 drawings by Major Taylor (Figures 2 and 3), which were reproduced over and over in the project’s planning reports and other documents (BDA 2009; JPW and PWP 2010). These images show the series of coves and inlets that sheltered the new colony and the sandstone and green that characterised the headlands.
Figure 2: Major James Taylor, Part of the Harbour of Port Jackson, and the country between Sydney and the Blue Mountains, New South Wales. c1821, Aquatint, 39.5 x 58 cm. State Library of NSW, Sydney. Miller’s Point is on the right of the image, with the two windmills.
Figure 3: Major James Taylor, The entrance of Port Jackson, and part of the town of Sydney, New South Wales. c1821, Aquatint, 39.5 x 58 cm. State Library of NSW, Sydney.

That the park would be a truthful replica of the natural headland as it was in the past was reiterated throughout the project. Keating claimed in September 2009 that ‘[t]he designs currently proposed are based on the last drawings we have and they are as close as humanly possible to those drawings’ (in Bibby 2009). However, it is clear from the planning documents that the form of Barangaroo Reserve is not particularly faithful to the historical record (BDA 2009; SHFA and MG Planning 2009). In a Design Strategy Review report for the project, Conybeare Morrison International (2008, 4) admitted that the earlier headland was probably much smaller than that proposed for the park but that it could still have a ‘natural’ feel ‘without necessarily being cut back to the 1836 shoreline extent’ (emphasis added). The highly manicured and re-formed landscape of Mrs Macquarie’s Point in Sydney’s Domain informed the design, with the Request for Proposal (RFP) documents from 2009 stating that the park’s character should reflect the rugged sandstone topography of Sydney Harbour and include plantings of large figs (Moreton Bay and Port Jackson figs) and native trees similar to the parklands at Mrs Macquarie’s Chair (BDA 2009, 12).

There is also little evidence of ecological accuracy at Barangaroo Reserve, or a commitment to restoring the landscape in any way other than aesthetically. Even though the park includes native trees and a rocky shoreline, the grade of the headland, paths and shoreline have all been designed to suit an urban public park. The headland shape has been formed not by outcrops of sandstone, but by concrete retaining walls and fill over a 300-space carpark and a concrete-framed ‘cultural space’. A glass and steel lift connects the carpark to the top of the park, and the north-eastern section of the
park is interrupted by an open gash over the carpark entrance. The natural reconstruction is essentially skin deep—the park is a thin layer of nature over concrete, cars and culture.

The plants have been selected generally for their ‘nativeness’ to Sydney Harbour, but not from any detailed study of the ecological system that may have once graced the headland. The integrity of the process has been further eroded by the addition of four ‘iconic’ species not native to the harbour—Gymea lily, spotted gum, Sydney blue gum, water gum—and one, a bottle brush, Callistemon citrinus, chosen because it was named ‘Anzac’ and the park opened during the centenary of Gallipoli (BDA 2015).

While the project’s main works application claimed that the park would have ‘natural heritage advantages’, the National Trust pointed out in response that this claim ‘is made, but isn’t proven anywhere’ (National Trust NSW 2010, final page). No documents that explained how the headland would be natural were submitted with the application, or at any other stage of the project. The rigour required for recreating ecological systems (Higgs 2003) has not been seen at Barangaroo Reserve. There was a complete lack of explanation of the characteristics of a natural headland in Sydney Harbour in any terms other than aesthetic.

Essentially the project was an expression of Keating’s aesthetic preferences. He claimed that the hard geometry of the site’s container wharf ‘jars with the romantic nature of every Sydney headland, bay, point and inlet, characterised by sandstone and green’ (Sun-Herald, February 28, 2010), and congratulated the NSW government for its ‘vision and courage’ in taking a step towards ‘restor[ing] the western harbour to its original beauty’ (Keating in Keneally 2008). Keating’s views are not without precedent. The belief in the natural landscape’s beauty and its importance to Sydney has long been emphasised in efforts to conserve the sandstone foreshores of Sydney Harbour. Protection of the scenic qualities of the harbour’s headlands and eucalypt bushland were a major early focus of the National Trust in NSW (Logan 2015).

The images and values that underpinned Keating’s vision and used by the park’s designers had some troubling aspects. In describing the headland’s ideal and most beautiful state, the project relied on colonial depictions of the harbour landscape. It appeared that the obligation to restore was not for ecological reasons, but rather for a romantic vision of the harbour as it appeared to the nation’s colonial forebears. Keating saw Barangaroo as the chance to restore the landscape Captain Arthur Philip saw when he arrived at Port Jackson in 1788:

> We now have a once-in-200-year opportunity to call a halt to the kind of encroachments we have seen in the past. A once-in-200-year opportunity to leave something Arthur Phillip might recognise were he somehow, mystically, to return. (D*Hub 2007)

In a tour of the site given to journalists in August 2008, Iemma indicated that he wanted to see the northern point ‘converted into a wooded headland reminiscent of what the first settlers would have seen when they sailed into the harbour’ (Frew 2008). Landscape images, like landscapes themselves, are cultural products which channel the political or social context of the time (Cosgrove and Daniels 1988; Mitchell 1994). They can be an instrument of power that “silences discourse and disarticulates the readability of landscape in order to carry out a process of institutional and political legitimation” (Mitchell 1994, 3). The landscapes by Major Taylor and other colonial artists show a landscape ordered for aesthetic appreciation, with gentle slopes of green, punctuated by wild outcrops of
stone and trees in the distance. The images ‘cultivate the illusion of a natural place’ (Carter 1987, 251) and yet allowed imperial power to be ‘naturalised’ by remaking the colonised landscape in its own image and its own aesthetic conventions (Mitchell 1994). The images are colonial artefacts through which the harbour landscape, by the use of picturesque conventions and preoccupations, has been made British. In relying on these images for inspiration, Keating’s vision for Barangaroo Reserve is imbued with meaning—a colonial image of the landscape made real.

The Barangaroo Delivery Authority (created after the design competition to oversee the development) and Keating (Davies 2015) belatedly claimed that the intent behind the park’s design was to honour the landscape’s first inhabitants, but there was no mention of this prior to a major review of the project in 2011 (Sussex and Penn 2011). Keating himself had described the renaming of the site to ‘Barangaroo’, after a Cammeraygal woman who was a powerful figure in early Sydney, as ‘Aboriginal kitsch’ (Pearlman 2006). Involvement of Aboriginal people in the project since has had its share of controversy, with a circle of ‘phallic’ standing stones placed on the foreshore offending some traditional owners (Boney 2014; Hutchinson 2014). It is also undeniable that by its foundation in colonial images and descriptions of the harbour, Keating’s vision is closely tied to the colonial experience, which was exploitative of the landscape and its inhabitants.

If we accept that the product of the Barangaroo Reserve design is cultural, then this project has replaced one type of cultural landscape with another. If that is accepted, then what is at stake when one landscape is replaced with another is that physical evidence of public history and identity is erased and intangible attachments to that landscape are severed. Though that history may remain recorded in other forms, the everyday physical evidence that the landscape provides—visible every day to everyone in a city, the most tangible way for that history to be seen and found—will be lost.

For Hayden (1995) the very identity of a place and a community is in danger if the physical traces of its past are lost. While Barangaroo Reserve attempts to be a natural landscape, it conceals a cultural landscape that has been shaped by human intervention over thousands of years. The history of the neighbouring communities of Millers Point and Dawes Point is closely tied to that of the Barangaroo site and the industrial landscape of the Darling Harbour and Walsh Bay wharves. The entirety can be seen as a cultural landscape that has value to those who have worked and lived there and also to the broader community in terms of the role the wharves had in the development of Sydney.

This has implications for landscape restoration projects more broadly. If a cultural landscape is the physical expression of a place’s and community’s identity and history and if that identity has value, then a project like Barangaroo Reserve has the potential to commit a moral wrong by destroying (or at least damaging) that value. The nature preservation and landscape restoration projects are both founded on the obligation to preserve or restore something that has an intrinsic value (Katz 1993; Elliot 1997; Higgs 2003). However, if the restoration removes another type of value, then its moral foundations become somewhat unstable. In the case of Barangaroo Reserve, the moral value of reconstructing the harbour’s pre-industrial landscape, why it was something Sydney was duty bound to do, was never explained or substantiated. Nature has not been restored and the authentic reconstruction, which was to be faithful to the lost harbour landscape, is superficial at best. In truth Barangaroo Reserve is an aesthetic preference dressed up as a chance for redemption, without its true implications ever being fully considered or admitted.
Conclusion

Barangaroo Reserve finally opened to the public in August 2015, with its natural landscape intentions somewhat undermined by the presence of the harbour control tower looming over the site. Demolition of the tower is slated to happen in 2016 (Barlass 2015), and erasure of the site’s maritime industrial history will be complete. This act will remove an opportunity for a more complex reading of the present, where the site’s so-called natural and industrial histories as part of Sydney Harbour could be seen side by side.

Eric Higgs (2003, 279) has argued that “[d]esign specifies intention, meaning that our biases and dispositions and practical concerns are revealed through design: the cards are well displayed on the table”. While its development came loaded with claims of obligation and promises of redemption, in the end Barangaroo Reserve is a statement about the aesthetic preference of a former Prime Minister who wielded extraordinary power in the park’s design. The use of an 1836 map and landscapes by colonial artists, and the aesthetic focus of the landscape design, indicates that the park’s design is derived more from the picturesque thrill of the images themselves than a commitment to reconstructing a natural landscape. Headland Park will also obscure the 200-year industrial past of the place, one deeply connected to the history of the neighbouring Millers Point and Dawes Point communities, resulting in the loss of physical evidence of public history and public endeavour. While the justification for the project, as conveyed in the discourse, was that the park would ‘heal’ the foreshore and right the wrongs perpetrated by the ‘vandalism’ of its industrial past, in truth Sydney’s new natural headland is deeply colonial and not particularly natural.

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David L. Davidson
Early town planning reformer and administrator

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From the late 1920s to at least the mid-1940s, David Lomas Davidson (1893-1952) was the most powerful and influential administrator in town planning in Australia. As Town Planning Commissioner for Western Australia from 1929 until his death, his job was to implement the spirit and letter of the Town Planning and Development Act 1928. Davidson’s credentials for this position were consolidated in New South Wales in the 1920s. With a professional background in surveying, he joined the Town Planning Association of NSW as a vocal advocate for planning legislation and becoming President in 1928. Davidson succeeded Sir John Sulman as Vernon Memorial Lecturer in Town Planning at Sydney University in 1929. His enthusiasm for spreading the ‘good word’ about planning as well as the application of his sound practical planning skills continued in the West from 1929 but as an administrator he proved a controversial and divisive figure. There were gains but depression, war and likely his cantankerous personality hindered his effectiveness. This paper provides a brief biographical overview of his planning work and contributions, venturing also into his personal life which proved just as tempestuous and revealing.

**Keywords:** David Lomas Davidson, Town Planning Commissioner of Western Australia, Town Planning Association of New South Wales, Town Planning Legislation, Perth, Sydney

**Introduction**

David Lomas Davidson’s planning career stretched across two states from the 1920s to the 1950s, a crucial phase in the evolution of planning from citizens’ movement to statutory force. In New South Wales (NSW) in the 1920s he was a reformer associated with the Town Planning Association (TPANSW). In Western Australia (WA) from 1929 he was the most highly ranked planning
administrator in the country as that state’s Town Planning Commissioner. As a forceful character of some notoriety, Davidson has attracted attention (Bolton 1993; Webb 1968; Foley 1995; Freestone 2007), but there has been no considered overview of his life and times. Taking a biographical approach to planning history (Cherry 1981), our account is drawn from archival and secondary sources covering Davidson’s time in both Sydney and Perth. It commences with a brief summary of key moments in his life then looks more intensively, first, at his reforming years in Sydney followed by his administering years in Perth. The conclusion offers a preliminary assessment of his contribution to Australian planning practice.

As a backdrop to what follows, Table 1 provides a chronological summary of some key events in the life and career of David Davidson as best we can assemble the facts from public records. It was an eventful journey marked by controversy and private turmoil which he largely kept from public view. He solidified his planning credentials in NSW and in 1929 was appointed the first Town Planning Commissioner for Western Australia, retaining that position until his death. Davidson was a pragmatic planner, aligned more to the values of the city functional than the city beautiful. He defined planning as “the use of art and science to regulate and control the growth of towns and cities to establish health, create convenience, and preserve natural and [create] beauty - never omitting economic factors upon which modern progress depends” (West Australian, hereafter WA 12-9-29: 19).

**Advocating planning advocacy in Sydney 1920-1929**

Through the 1920s Davidson was as an engineer-surveyor based in Sydney, to 1924 with the Public Works Department carrying out investigations on potential hydro-electric schemes in regional NSW and then with the Metropolitan Water Sewerage and Drainage Board. In connection with these duties, he began to give public talks and write for a general audience. A published treatise on the national importance of hydro-electric power as a renewable energy source promoting decentralisation captured his philosophical formula: “Knowledge is Power, Power is Civilisation and true Civilisation is Happiness” (Davidson 1923). Davidson attributed his own professional rise to childhood lessons of reading, writing and “penmanship”, singling out his various studies through correspondence courses (Daily News, hereafter DN 5-8-36: 7). This is how he qualified for membership of peak professional bodies including the British Town Planning Institute. In 1920 he was registered by the NSW Board of Surveyors. Although eligible to sit the exam, he was never formally licensed to practise in his own right even though he claimed otherwise. He did not complete his military science diploma from Sydney University or a law degree at UWA. His formal instruction in planning was confined to Sulman’s Vernon lectures. These lectures provided an accessible overview of contemporary thought (Sulman 1921), but did not constitute a professional qualification. Remarkably, Davidson’s first wife Daisy and two of their children (William and Constance) also gained town planning certificates through the same course.

**Table 1: Summary Timeline of David L. Davidson**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1893</td>
<td>7 July. Born Sydney to George Thom Davidson (policeman) and Florence, nee Taunton.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1900s</td>
<td>Family moves to Wagga. Law clerk, draftsman, then pupillage with G. Sheppard, architect/surveyor.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1912 NSW Metropolitan Water Sewerage and Drainage Board, Engineering Assistant in surveys and construction.

1914 University of Sydney, student in Military Science


Second child, William Lomas.

1915 Rabaul, New Guinea, Lieutenant.

March. Discharged from army on disability grounds.

May. Court Martial in Sydney for acquiring German medals. Acquitted.

August. NSW Public Works Department, Draftsman and Surveyor until 1917.

1916 Third child, Marjorie Ruth.

1917 Federated Malay States, Indo-China, USA as civil engineer and surveyor.

1919 Returns to Sydney. Attends John Sulman’s Vernon Memorial Lectures on Town Planning at Sydney University. Passes with High Distinction.

Private practice with surveyor Henry Halloran.

1920 June. Registered to practise as Licensed Surveyor, but not formally Licenced under Act.

NSW Department of Public Works. Engineer Surveyor. Hydro-electricity investigations.

1923 Member, Council of the Town Planning Association of NSW (TPANSW).

1924 NSW Metropolitan Water Sewerage and Drainage Board until 1929. Sewerage/drainage engineering.

1926 Vice-President, TPANSW.

1927 President, TPANSW.

1929 February. Appointed as Vernon Memorial Lecturer in Town Planning, University of Sydney.

March. Retires as President of TPANSW.

July. Appointed Town Planning Commissioner for Western Australia.

September. Takes up appointment in WA.

November. Fourth child, David Clifton, to Amy Roughley.

1930 December. Admitted to hospital for treatment of war injuries.

1931 Town Planning Lectures at University of Western Australia

President of the WA Institution of Local Government and Highway Engineers

1933 Commissioned into Militia. Lieutenant.

1934 Legally adopts his son David Clifton.

1935 2 April. Divorce granted from Daisy May.

6 July. Marries Esme Mary Powell.

1937 Receives WA Coronation Medal.

1938 Royal Commission on the Administration of Perth.

Third son, Alastair, to Esme Powell.

1939 Assault charge brought by an applicant for a subdivision.


1940 December. Transferred to Army Reserve. Involved in intelligence work.

1942 Chair of State Advisory Committee on Post-War Housing

1952 20 June. Dies aged 58 years, Subiaco from kidney disease and hypertension.
Davidson showed an early predisposition to town planning, winning a prize as a 16 year-old for a map of Wagga at the annual agricultural show (Daily Advertiser 23-8-11: 3). He claimed that his interest in planning was also advanced by survey work in the vicinity of the federal capital site for the NSW Department of Public Works in 1913 and it is likely that his pupillage as a teenager with Wagga Wagga surveyor and architect George Sheppard further piqued his interest in planning. A reported stint with Henry Halloran and particularly the patronage of Sulman opened up new perspectives beyond his day job. He also became a “dear friend” of George Taylor, founder of the TPANSW. By 1923 he was a member of the Council, by 1926 a Vice-President, and then President in 1927-29. He was active on numerous sub-committees dealing with city centre planning, parks and reserves, planning legislation, and the replanning of Dawes and Millers Points. He gave lectures on town planning in country towns while working as a hydro investigating engineer and public presentations became a staple of his advocacy for the rest of his life. His wife Daisy assisted with lantern slides in many presentations. He was also an entrant in the 1926 design competition for Hyde Park (Baker 1988).

The TPANSW was active in lobbying the state government and local authorities on a wide range of issues through reports, letter writing, petitions and deputations. The controversial siting of a Circular Quay railway station sucked up much energy in the late 1920s when Davidson became President (Freestone and Park 2009). On his election Davidson put forward three key objectives: state planning legislation; provision of parks, playgrounds and sportsgrounds; and greater coordination between government departments (TPANSW 1928). The scientific design of land subdivisions was also a major preoccupation. “No subdivision is too small to have character” (Davidson 1928). Davidson took the legislative debate into new territory with a draft bill to constitute a “Metropolitan Town and Regional Planning Commission” for Sydney (Davidson 1927). There were signs of restlessness within the Association to explore a more professional organisational model with Davidson more than happy to countenance this possibility.

Davidson represented the TPANSW on various committees and working parties. He was a judge for the 1927 NSW Tidy Towns competition but his major coup was to be appointed Sulman’s successor as the Vernon Memorial Lecturer. Davidson was preferred over other candidates including Norman Weekes and Keith Harris after the University Extension Board solicited advice from Sulman. Professor Leslie Wilkinson labelled it “an unfortunate appointment” probably in part because Davidson brought insufficient architectural expertise to the task. He retained Sulman’s basic sequence of lectures but introduced “philosophy and ethics” and a greater emphasis on survey research at various geographic scales, in keeping with the interwar planning emphasis on scientific rather than aesthetic planning (Freestone and Pullan 2015). He had already assembled over 800 lantern slides, “forming one of the most extensive and up to date collections in the Commonwealth.”

Davidson was ambitious. He had unsuccessfully applied for the position of Town Planner to the South Australian Government in 1922, and around late 1928 unsuccessfully applied for Principal Assistant Engineer in the Water Supply and Sewerage Department. But it may have been his matrimonial difficulties that also encouraged the move to the west (Bolton 1993). In late May 1929 Davidson applied for the post of Town Planning Commissioner of WA and was notified of his appointment two months later. The 20 weekly evening lectures in the Vernon series starting on 13 June 1929 were reshuffled into two lectures per evening to enable him to take up his new position. He delivered his final lecture the day before he left Sydney (DN 11-9-29: 1). Davidson’s departure
was lamented in the press as a sad comment on the lack of progress of planning in Sydney (Sydney Morning Herald, hereafter SMH 14-8-29: 14). The TPANSW held a luncheon in his honour and in response he stated that if it had not been for the Association he would never have secured his new position (Anon 1929).

Administering planning in Perth 1929-1952

Apart from advisory and promotional functions, his appointment as Town Planning Commissioner under the landmark WA Town Planning and Development Act 1928 also bestowed chairmanship of the Town Planning Board, an independent statutory authority set up by the Act to determine all land subdivision applications in WA (formerly undertaken by local governments), and to make recommendations to the Planning Minister on the approval of local government ‘town planning schemes’ and ‘town planning bylaws’ which the Act empowered them to make to control and facilitate land use and development. Under the Act, the Town Planning Commissioner in WA was appointed directly by the Governor (Cabinet) rather than to the public service. Davidson was thus in a very influential and often powerful position in Government and in the community in general, and he held arguably the most powerful planning position in any jurisdiction in Australia at the time.

In addition a Metropolitan Town Planning Commission had been established under a separate Act in 1927 based on a comparable organisation in Melbourne and was required to report with a plan for metropolitan Perth by December 1930 (extended to 31 March 1931). Davidson was not appointed a member of this Commission and although it drew on his input he was not afraid to make critical comments on its technical proficiency.

Several names had been canvassed for Town Planning Commissioner, including Fred Cook from the Melbourne Metropolitan Town Planning Commission and Reginald Hammond who had been New Zealand’s first Director of Town Planning. Davidson came to the attention of the WA Government and he duly supplied a stack of references from senior bureaucrats, politicians and professional colleagues. Among notable supporters were Earle Page, leader of the Country Party in the Commonwealth Parliament; John Garlick, Secretary of the NSW Department of Local Government; and John Butters, head of the Federal Capital Commission. The general consensus was that he was a reliable, technically proficient and resourceful individual. John Sulman stated that “his qualifications and experience should enable him to carry out the duties of the position with much advantage to the State and with credit to himself.” He officially took up his position on 11 September 1929. The Town Planning Board had its first meeting on 6 November 1929. He saw his principal task as “to give effect to the Act reasonably, to express the social and the political aspirations of the people of the State” (DN 11-9-29:1).

Town planning already had its champions in the West, with the key quartet being William Bold, Harold Boas, Carl Klem and William Saw (Newman 1996). Davidson proved an unsettling addition to the culture of the local planning movement which had evolved steadily under their leadership since the 1910s. In particular there would be incendiary clashes with Bold and Boas. Bold was the venerable Perth Town Clerk, an amateur town planning and city beautiful advocate by Davidson’s reckoning, and the enmity quickly established a state-local character (Newman 1996). Boas was an architect-planner, Chairman of the Metropolitan Town Planning Commission, long serving city councillor, and active in conservative political circles. Davidson’s power rested with his stewardship
of the Town Planning and Development Act which he described as “the watchdog and safeguard of sound local government in Western Australia” (Davidson 1932). This was quickly established as his exclusive domain and he did not take kindly to any incursions or rival threats.

Under the Act Davidson’s responsibilities in conjunction with the Board revolved around four main activities (Stead 1931; Bean 1933). First, was facilitating the gazettal of town planning schemes and by-laws by local authorities and road boards. Although the first scheme was announced in mid-1930 for Armadale-Kelmscott, this proved a long, hard grind (WA 10-7-30: 7). Second, was the approval of private subdivisions, and in his first year over 600 applications were considered. Allied to this activity were thousands of truncations of street corners for public safety. The approval process also secured dedicated parkland, open space and school sites for local communities. Third, was the preparation of plans and planning schemes for communities on Crown Land. Early approvals were secured for Wiluna, Nyabing and Augusta townships. Fourth was a wide-ranging advisory role for various state and local government bodies. On top of these tasks came a vigorous propaganda campaign, committee memberships, and extra-curricular rounds of involvement with professional organisations, giving evidence to government inquiries, and commenting on innumerable projects. The scope was large but constrained by the meagre staff and material resources made available by the WA Government.

Without missing a beat from his time in NSW, Davidson remained committed to the lecture circuit for promoting planning generally as well as particular pet projects. He wrote occasional articles in the news media and gave radio broadcasts from the 1930s. He delivered an invited series of 20 lectures on the Vernon model in the Faculty of Engineering at UWA in 1931 and subsequently in 1933 at Perth Technical College (WA 22-5-1934: 17). The first of these programs attracted many practising professionals who were or would become prominent in their fields with an average weekly attendance of nearly 60. He unsuccessfully tried to resuscitate these in 1945 and again in 1949. Davidson was also an instructor in the Malay language from 1933 at the Technical College (WA 9-2-1933:12), a role which provided useful supplementary income at a time of financial stress because of his divorce.

Davidson was active in sitting on or convening state government committees and inquiries including siting of major public buildings in Perth (1939), traffic (1943), the Swan River (1943), post-war housing (1943), selection of town hall site (1944), Fremantle Hospital (1949), and a new gaol (1950). He gave substantive evidence to select committees, royal commissions and other government inquiries, including the administration of Perth (1938), UWA’s endowment lands (1941), Kalgoorlie-Fremantle railway line (1945), municipal boundaries (1949), and the WA railways (1947). His dealings with the local town planning association and the breakaway planning institute in the early 1930s were mostly fraught because of the personality politics with Bold and Boas. An explosive meeting of the Town Planning Institute in June 1931 saw him walk out with a dispute over membership qualifications (WA 12-6-31: 20). The perceived threat to his authority posed by such a watchdog body emerged as a concern (Freestone 1982). Davidson was the foundation president of the Institution of Local Government and Highway Engineers (WA) (Sunday Times 22-3-1931: 2) and held honorary positions in a range of other organisations.

As time moved on, tensions with some local authorities and personalities increased, partly because of Davidson’s forceful character. Newspapers carried reports of his uncompromising “dictatorial”
style wielding “autocratic” powers under the 1928 Act, although they may have been to some extent doing the bidding of certain interests who did not favour the additional constraints on subdivision and development that the Act created. Governments of both colours nevertheless retained confidence in his abilities, re-appointing him several times over two decades. Implementation of the Act was recognised as “no mean undertaking, and the most critical of our citizens will no doubt readily admit that since the commencement of Mr Davidson’s period of office much good has been accomplished, and a considerable improvement of the landscape of the metropolitan area, and in certain country districts as well, can be attributed to the administration of the Town Planning Act by the Commissioner and the Town Planning Board.”

Unfortunately, Davidson’s personality often would not let him compromise on, or let go of, a matter – he always had to win the argument. He brought two defamation actions against the Daily News in 1937 and 1945 for mocking depictions of him as a grand “Pooh-Bah” eight years apart (WA 25-9-45: 3). The most problematic relationship was with the state’s major local authority and rival planning authority, Perth City Council, with which Bold and Boas were associated. Davidson’s public skirmishes with Council included new roads he considered to be dangerous and a waste of public money, the siting and design of memorials, and failure to police its own health and building by-laws resulting in unsafe and fire-hazard buildings on the one hand to slums on the other. Extraordinarily, in several instances he initiated legal action as a private individual to pursue what he saw as flagrant breaches and inaction by other responsible authorities. In 1937 he called for an independent civic commission to replace the elected council (Robertson 1970).

All of this tension culminated in a 1938 Royal Commission into the Council's administration of health, housing, building and other administrative matters. The first witness called was Davidson who launched a damning but unsubstantiated attack of improper dealings against Boas as an alderman and architect. Boas clearly resented what he saw as Davidson’s vendetta stretching back nearly a decade and their lively exchanges at the Commission dominated media coverage. Bold was also in the line of fire. The deeper dispute throughout was Davidson’s view of planning as primarily a utilitarian activity in contrast to the more aesthetic orientation of Bold and Boas. In all some 750,000 words of evidence and “a big pile of exhibits” were assembled (WA 6-8-38: 20). When the Commissioners resurfaced after two months, Boas was eventually exonerated, Davidson castigated for acting out of “motives of ill-will,” and Bold’s Council impelled to reframe and better administer its building by-laws.

Wartime, like the Depression, was a brake on the work of the Commissioner who again was forced to administer on a shoestring budget (Foley 1995). By the early 1940s the Board had dealt with 4,050 subdivisions, 3,800 street corner truncations, and acquisition of 410 acres of land for schools, water reservoirs, and parks. Numerous country towns also benefitted from Davidson’s “specialised knowledge”. The 1940s introduced a new idealistic ethos of post-war reconstruction nationwide. In 1942-43 Davidson chaired a State Advisory Committee on Post-War Housing which made many far-reaching recommendations including construction of 20,000 houses over five years, setting minimum dwelling standards, and constructing group housing for Aboriginal and special needs populations (Davidson 1945). A major institutional change followed in the formation of a State Housing Commission to replace the Workers’ Homes Board to work within the arrangements of the 1944 Commonwealth and State Housing Agreement.
Inevitably, Davidson was caught up in dealings with the Commonwealth about postwar housing and development. This national exposure provided another forum for intemperate behaviour. In April 1943 he gave evidence to the Rural Reconstruction Commission but his dealings with the Commonwealth Housing Commission later that year descended into farcical standoff as to the powers of the Commission to compel oral testimony (Kalgoorlie Miner 25-11-43: 2). He represented WA at a Commonwealth-State Town Planning Officers Conference held in Canberra in April 1945 and chaired by H.C. Coombs, the Director-General of Post-War Reconstruction. Davidson forcefully asserted the cause of state ownership of town planning, criticised Commonwealth actions which subverted state planning legislation, and expressed opposition to any new Commonwealth bureaucracy, but was not averse to seeking a package of financial assistance including £10,000 to assist preparation expansion of post-war planning schemes and up to £900pa over 3 years for postgraduate education.

At the end of the war, the WA Government invested more resources into town planning administration. In 1945 four new permanent positions were created, the most senior of them, Town Planning Assistant and Secretary was filled by Davidson’s son William, who had been employed as a temporary draftsman since 1938. By 1951 staff increased to six permanent and four temporary positions (Foley 1995). An important task which emerged was preparation of a new metropolitan plan to update the work of the Town Planning Commission from 1930. In 1941, Davidson indicated that the Town Planning Board would soon be considering a master plan for the metropolitan area that would be submitted to local governments for consideration and acceptance. Progress was slow due to a lack of resources and the war, but in 1946 Davidson revealed work in progress on such a plan in an address to the University of WA Labour Club by presenting first details from a regional survey. Completion of his plan were said to await only decisions on a harbour development at Fremantle, a new transcontinental railway route, and a zoning plan from the City Council (WA 18-7-46: 9). The plan never eventuated. In late 1951, Albert Hawke, Leader of the Labor Opposition, was still expressing confidence in Davidson’s ability to produce a scheme (WA 6-12-51: 15). Others had lost patience including Joseph Totterdell MLA and Perth Lord Mayor from 1946. Declaring the recent history of planning in Perth as “a dismal failure”, Totterdell lampooned the so-called “master plan” as merely “four aerial photographs with a few lines on them indicating where certain industrial sites would be ... hanging in the office of the Town Planning Commissioner” (WA 7-12-51: 5). There was criticism in the press about the ineffectuality of the Board and exchanges between the Commissioner and his Minister ensued about the best strategy to respond to media “misstatements”. The Minister’s view was not to respond which compromised Davidson’s ability to defend himself.

Nonetheless, Davidson retained the confidence of the government, “fortified by favourable comments from visiting authorities” such as Sir Patrick Abercrombie in 1948 and Professor William Holford in 1951 (Bolton 1993). Despite his continued lively public persona, he had been continually reappointed as Town Planning Commissioner, for the last time on 31 January 1951 for another five year term. But change was afoot. A State Government Committee reviewing the Town Planning and Development Act was converted to a Royal Commission – with Davidson the first witness - and reported in July 1952. It recommended that the Town Planning Board be abolished and a new statewide planning authority be instituted (Foley 1995). The foundations for a fresh, new approach to planning in WA were being laid. Davidson’s critics inferred that he would not be appointable to
any new body (Gregory 2003). But the possibility passed with his death in June 1952, just one month before the Royal Commission reported.

Conclusion

Davidson’s planning career spanned two states evolving from advocate to regulator in bridging the proselytizing era and beginnings of institutionalisation. His reputation as a practical propagandist was honed in NSW forming an alliance with the hard-nosed George Taylor. Questions about his character and qualifications surfaced and his private life became complex but his work for the TPANSW was convincing enough for him to move west. In Western Australia he quickly assumed a position of authority and influence. But the timing could not have been worse with the US Stock Market crash the month after he arrived and then a slow recovery from the Depression checked by the outbreak of World War Two. Beyond his statutory power, resources were meagre. Davidson explained that in the first decade of the Town Planning Board no annual reports were published because of the cost (WA 24-7-39: 14). He also confronted the vested interests of powerful state agencies resistant to external coordination and was soon at loggerheads with the state’s most powerful urban authority, Perth City Council.

Comprehensive statutory planning was slow to evolve despite the pioneering 1928 Act. Even by 1956 only 25 partial schemes or zoning approvals had been approved with 17 similar proposals in course of preparation meaning just 42 local authorities (municipalities and road districts) formally implementing the Act out of a state total of 147. Not one local authority had prepared and gazetted a comprehensive town planning scheme. This 1956 assessment by Harold Boas, who suffered a poisonous relationship with Davidson for over two decades, acknowledged war, depression and other external factors for “these years of ineffectiveness” but also highlighted “a spirit of antagonism” between the Board and local authorities (Boas 1956: 10). Nevertheless Boas’ view may be unfair as evidence indicates that with his meagre resources Davidson was willing to assist local governments, sometimes almost in consulting fashion beyond the call of duty, in preparing schemes and plans, given the lack of qualified planners and limited resources of local governments.

Davidson was a determined but divisive character with a heightened sense of his own professionalism as a “trained” planner. Never afraid of a good feud, he could be truculent, polarising and even physically aggressive. He was “a man who throve on controversy” (Robertson 1970: 170) and acknowledged his own occasional intolerance (WA 24-7-39: 14). There were embarrassing public confrontations with other senior public servants (DN 2-12-47: 8). Senior politicians acknowledged his “without fear or favour” style but the targets of his criticism and legal threats struggled to see any redeeming features. He was described in Parliament as the “Clown” Planning Commissioner in 1944. By modern public sector management standards and politics, he would be unlikely to have retained his position in WA for such a long period, and he managed to suppress his complicated private life and past indiscretions from public attention.

Nevertheless, credit needs to be given where it is due. Coordinated oversight over subdivision and preparation of planning schemes prior to the release of Crown Land for urban purposes and by those local governments who had been able to prepare them for all or parts of their districts, even if limited, were timely inputs into the development process. Given a challenging external environment and hostile institutional setting, Davidson, his staff, and the Board still “achieved a considerable
amount in a relatively short space of time” (Foley 1995, 2). He was a true believer in government-led planning and his drive kept this goal alive during depression and war. He sought to facilitate visionary projects and was very hands on negotiating planning outcomes and actually doing the planning. David Davidson deserves to be recognised for his positive planning contribution, and overall, he made a difference.

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Cherished sites of remembrance
Soldiers’ memorial gardens

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During and after World War 1 communities around Australia constructed memorials of various types to remember their deceased, missing and returned soldiers. The memorials ranged from physical monuments like statues and buildings to arboreal sites including trees planted in avenues of honour. In South Australia, metropolitan and rural communities embraced a distinctive form of remembrance that became known as soldiers’ memorial gardens. In the main, these living garden memorials were initiated, planted and maintained through the efforts of local citizens. Many were designed through a consultative process involving community representatives and the state’s Government Town Planner Charles Reade (1880-1933). The gardens were either stand-alone sites or incorporated into a larger scheme such as a recreation park or town improvement project. Since the bodies of deceased soldiers were not returned to Australia but rather were buried in cemeteries overseas, soldiers’ memorial gardens were cherished iconic community sites where people of a suburb, town or district could individually and collectively grieve for and remember their loved ones.

This paper draws on published sources, primary archival research and fieldwork to explore the phenomenon of soldiers’ memorial gardens in South Australia. It examines the evolution of the concept, investigates their cultural meaning and identifies their key design elements based on a survey of examples from across the state. The paper reveals and appraises why soldiers’ memorial gardens were local icons of remembrance from the 1910s and considers their physical condition and cultural heritage status at the centenary of the Great War.
Keywords: World War 1 memorials; soldiers’ memorial gardens; Victor Harbor, South Australia

Introduction

One strand of the international resurgence in recent decades into historical research into World War 1 has been the investigation of memorials constructed during and after the War to the fallen, to the missing and to the returned. The rationale for the construction of homeland memorials stemmed from the fact that the bodies of those who died were not repatriated to their home country but rather were buried in cemeteries overseas; consequently families and communities established local sites to remember loved ones and to grieve for their loss. At the time when they were conceived and erected, the memorials were imbued with a variety of meanings, a phenomenon that has been sustained and has grown with the passage of time. Today, war memorials contribute to the physical and cultural landscapes of the various countries around the world affected by the Great War, and by later conflicts.

Research into World War 1 memorials covers a diversity of topics including their embodiment of ideas of nationalism, empire, patriotism, and community pride, as well as their role as tools for recruitment (McKay 1986; Inglis 1998). Other areas of research have included war, grief, and memory, and the function of memorials as the “foci of the rituals, rhetoric and ceremonies of bereavement”, and as places of “solace” to cope with loss and grief (Winter 1995; Damousi 1999; Jalland 2002; Ziino 2007: 78; Stephens 2009a: 10). The actual form of war memorials has been investigated, and sculptural memorials have been examined as public art works.

Sydney-based historian and academic Ken Inglis’ late twentieth century study of war memorials in Australia culminated in 1998 in the seminal text Sacred Places: War Memorials in the Australian Landscape. Inglis examined a number of the larger themes and topics evident in the international literature and situated them in the Australian context. He revealed that memorials of various kinds were erected around Australia to remember local men and women who died as a result of World War 1. Primarily they took the form of sculptural monuments, but utilitarian structures such as institutes and halls, as well as arboreal memorials, were also erected. Although Inglis surveyed the variety of war memorials constructed nationally, his focus was on sculptural and built forms. More recently, Richardson has extended and enhanced Inglis’ research by carrying out a major investigation into the art and design of Australian war memorials and into the architects and designers who created them (Richardson 2015). Following Inglis, other scholars including Dargavel (2000), Richards (2003), Holmes (2008) and Stephens (2009b) have investigated arboreal memorials – trees planted as single specimens or as avenues or groves on roadsides and in public parks and gardens. Avenues of honour have been of particular interest in studies of this memorial type and they continue to be a topic of research.

Arboreal memorials were often a pragmatic option since they could be realised for a lower cost compared with a masonry memorial (Dargavel 2000: 191). They achieved “an unmistakable order in the landscape … [and] followed traditions already established by Arbor Day with its messages of regeneration and hope” (Stephens 2009b: 126). Although deciduous trees were most commonly
planted in arboreal memorials, rainforest species, which included the Norfolk Island pine, were also used. “[S]ynonymous [in Australia] with coastal settlements ... and the idea of ‘the beach’”, as a rainforest tree, the Norfolk Island pine was associated also with “the European notion of the loss of innocence” (Stephens 2009b: 131). Over time, Norfolk Island pines took on a larger symbolism linked with individual and community loss and, later, local commemoration of the international conflicts that followed the Great War.

Although arboreal memorials have received scholarly attention, the literature is less focused on the role of gardens as a distinct war memorial type. Gardens have been studied in the context of wartime cemeteries and Morris, for example, argues that, “both during and after the war, gardens were continually mobilized as essential ingredients in the iconography of British war cemeteries” (Morris 1997: 411). Our focus, however, is on garden war memorials that were not in cemetery settings. This war memorial type apparently first emerged in South Australia in 1917 at Victor Harbor a seaside town 80kms south of Adelaide. It appears to have taken hold more in South Australia than in any other Australian state.

What came to be known variously as soldiers’ gardens, soldiers’ memorial gardens, and gardens of honour, included particular components that gave them a distinctive appearance and character. Soldiers’ memorial gardens were introduced into the city of Adelaide and into metropolitan and country landscapes across the state either as stand-alone sites or as a component of a larger scheme like a recreation park or a suburb or town improvement project. Whatever their location or constitution, in the absence of a grave where families and local citizens could grieve for those who had died, soldiers’ memorial gardens were held up as cherished community sites where people of a suburb, town or district could individually and collectively remember loved ones, and “hold them in sweet and loving remembrance” (Abbot 1927: 3).

This paper begins with a brief introduction to the phenomenon of gardens as a mourning landscape. It introduces and describes the first known Australian example of a soldiers’ memorial garden, at Victor Harbor, and drawing from that case study, provides an overview of the design elements of selected examples elsewhere in the state. Reflecting on preliminary findings from the research, the paper discusses soldiers’ memorial gardens as local icons and briefly reviews their current physical status. Research for the paper is based on primary sources, newspapers, published material and fieldwork.

**Gardens as a mourning landscape**

Holmes et al argue that, “Planting a garden is an act of anticipation. It is also an act of memory ... Gardens [are a] borderland between the familiar and the strange, the old and the new [they carry] meanings of loss and grief, hope and affirmation” (Holmes et al 2008: 3). In an endeavour to understand why gardens were adopted in South Australia as a war memorial type, one line of our enquiry has been into the re-emergence in the nineteenth century of gardens as sites of mourning.

The impact of the industrial revolution on the towns and cities of Great Britain is well known. One area of focus for the sanitation movement, which sought to improve conditions for the living, was how to safely bury the dead. Scottish-born landscape gardener, horticulturist and author John Claudius Loudon was responsible for the gardening style known as the Gardenesque. He was also an
early proponent of public parks and of ideas related to sanitation and burial practices. In 1843 he published a book based on a series of articles he had written for his periodical The Gardeners’ Magazine. Titled On the laying out, planting and the managing of cemeteries and the improvement of churchyards, these works were early texts in what became known as the garden cemetery movement. Through them Loudon sought to effect sanitary burial conditions that would see bodies decompose without causing harm to the living while the cemeteries, being public garden spaces, would assume the role of public parks and act as sites of moral instruction, particularly for the working classes (Curl 1982).

Cremation emerged as a further, albeit controversial, response to the sanitary disposal of the dead in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. The pro cause was aligned with improving sanitary conditions while those against regarded cremation as a pagan burial ritual. As Loudon had advocated the garden cemetery, another prominent British landscape gardener, William Robinson, supported the cremation movement. Robinson drew on the long history of cremation in his 1880 publication, God’s Acre Beautiful, in which he proposed that crematoria and cemeteries be “not only ... a garden in the best sense of the word, but the most beautiful and best cared for of all gardens” (Robinson cited in Grainger 2005: 79). With prominent English architect Ernest George, the Cremation Society of Great Britain’s London Cremation Company, of which Robinson was a founding director, designed and built the Golders Green crematoria adjacent to Hampstead Heath, northwest of London, in the first years of the twentieth century. Golders Green was a “new landscape for mourning” and heralded the concept of the “Garden of Remembrance” (Grainger 2005: 40). With the ashes of the dead interred in the West Columbaria, the gardens at Golders Green became a place in which to grieve without the presence of a body.

Gardens of mourning in South Australia

South Australia has a rich garden history and during the nineteenth century Loudon’s works were particularly influential. His Gardenesque style of landscape design was popular in both domestic and public settings and can be identified in the layout of purpose-designed garden cemeteries developed in Australia (Hodgkinson 1995; Jones 1998; Morris 2004; Payne 2007). One of these was designed for Parafield, 18kms north of the city of Adelaide. Developed in the late 1880s and early 1890s, the cemetery at Parafield was a response to concerns over rapidly diminishing space at the city’s main cemetery, known as West Terrace, in the southwest Park Lands (Nicol 1994). However, photographic evidence from the 1870s shows that by then, at the West Terrace cemetery, gardens were already an important consideration in the local mourning landscape.

Burying the war dead

Major General Sir William Throsby Bridges and the unknown soldier were the only Australian soldiers from World War 1 to have their remains repatriated to Australia, respectively in 1915 and 1993 (Inglis 1998: 75, 454). The dead were buried initially in temporary cemeteries, with the responsibility of digging graves often falling upon their fellow soldiers. If they were far enough away from the front to safely allow planting, such cemeteries featured annuals, bulbs and grass. Morris and others have argued that temporary cemeteries were planted in such a way as to express Britain’s and the Empire’s enduring presence on foreign soil, as presaged by English poet Rupert
Brooke in ‘The Soldier’: “If I should die, think only this of me:/That there’s some corner of a foreign field/That is forever England” (Brooke 1914 cited in Morris 1997: 410). After the Gallipoli campaign of 1915, some Australians endeavoured to achieve a corner that was forever Australia at Gallipoli by sending wattle seeds to be sown on the graves of the ANZACs (Inglis 1998: 89-90; Gough 2007: 202).

Permanent cemeteries followed in the years after the war under the auspices of the Imperial, later the Commonwealth, War Graves Commission. These war cemeteries were created as garden spaces, and in those established in France and Belgium alone 63 miles of hedge, 536 acres of grass and 13 million plants were planted by 1928 (Morris 1997: 415). The Commission made some attempts to ensure that the plants planted on the graves of the soldiers from the Empire reflected or, where climate allowed, were the plants of their homelands (Morris 1997; Gough 2007).

At home: war dead without a grave

Australians came to understand early in World War 1 that the bodies of their loved ones would not be returned to Australia for burial. Ziino (2007) has explored the effects of this reality on the mourning process and reveals the actions of families who sought to procure something from their loved one, often a small token like a photograph or comb, as a symbol to link them with the “distant graves” and upon which to focus their private grief. Further he posits that, since so many Australians turned to war memorials while grieving, the memorials “acted as surrogate tombstones (and) as places where mourners could attend the funerary rituals … denied [to] them” (Ziino 2009: 1). In South Australia many communities turned to soldiers’ memorial gardens to publicly mourn and honour the fallen and missing.

Soldiers’ memorial gardens in South Australia

Over forty communities across South Australia proposed to establish soldiers’ memorial gardens during and after World War 1. Table 1 and 2 identify selected examples of sites in Adelaide and in the metropolitan and country areas.

Table 1: Selected Examples of Sites Proposed for Soldiers’ Memorial Gardens in Adelaide and the Metropolitan Area, 1917-1920s

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Belair National Park</th>
<th>Kilkenny</th>
<th>Prospect Recreation Ground</th>
<th>Unley</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brighton</td>
<td>Lower North Adelaide (and children’s playground)</td>
<td>Rosewater</td>
<td>Walkerville (and children’s playground)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cherry Gardens</td>
<td>Mitcham</td>
<td>Semaphore</td>
<td>Women’s Memorial Garden, Adelaide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glenelg</td>
<td>Norton Summit</td>
<td>Thebarton Recreation Park</td>
<td>Woodville</td>
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<tr>
<td>Glen Osmond</td>
<td>Payneham</td>
<td>Trinity Gardens</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Sources: Various including newspapers, local history collections records, published local histories
Table 2: Selected Examples of Sites Proposed for Soldiers’ Memorial Gardens in Country South Australia, 1917-1920s

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ardrossan</th>
<th>Kadina</th>
<th>Port Augusta</th>
<th>Strathalbyn</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Crystal Brook</td>
<td>Kapunda</td>
<td>Port Elliot</td>
<td>Tumby Bay</td>
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<tr>
<td>Curramulka</td>
<td>Middleton</td>
<td>Port Germein</td>
<td>Two Wells</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gawler</td>
<td>Millicent</td>
<td>Port Pirie</td>
<td>Victor Harbor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goolwa</td>
<td>Penola</td>
<td>Robe</td>
<td>Wallaroo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gumeracha</td>
<td>Peterborough</td>
<td>Quorn</td>
<td>Watervale</td>
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<td>Jamestown</td>
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Sources: Various including newspapers, local history collections records, published local histories

Although the layout, design elements and plantings were influenced and determined largely by community committees, a number of the first wave of gardens were designed with specific advice from the South Australian Government Town Planner Charles Reade, who was based in Adelaide from April 1916 until December 1920, and with the assistance of Harold Chalklan Day who was draughtsman in the Town Planning Department and went on to be Acting Town Planner in the 1920s. In conjunction with developing a foreshore improvement scheme at Victor Harbor, Reade advised on improvements to an existing soldiers’ garden and on the design of an additional one to form what became the soldiers’ memorial gardens; this project was his first foray into designing memorial gardens. Although no specific records have been uncovered to identify what influenced his design, Reade is likely to have been familiar with the Golders’ Green Garden of Remembrance as the site was adjacent to Hampstead Garden Suburb with which he was intimately familiar through his work in the early 1910s as a volunteer with the London-based Garden Cities and Town Planning Association (Garnaut 2006). Familiarity with the purpose and layout of the garden at Golders Green may at the least have influenced his understanding of the contemplative role of gardens as memorials for the deceased.

Victor Harbor soldiers’ memorial gardens

A soldiers’ garden was established in Victor Harbor in April 1917 on the town’s eastern foreshore. It was not the first memorial to a local soldier who fell in World War 1 as Private JM Bruce, the earliest to die, was remembered by a tree planted in August 1915 on a public site at nearby Encounter Bay (Page 1987). The expansive town foreshore location was chosen when the war claimed more lives after Bruce, and the reality set in that even more might be lost.

The first garden was established from April 1917 around four Norfolk Island pines that were planted in memory of four local soldiers who died in the War (Soldiers Gardens 1917). The town’s mayor, William Northey, and a local resident, Mr Morris, designed the garden. The Victor Harbor Times of 13 July 1917 reported that Adelaide City Council’s gardener AW Pelzer had visited the town to provide additional advice on the garden’s layout and on suitable plants. In keeping with local tradition to fund civic improvements through community fundraising efforts, the gardens were financed by private and company donations, not by revenue raised from municipal rates. Volunteers provided the equipment and labour. Local resident George Kirby was appointed gardener and overseer of the project (Soldiers Gardens 1917; Kenny 1980).
The garden was a simple formal design (Soldiers Gardens 1917; Soldiers Memorial Plot 1917; Kenny 1980). It was laid out with a central and side paths with garden beds at the boundaries and around the existing trees. The first bed to be formed had a cross dug into it and filled in with white shells. A rockery and whale bone were additional features. The garden was enclosed by an open style fence with a local material, Goolwa broom, attached to form a wind break. The name of each of the deceased soldiers was painted on an individual ‘inspection board’ placed adjacent to the Norfolk Island pine planted in his memory. The garden beds were planted with perennial and annual plants. On 17 May 1917 the local newspaper, the Victor Harbor Times, described the garden as a colourful “... emblem of love and reverence”.

The first Victor Harbor soldiers’ garden was the very personal and local response of the Victor Harbor community to the losses they had suffered. The use of shells, whale bone and other local materials was not only expedient but also exemplified their coastal location and cultural identity. The Norfolk Island pines embodied the distant graves that most family members or residents were unlikely to see. Local residents found the symbolism of the garden particularly compelling, as a Times reporter noted on 19 April 1918:

Name after name of loved ones flashes upon the mind from among the gorgeous riot of colouring made by the brilliant foliage and flowers. The ordered paths and bordered walks speak of loving and undying care and remembrance ... The beauty of a holy peace lies all about.

By December 1917, when more local lives had been lost, it was evident that the garden was not large enough to accommodate additional pine trees (Soldiers Gardens 1918; Kenny 1980). Consequently the Victor Harbor Corporation proposed to create a second garden. At about the same time, in the wake of the passage of the Victor Harbor Foreshore Development Act 1917, the Corporation invited Government Town Planner Reade to visit the town and to advise on and design a scheme of improvement for the entire foreshore (Memorandum 1918). Cognisant of modern town planning thought, Reade prepared a foreshore improvement scheme that took into account the township’s future needs and the financial position of the Council (Memorandum 1918). His proposal enlarged and adjusted the layout of the first garden and incorporated a second (Figure 1).
In the northern (first) garden, plots followed the boundaries and thus created a bounded space enclosed by plants. There were three central rectangular beds, two of which were separated by a sundial. Paths were mostly straight and ran in a north-south direction between the boundary plots and the central beds. Three short paths led to inward facing seats on the eastern boundary. Another seat was proposed in the southeast corner.

Garden plots also followed the boundaries in the southern (second) garden. The central garden beds were alternately rectangular or circular and the paths were a mix of straight, curved, long and short arc lines. A hedge, broken only by the two side pathways, divided the garden at the midway point. Seats were positioned on the western and eastern sides of the circular beds and at the northeast and southwest corners. Both the first and second gardens were encircled at the perimeter by a footpath 5 feet wide.

Reade considered that the existing Norfolk Island pines would impact detrimentally on the gardens as they grew. To prevent that from occurring he suggested that the trees be relocated outside of the boundary fence; together with the yet-to-be-planted pines for the recently deceased, the existing pines would form a row along the gardens’ northern boundary (Figure 2).
However, before he could finalise and explain his plan the additional pines were planted, in alignment with the existing ones, as part of the 1918 ANZAC day ceremonies (Report 1918). Reade therefore proposed the relocation of all of the pines. The Corporation, desiring that the foreshore be developed to its “best advantage”, accepted the proposal and was prepared to transplant the trees (Report 1919). On the other hand, the people of Victor Harbor considered the proposal sacrilegious. They petitioned the Council, threatening it with dismissal in the following year if it removed the trees (Report 1919). The council reconsidered its position and the Norfolk Island pines were left where they were planted.

A decade after the soldiers’ gardens were first established at Victor Harbor, on 15 October 1927, the Times declared the “sacred spot ... one of the most striking and beautiful memorials to fallen soldiers in the Commonwealth.” However, Reade’s prediction was realised and as the trees grew, they caused increasing levels of damage and various components of the gardens were gradually lost over the ensuing years. Today only the Norfolk Island pines survive (Figure 3).
Figure 3: Victor Harbor Soldiers’ Memorial Gardens. 2016. C. Garnaut photograph.

Key design elements

The Victor Harbor soldiers’ memorial gardens were the forerunner of others designed with input from the state’s Town Planning Department; they were located in Goolwa and Port Elliot (close to Victor Harbor), as well as in the country towns of Kapunda, Kadina and Jamestown, and in the Adelaide suburbs of Unley, Thebarton, Prospect and Walkerville (Garnaut 1997; Walkerville Recreation 1920). As noted, other communities in locations identified in Table 1 and 2 set about designing memorial gardens through community input with occasional specialist advice.

On 3 January 1919, the Victor Harbor Times praised the town’s soldiers’ memorial gardens as “a model which many towns throughout the State might well emulate.” Although the research has not uncovered a direct correlation between the Victor Harbor gardens and those established in other places, the design approach and elements employed at Victor Harbor were indicative of what was utilised elsewhere. Typically, the structure of the gardens was based on pedestrian paths, designated zones for garden beds, grassed areas, and places to sit. The sites were typically bounded, commonly with open style fences and gates. The spatial arrangements were often symmetrical and sometimes focused on a particular element: trees, a rotunda, pond or fountain, obelisk, statue or other monument or a building. Some included elements like arbours, arches and pergolas, drinking fountains and shelter sheds. Furniture such as seats and benches was common and enabled the gardens to fulfil their function as sites of remembrance, reflection and contemplation. As noted, some soldiers’ memorial gardens were established in conjunction with a recreation park that also included any one or a combination of an oval, children’s playground, lawn bowling green and tennis courts. When this approach was taken, the memorial garden formed a discreet component of the site.

Iconic status

Why were soldiers’ memorial gardens local icons of remembrance? This distinct form of war memorial emerged as a community expression of loss and grief, and as a place for individuals and
members of a community to gather collectively to remember and grieve for those who lost their lives in World War 1. They were quasi-cemeteries where people could walk or sit contemplatively in a garden setting amongst “the calm of trees and flowers ... [which] offer a balm to those who come to commune with the spirit of their dead” (Border Watch 1922). The sense of the intimate connection of family members and local people to these memorials was palpable and perhaps expressed most forcefully in the case of Victor Harbor when for pragmatic reasons Town Planner Reade proposed moving Norfolk Island pine trees symbolically connected to deceased soldiers; his suggestion was perceived as being akin to moving individual graves.

From the time when soldiers’ memorial gardens were opened, they became the venue for Anzac Day services; in the main, that tradition continues today. Although the first generation of people associated with those whose lives were commemorated in these gardens have passed, and although, as at Victor Harbor, elements of the gardens have been lost and/or changed with the passage of time, all of the sites that were built survive as local memorials. They are local landmarks which often double as passive open spaces. Some, like the soldiers’ memorial gardens at Goolwa, in Dutton Park at Kapunda and at Cherry Gardens have been redeveloped with special project funding, or given a facelift in conjunction with World War 1 centenary celebrations. Others like the Victor Harbor gardens, have state heritage listing and hence special protection. In several cases the soldiers’ memorial gardens include elements that have become iconic local landmarks in their own right, for example the Norfolk Island pine trees that mark the site of the Victor Harbor and Port Elliot gardens, Golden Cyprus pines at Cherry Gardens, the rotunda at Goolwa and the central pond at Dutton Park.

Conclusion

Soldiers’ memorial gardens were one form of war memorial constructed by various communities across South Australia as a means of honouring, remembering and mourning local people who participated in World War 1. The use of gardens can be explained in part by the funerary culture that re-emerged in the nineteenth century in which garden spaces were created as places to mourn the dead, both with and without the presence of a body. Drawing on that antecedent practice, some communities replicated those spaces to provide sites in which to privately and collectively mourn in lieu of the graves that most knew they would never visit. Soldiers’ gardens were a collective and personal response of and for the local community, which subsequently cherished them as living memorials to their wartime dead.

Acknowledgements

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Activists making legal history
The establishment of Redfern Legal Centre 1977

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On 14 March 1977, the first non-indigenous community legal centre in New South Wales, established in Redfern Town Hall, opened its doors to clients. The centre has become an icon in Australian legal history and developed a number of other centres critical to the provision of legal aid services in Australia such as the Welfare Rights Centre, the Consumer Credit Legal Centre, Redfern Legal Centre Publishing, the Intellectual Disability Rights Service, the Accommodation Rights Service, Streetwise Comics, Campbelltown Legal Centre, Prisoners Legal Service and the Domestic Violence Court Assistance Schemes. Community legal centres in Australia have been responsible for significant changes to the Australian legal system and legal profession.

This paper uses archival material, newspaper reportage and personal reminiscences from lawyers, activists involved with the Centre in the 1970’s. It examines factors leading to the Centre’s establishment including the nature of the area of Redfern where the Centre is situated, personal motivations and sectoral influences at work in its formation and development particularly at UNSW, engagement in community partnerships, the innovations to legal practice the Centre introduced, and the centre’s sometimes fraught relationship with the wider legal profession.

Keywords: Redfern, urban history, legal history, community legal centres.

‘Something big happened to public consciousness about law and power in the 1970s. Somehow law got caught up in a broader social upheaval about equality and poverty and the scales that masked the power embedded in legal relations fell away. People joined the dots about law and power at all sorts of levels — neighbourhoods, schools, universities, courts, the media and legislatures — and used it as a means of redressing inequality and achieving social change. They lit fires which burned brightly for a couple of decades and made significant and lasting contributions to the distribution of power in Australia and to the inflection of its legal institutions.’ David Neal

‘Hearty congratulations to Mary Anne and Joe on the occasion of their engagement. Mary Anne a barrister and Joe (in the final year of his LLB) first met while interviewing a
client who was charged with rape. Due to the couple’s valiant efforts- the client (who will act as best man at the wedding) was held to be innocent’

RLC News Vol 1 No 1

Redfern Town Hall, 73 Pitt Street, is an imposing building designed in 1871 by George Allen Mansfield. The suburb of Redfern, one of the most famous in Australia, is now closely associated with the Aboriginal community of Sydney, but the Town Hall has another history, separate yet connected. It has long been the site of significant community, political and protest events in Sydney. Labor party luminaries have chosen the hall for campaign launches and speeches. The rugby league team South Sydney Rabbitohs was officially formed on the premises in 1908 (Rabbitohs 2015) and the Redfern All Blacks rugby team held large dances there in the mid-20th century (Hartley 2002, p.158). In 1943, Bill Ferguson hired the Town Hall at Redfern for a public meeting, where he launched his nomination for a place as the first Aboriginal person on the Aborigines Welfare Board. Anti-conscription meetings were held there in the 1960s. Anzac Day gatherings and were held at the hall and it was often the site for polling booths in elections. Notable rugby union player Nicholas Shehadie remembers in 1947:

‘When I was first selected to go to England with the football and the people of Redfern gave me a farewell at the Redfern Town Hall and Johnnie Wade was the compere .... And they had this big function at Redfern Town Hall and I remember Johnnie Wade saying “This is a fun night. Everyone leave the hardware outside” – the guns and the knives were left outside’ (Shehadie 1994).

Large political meetings still go on in the upstairs hall along with the ballroom dancing sessions and recent dancing innovations such as the free-form dance phenomenon No Lights No Lycra. It is a hub for the local community. But in addition to all of the above, in 1977, it opened its doors as Redfern Legal Centre - an organisation that was to become synonymous throughout NSW and nationally with the struggle for justice and equality through law.

The Redfern area

Redfern itself in the 1970s was an area of significant social disadvantage. This had not always been the case. The suburb’s name came from Dr William Redfern, who received a grant of 100 acres from Governor Macquarie in 1817. The land was described as a rich alluvial flat, surrounded by and partly encroached upon by sand hills. In 1842, after the area was subdivided, Pitt Street was one of the finest streets in the area with grand Victorian terraces and the courthouse, police station, post office and fire brigade station all built on the land between Pitt and George Streets.

In the 20th century, the suburb of Redfern was a hub for a diverse set of populations. By Federation, many Lebanese people (known as Syrians) had settled in Redfern establishing retail and warehousing business and factories. These businesses often supplied suitcases of drapery and manchester to Lebanese hawkers who, unable to gain employment in other industries, would go out on the road with these goods, often to get capital to set up their own business in the area (Convy 2006). Other residents were working in the Eveleigh train workshops and the many manufacturing businesses in
the area. Max Neutze (1972, p. 30) describes Redfern before World War II as a “stable working class inner suburb.” After the war, however, with the availability of better working class housing in outer suburbs, it was common for Redfern to provide temporary accommodation where families lived in rented premises while waiting to save the deposit on a new cottage or move into Housing Commission accommodation and the suburb was operating almost as a “migrant reception area” for the Greek, Italian and Maltese migrants arriving in the country (Neutze, p.19). From 1947 onwards, the area experienced significant change. Neutze notes two major sources of change as being the displacement of old housing by the Housing Commission towers and large scale movement of migrants into the area. The area prospered until the exodus of manufacturing from the central city in the mid 1950s (Redfern Estate Heritage Conservation Area 2015). Slum clearances in the same decade destroyed the heart of the old Lebanese quarter at a time when many Lebanese people were settling in the western suburbs (Convy 2008). Many older people stayed in the area due to rent control provisions, and there were also large numbers of single people living in boarding houses (Neutze 1972, p. 120). By the late 1960s the area was described thus: “Redfern is an economically and socially depressed area. Sydneysiders, on the whole, regard it as a slum, an attitude shared by many of its residents” (Jakubowicz 1969, p. 6).

The traditional owners of the land are the Cadigal and Wangal bands of the Eora but since white settlement there was no large Aboriginal population in Redfern until the 1920s and 1930s when Indigenous people from rural areas moved looking for work. In the 1960s, many Aboriginal people moved to the inner city after closure of rural reserves and estimated numbers for Aboriginal people living in the Redfern area by 1971 ranged between 4,000 by a government commissioned survey and 9,000 by Aboriginal estimates (W. D. Scott and Company 1973). In 1973, houses on the block near Redfern station occupied by Aboriginal people were bought by the Commonwealth Government and given to the Aboriginal Housing company. There were ongoing conflicts between the police and Aboriginal people of Redfern. In the 1960s, discriminatory policing practices had even led to the establishment of a curfew for Aboriginal people. Justice Wootten (1974) noted:

‘I found, as most people do, it [the curfew] a little hard to believe when I first heard it, but when I observed it operating with my own eyes, I was left with little doubt. The simple position was that any Aboriginal who was on the streets of Redfern at a quarter past ten was simply put into the paddy wagon and taken to the station and charged with drunkenness, and that was something that was just literally applied to every Aboriginal walking along the street, irrespective any sign of drunkenness in his [sic] behaviour. This and the associated problems gave rise to very strong feelings amongst Aborigines here.’

As a result of these activities, Aboriginal activists and lawyers set up the Aboriginal Legal Service in Redfern in 1970, staffed by volunteers, including law students to provide advice to Indigenous people in the area (Aboriginal Legal Service 2015). A number of these students and lawyers were associated with the University of New South Wales.

The role of UNSW

UNSW Law School was a new law school in Sydney established in 1971. In Australia in the early 1970s, there were mass demonstrations against the Vietnam war and apartheid in South Africa. Free tertiary education was introduced and this may have had an effect on student radicalism by allowing
students from different social backgrounds the chance to engage in university education and, subsequently, university-related activism. Crowley (1986) describes the 1970’s in Australia as “a time of street protest that would have been unthinkable 20 years before except by waterside workers.” 1972 saw the advent of the Whitlam government, which focused activities on “the progressive elements of Australia and New Zealand and prioritised human rights, international organisations, racial equality, decolonisation and détente...heavily influenced by the new left social movements” (Doig 2013 p. 560). There were signs of protest across the nation in many sectors.

Although legal aid was not at the forefront of issues debated at the time for many in the community, Crowley (1986, p. 6) notes an ‘increasing public awareness that a significant proportion of the population lived in poverty, especially single mothers, unskilled recently arrived migrants, the permanently unemployed, the aged and the Aborigines.’ This poverty, then as now, led to social problems such as evictions, violence, unscrupulous finance deals, discrimination, family breakdown, imprisonment - all matters where the law played a major role.

The first UNSW Vice-chancellor, Sir Phillip Baxter (1905-1989), believed that “the University ‘... must endeavour to meet the needs of a changing society, not be afraid of innovation, and be radical rather than conservative in its attitude to its responsibilities” (French, 2011). This attitude was reflected in his appointment of the first Dean of the Law School, Hal Wootten (1922 - ), a leader committed to social justice and determined to create a law school with a difference. Legal academics and students at the university were aware of developments in the USA in poverty law theory/services and two Faculty members were NSW editors of the Legal Services Bulletin and in contact with the new legal service at established in 1972 in Melbourne. One professor at UNSW Law was Ronald Sackville who was appointed Commissioner for Law and Poverty on the Australian Government Commission of Inquiry into Poverty which ran from 1972 -1975. In Australia, Sackville’s Report on Poverty endorsed probably the most radical approach to lawyering in any Australian government report to this day (Fleming and Regan 2006, p. 91). Legal academics at the Faculty worked with prisoners and students worked on practical legal problems such as assisting at the Children’s Court (Haesler, 2015). As Terry Buddin, (2015) UNSW academic and one of the RLC founders puts it “the concept that law could be a force for social change not social control” was a defining thematic link between people in the Faculty. Another student at the time, Andy Haesler, comments, “Barriers between staff and students were low in terms of age and experience of the law. ...People were pushing the boundaries about what was taught, what was learnt and what classes were...Students were taking an active role. Academics were encouraging research that had a practical outcome” (Haesler 2015).

It wasn’t long before discussions were held between academics and a group of interested students about possibilities of setting up either a legal clinic for students as part of the UNSW curriculum or a stand alone legal service - a community legal centre.

A legal centre is born

In 1975, a meeting was held in Redfern at the St Luke’s Community Centre in Regent Street to discuss ideas about community controlled legal services. This meeting included a visit from Fitzroy Legal Service’s Phil Molan. By 1976, the idea of setting up a legal advice centre became a focus of the group at UNSW. Accounts vary as to whose idea this was. Law Faculty members, Terry Buddin, John
Basten and maybe George Zdenkowski have been named as possibly being responsible (Haesler 2015). No doubt the truth is that it was the culmination of a number of group discussions. Various locations for the Centre were considered - Mascot, Botany, Redfern - the spot had to be within reach of students from UNSW and accessible by volunteer solicitors from the city. It was understood that this group had no hierarchy as such, (Buddin, 2015) but people were allocated specific tasks. In late 1976, Terry Buddin was allocated the task of finding accommodation. South Sydney – a firm Labor Party council - was seen as being receptive to an approach. Buddin (2015) describes the experience of dealing with the Council as being somewhat cloak and dagger. “For reasons that were never explained meetings had to be conducted away from the public gaze usually in some obscure back room.” Council was interested in a deal - the RLC group was offering to provide free legal advice to people the Council felt a responsibility for. The Council actually had a number of underutilised halls after amalgamations of local suburban councils in South Sydney in 1968. The group had decided that Redfern was the best location as it was an area that was critically short of legal services – there was nothing provided there at all apart from the ALS and an evening advice session run at Redfern Town Hall by Law Society volunteers on Wednesday evenings that often only had 2 or 3 clients. Redfern was seen as an epicentre of disadvantage...and they had decided that Redfern Town Hall was a good spot (Buddin 2015). It was close to the city for volunteers, close to a court as well as the railway station. Probably the deciding factor, however, was that the Council offered the hall for free rent. In return the RLC group would provide lawyers providing free advice. Dominic Gibson (2015) was a student at UNSW law school in 1977. “I started to see signs going up around the law school about Redfern Legal Centre ...looking for volunteers.”

The Centre opened on 14 March 1977 and was set up by 31 March 1977 as an unlisted non profit company limited by guarantee. Law students were rostered on during the day and solicitors came at night and two afternoons a week. Andy Haesler was rostered on the second day the Centre was open with another student Peter Barling.

‘There were folders and a big table and we must have had some training - probably out at uni the week before. Because it was alien but not totally alien. We had a phone and we had a number. The phone rang and we answered it... People were wandering in... we took details and got information and clients could come back to get advice in the evenings. ...I can’t remember sending anyone away. The advice was always free. There was never a means test.’

The Council decided it would pay for a social worker to staff the Centre (Buddin 2015). Somewhat to Terry Buddin’s surprise, the Council asked him to sit on the selection committee at which Clare Petre was employed as the first worker at the Centre commencing on 1 August 1977. That a social worker was the Centre’s first employee was probably a result of the Council’s offer to fund a position, but it was also in keeping with the Centre’s ethos of offering a holistic service to clients. Clare had been a student politician while studying at Sydney University and had worked in juvenile justice in London. She had a background in law and justice and was at the time working in the inner city at Royal Prince Alfred Hospital.

The RLC group had no funding or assets. “The Council paid for cleaning, maybe a few bits of furniture. Everything was donated. The first photocopier held together with a paperclip literally - to
do a copy you had to move a paperclip. We got some old furniture from law firms who would give furniture as they were upgrading.”

The first RLC newsletter was produced in October 1977 (RLC News 1977). By this time there were three people employed at the Centre as a result of some State government funding. John Terry, a solicitor; Sue Davitt, a secretary (later to study law and become Principal Solicitor) and Petre. RLC News (1977 Vol 1 no 1 p. 2) cheerily reported that John Terry had become a lawyer “for all the wrong reasons having drawn his inspiration from preposterous television programmes of dubious entertainment value. He feels that this is indicative of the general ignorance of law widespread in the community and sees the task of RLC as being broader than merely providing advice and representation to persons who are already in trouble.” Despite being only six months old, the Centre had been assisting in cases in all areas of poverty law, (RLC News 1977 Vol 1 No 1 p. 3) including family, tenancy, consumer, employment social security and others; the Centre was also taking proactive approaches outside the remit of standard legal practice by making submissions to Law Reform Commissions, Ministers and government departments about areas of law needing reform and engaging in community legal education programmes.

The Centre’s ethos

The lawyers at the Centre had a radical approach to legal practice, as Petre (2015) recalls:

“They felt that a lot of people who came face to face with the legal system had a whole range of problems and a lawyer might represent them, get a plea in mitigation or get a reduced sentence but they still had all these other problems, domestic violence, income problems etc. We wanted to focus on helping clients with a range of other services and if you are a low-income disadvantaged person in poverty, almost by definition they needed other services. We also wanted to help people not getting legal services, for example prisoners and tenants, gay people and other minority groups were identified as groups who were missing out...We wanted to be proactive and reach out...We wanted to set up a model that would be different, that would be holistic and wouldn’t just look at the black letter law part of a person’s problem because they wanted to focus on poverty law. The lawyers felt that there were people who fell through the gaps in traditional law and that’s where they wanted to focus.’

Giddings and Noone (2004) identify the features that distinguished the early CLCs from the services provided by the private legal profession or other legal aid providers as being:

‘. free legal assistance was provided to anyone who walked in the door;

. centres were staffed by both lawyer and non-lawyer volunteers working on an equal footing;

. centres were open out of normal office hours, usually in the evenings;

. the physical surrounds of the offices and the clothing of the lawyers were informal;

. there were often no formal organisational or administrative systems; and
clear explanations of their legal situation were given to clients and clients were involved in their own problem solving.’

These were all features of the services provided by RLC.

The staff and volunteers were incredibly active. Planning for a Legal Resources Book started, a Plain English guide to the law about family, insurance, wills, small estates, maintenance orders, motor vehicle accidents, etc which was be published in 1978. High Court Justice Lionel Murphy’s visit to the Centre in November 1977 was followed by a lunch at Dilina’s, which was described as most convivial. The RLC News (1977 Vol 1, 3 p. 4) commented that “John Terry’s and John Kirkwood’s respective faith in lawyers has been partially restored by the visit and they have graciously agreed to be available for any such lunches in the future.”

The Centre was not a grassroots community organisation. There were always tensions between the needs of the local community and the wider population and debates as to what extent the Centre should be community controlled. Most of those influential at the Centre’s beginning wanted community focus, not community control. At the beginning of the Centre’s operations, John Basten et al (1983 p. 173) write, although the centre ‘never had any local residents on its management committee, that committee actively sought comment and criticism from local social agencies. The management committee never had a fixed membership and was open to anyone working at or interested in the operations of the centre.’

It seems that the RLC crew were wary of certain very outspoken Redfern identities who may have had views on how the Centre should run that differed from the direction it was going. Clare Petre (2013) says

‘the legal advice was locally focused – that’s where the need was, but I think that the other characteristic of RLC right from the start is that they would identify a need relevant to the local area—and prisoners was one of the first. Volunteers would go out to prisons, Long Bay particularly and provide legal services and advice out there.’

The Centre’s work revolved around issues rather than just individual local casework.

Staff and volunteers at the Centre were very close. Petre (2013) says that, “Wilson’s, the oldest continuing lebanese restaurant in Sydney was a big hangout for people from the Centre as well as the pub across the road. After work and weekends people would have parties in their houses.” The Sydney CLC group was known for having fun. Despite close links with colleagues at Fitzroy Legal Service in Victoria, the two Centres seemed to take a different approach. One saying at the time was “If you have an idea in Victoria you call a meeting, if you have an idea in Sydney you have a party” (Petre 2013).

The Centre was well accepted in the area. “Locals got used to everyone. We ended up very good mates with the publican. We developed good relationships with local doctors and Roger the Shoeman.” Petre points out that “When people understood what we were doing there was huge acceptance of the Centre... Lawyers from the big commercial firms were often frustrated with their
own work and enjoyed coming to RLC. At RLC they had autonomy and could pick their area of interest, criminal, tenancy etc.”

**Relations with the private legal profession**

The Centre’s advent was not greeted with joy in all quarters. The general attitude of much of the legal profession especially those in positions of authority is illustrated by the “Dialectical Diatribe” in RLC News Dec 1977. This short piece also illustrates the ongoing confusion of the Centre with the Aboriginal Legal Service that still persists today.

‘Scene: Any suburban Court of Petty Sessions

Players: Magistrate, his attendants, a lone solicitor and client

ACTION

Solicitor: If Your Worship please I appear for the Defendant in this matter

Magistrate: Your Name is M....?

Solicitor: Terry, Your Worship from the Redfern Legal Centre

Magistrate: From the what?

Solicitor: Redfern Legal Centre, Your Worship

Magistrate: What is that Mr Terry? Do you mean the Aboriginal Legal Service?

Solicitor: No Your Worship its...

Magistrate: Redfern Legal Centre?! It’s extraordinary

Solicitor: I couldn’t agree more Your Worship

REPEAT AD INFINITUM’

NSW Supreme Court Judge Justice Yeldham thought the operations of the Centre so extraordinary in the course of a tenancy matter in court in 1977, that he found it necessary to report his concern to the Law Society for investigation. The lecturers at the Law School, aware of the obstructive attitude taken by professional associations in England and Victoria, decided not to seek Law Society approval before starting the centre. Several months after the opening of the centre, the Council of the Law Society took the initiative and made inquiries of the Law School. On being shown around the centre, one senior member was heard to remark, "[i]t is just like a legal practice, really" (Basten et al 1983, p. 172). One volunteer lawyer said he used to leave his commercial firm carrying a sports bag with a squash racket when en route to RLC as sport was more acceptable to some partners than volunteering at the legal centre.
The work begins

The Centre had an extraordinary immediate impact. By the Centre’s first birthday in 1978 it was firmly established. RLC News (1978) recorded that over 1125 clients’ cases had been opened. The Legal Resources Book (later to become the famous Law Handbook) was about to be published and a column called You and the Law in the Australian Women’s Weekly would regularly refer readers to Redfern Legal Centre for assistance. The Centre was engaged in work in the areas of consumer credit, tenancy, criminal law, gay and transsexual rights issues, social security cases and prisons work. The foundations had been laid for the development of what was probably to be RLC’s greatest achievement - the development of the “babies” as they were called- the Welfare Rights Centre, the Consumer Credit Legal Centre, Redfern Legal Centre Publishing, the Intellectual Disability Rights Service, the Accommodation Rights Service, Streetwise Comics, Campbelltown Legal Centre, Prisoners Legal Service and the Domestic Violence Court Assistance Schemes. Many of those initially involved with the Centre were to take what they had learnt and go on to have a significant impact in the law; they became High Court, Supreme and District Court judges, Ombudsman, journalists and senior legal aid and commercial lawyers. In the following years the Centre would consolidate its position and develop a distinctive reputation that made it a nationally recognised organisation.

Redfern is in many ways a different area to forty years ago. House prices are high. Fancy restaurants and bars line the streets. But these sit side by side with the housing commission flats, long term residents in boarding houses, international students crowded into small flats, and clients with complaints about breach of tenancy laws, abuse of police powers, domestic violence, discrimination etc still find their way to the doors of the Town Hall searching for legal assistance. In many ways the Centre has transcended the place where it was set up. It is now a first port of call for media seeking comment on justice issues. It is perceived as an example of the best side of the legal profession, of selfless lawyers working to create a better society - a model of what can be achieved when committed, intelligent people use the power of the law creatively. The name Redfern Legal Centre has become recognisable nationwide – a beacon of hope in our legal system- a recognition that access to justice is vital to all in our society.

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Everything Old is New Again
Caravans, Caravan Parks and Nostalgia

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This paper uses nostalgia, and especially 'social nostalgia', as a key to exploring the impacts of changes in the caravanning landscape since the early part of the twentieth century, using the Gold Coast as a case study. It shows that whilst the caravanning landscape has changed there is a resurgence of nostalgia for the simplicity and communality of the past, which is threatened by both land development pressures and changes within the industry. An expression of this new nostalgia is attempt to recapture the past through a growth in vintage caravanning.

Keywords: Caravanning; caravan parks; nostalgia; Gold Coast

Introduction

In the National Museum of Australia there is a pink caravan. It is a "1950s pale pink, rounded caravan" made of plywood on a wooden frame with aluminium trim (NMA 2009)49. The caravan itself is a one-off and built to advertise a caravan building company; it is included in the National Museum of Australia because it represents changing leisure patterns with the end of war-time petrol rationing in the 1950s, local production of accessible cars, and the increasing popularity of caravanning holidays. Additionally, the NMA website includes an interactive caravanning experience based on the display van, complete with 1950s surfing style music (NMA website, n.d.).

49 This should not be confused with the pink caravans used for mobile breast cancer screening campaigns in countries as diverse as New Zealand (http://nzbcf.org.nz/SUPPORT/PinkCaravan.aspx) and the United Arab Emirates (using 'caravan' in a somewhat different sense: http://www.thenational.ae/uae/health/20150323/sheikh-mohammed-shows-support-at-pink-caravan-breast-cancer-ride).
It is appropriate that the national museum pays tribute to such an iconic representation of leisure in Australia. As noted later in this paper many caravan parks are threatened by various forms of development; but a common theme of opposition to such change is that of the park's historic and iconic nature (See for example, Green's (2006) report titled “History at stake in caravan park fight”). Caravan parks have had such an iconic place in Australian leisure for many years (the Mooloolaba park in Green's report was established in 1934 and the report quotes people who have holidayed there over three generations).

Caravanning is still a major leisure activity in Australia, with the registration of new vans increasing by 257% over the decade 1995 to 2005 (Caldicott and Scheerer 2013). According to the Caravan Industry Association of Australia (2015) between 2013 and 2015 the number of registered caravans in Australia rose from 474,755, with 120,379 of these in Queensland, to 528,210 including 137,518 in Queensland (See Table 1). This paper revisits the historic roles of caravans and caravanning to explore the relationships amongst caravans and caravanners, the parks they use and their various roles in Australian leisure. Of particular interest is the intersection of these roles with ideas about nostalgia.

Table 1: Caravan Registrations by State, 2013-2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACT</td>
<td>3,443</td>
<td>3,753</td>
<td>4,052</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSW</td>
<td>102,549</td>
<td>108,946</td>
<td>117,323</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NT</td>
<td>1,199</td>
<td>1,266</td>
<td>1,352</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QLD</td>
<td>120,379</td>
<td>129,288</td>
<td>137,518</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SA</td>
<td>43,118</td>
<td>44,386</td>
<td>45,426</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAS</td>
<td>11,480</td>
<td>12,117</td>
<td>12,922</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIC</td>
<td>125,640</td>
<td>129,568</td>
<td>133,873</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WA</td>
<td>66,947</td>
<td>71,689</td>
<td>75,744</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>474,755</td>
<td>501,013</td>
<td>528,210</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The impetus for this paper is two-fold. The first is the authors' long standing interest in caravans and caravan parks especially as providers of affordable housing (Greenhalgh, Minnery & Anderson 2001). Caravan parks have also played an important but often unappreciated role in affordable recreation and domestic tourism provision. As implied by the National Museum of Australia display they have a powerful historic recreational role which is connected to individual and collective memories of holidays, childhood adventures, good times and family outings.

The second trigger was what we identified as the emergence and growth of a specific nostalgia industry to do with caravanning. A pointer to this is the emergence of vintage caravans and their collection -- some being refurbished originals from the 1950s or earlier, some constructed using modern techniques and materials but designed to look like a vintage caravan (defined as one built
before 1970). There is now a vintage caravan website (http://vintagecaravans.com/introduction/) and a special Vintage Caravan magazine published in Maleny (http://vintagecaravanmagazine.com.au/) (See Figure 1). But there are also significant references to caravans and nostalgia in the history of Australian tourism (e.g. Davidson and Spearritt 2000) and in local histories.

Caravanning as we know it has a long and fascinating history. Bassett’s (1980, p. i) account of the early years of the Caravan Club of Great Britain and Ireland claims that "the pleasures of caravanning can be traced back to the 1880s and 1890s" when horse-drawn specially-designed leisure vehicles were built for "gentlemen gypsies" who emulated the mobile life-style of Travellers. The person who claims to have had built the first such vehicle, Dr R. W. Gordon Stables, was a sailor, author and eccentric with a firm belief in the beneficial effect of outdoor life on health. His "land yacht", The Wanderer, made its first trip in 1885 (NMM 2009, p. 2).

Nostalgia for caravans and caravanning experiences fits within an increasing prevalence of social media pages focusing on the past. Often titled ‘Lost [insert name of city here]’ (for example, Lost Brisbane), they are a platform for individuals to share photographs, stories, information on pioneering families, and ephemera. In this instance the page ‘Have you seen the old Gold Coast’ piqued our interest: it includes historic holiday images and advertisements of caravan parks and caravans on the Gold Coast.

Thus, this paper addresses three questions. First, why is there such a high degree of nostalgia associated with caravanning? Second, what lies behind the current revival of caravanning nostalgia illustrated by the attraction of vintage caravanning? Then, third, what do the answers to these two questions tell us about the possible future roles of caravanning and nostalgia? In order to explore these questions we use a case study of caravanning and caravan parks on the Gold Coast of Queensland, a part of the country that has had a long association with recreation and is still a substantial caravan destination for families.

After briefly identifying the sources used, this paper then provides an overview of the concept of nostalgia: what it means and why it is important. The later sections focus on caravanning and caravan parks and especially those on the Gold Coast before we reach conclusions in the final section.

**Method and Sources**

The paper draws on a range of data sources to present a narrative about the history of caravan parks on the Gold Coast. This includes academic and grey literature, online historical picture and newspaper databases as well as the resources of the Gold Coast Local Studies Library sourced through both electronic and hand searching. The Gold Coast is defined as the current Local Government Area, although this included the former Town of the South Coast (later Gold Coast Town Council, and City of Gold Coast) and Albert Shire. The paper draws on, and is inspired by, images of the caravanning experience, including caravan parks, from the Gold Coast. Images are a key feature of this paper to illustrate essential points about nostalgia and caravanning, and to demonstrate the changes that have occurred to caravan parks and caravanning over time.
Some exclusions need to be noted. Caravan parks play a critical role in the provision of more affordable housing in Australia, including on the Gold Coast. This is explored extensively in other research (See Greenhalgh, Minnery and Anderson 2001; AHURI's Evidence Review 2013; Eastgate, Hunter and Wallace 2011). Other authors have also covered the issues of ageing caravan park infrastructure and other changes to the industry (Caldicott and Scherer 2013; Wensing, Holloway & Wood 2003; Goodman, Nelson, Dalton, Cigdem, Gabriel & Jacobs 2013). It is not the place of this paper to provide additional commentary on these aspects nor of the relationships between caravan parks and physical planning systems (but see Nelson and Minnery 2008).

Nostalgia

We need first to explore the idea of nostalgia. Memories of past experiences help create who we are; they help build up our “autobiographical memory” (Gino and Desai 2012, p. 743). Routledge et al. (2011) put it well in the title of a recent article: "The past makes the present meaningful." Memories of past experiences and places, whilst they build up a full autobiographical memory, can evoke positive or negative memories, but nostalgia itself is seen as “a predominantly positive, past-oriented emotion” (Wildschut et al. 2014, p. 844). Nostalgia evokes past positive and meaningful experiences.

In nostalgic reverie, one remembers an event from one’s past—typically a fond, personally meaningful memory. One often views the memory through rosetinted glasses, misses the remembered time or person(s), and may even long to return to the past. As a result, one typically feels sentimental, most often happy but with a tinge of longing (Wildschut et al. 2014, p. 844).

In other words, nostalgia is “self-conscious, bittersweet but predominantly positive” (Sedikides et al. 2015, p. 189). But nostalgia is not confined just to the memories and experiences of individuals. Wildschut et al.’s (2014, p. 845) important contribution is the identification of an equally significant collective nostalgia that confers unique benefits on a group. Nostalgia is in fact a "fundamentally social emotion" (Sedikides et al. 2015, p. 189). This collective nostalgia “is contingent upon thinking of oneself in terms of a particular social identity or as a member of a particular group” (Wildschut et al. 2014, p. 845). The way that even modern-day caravanning evokes feelings of group identity and group nostalgia is clearly illustrated by Foley’s (2015) research on caravan park residents who returned to the same parks for holidays each year, where friendship and sense of community were amongst the main reasons given for their return, these feelings being reinforced by a shared history. Both individuals’ and groups’ feelings of nostalgia for caravanning are explored in this paper.

Caravanning and Caravans in the Australian Holiday

In Australia the story of caravans and caravanning is full of historical nuances and divergences. In the 1930s the romance of the caravan was tied to the romance of freedom: "We are going to find Australia... We are going where the mood and the moment take us...", said Archer Russell as he set off from Sydney in 1933 (Russell 1933), a spirit echoed by 'The Queensland Caravanner' in his 1935 paean praising the forested environment of Coolangatta and Tweed Heads during his caravanning adventure (The Queensland Caravanner 1935).
Whilst the Gold Coast is the focus of this study, it is also important to place the research within the context of nostalgia for caravans and caravanning in Australia as a whole. Aspects of this have been explored by White (2005) and Davidson and Spearritt (2000). They say that in these parks: "Families made friends; social interactions took place around the facilities – the barbecue, the tennis courts and swimming pools if the amenities extended to such things, even in the queues for the showers and the laundry and the fish and chips" (White 2005, p. 143). Like Foley (2015), White (2005) identifies the social connections that were made and particularly the "ritual" of returning to the same place year after year: ".[t]he attractions were in the very familiarity and enforced sociability. The ritual of returning to the same place was part of the pleasure" (p. 143). The ritual exists today as shown by a recent newspaper report (Hall 2016) of a Brisbane matriarch who has spent every summer since 1939 at a Sunshine Coast caravan park and now four generations gather with her: "This is a little community and we love catching up with the same people each year. I wouldn't miss it for quids", she is quoted as saying.

Caravanning provided an egalitarian, inexpensive extended family holiday. You could "(h)itch your caravan behind the family car and take your home with you" because "(w)hen you take to the open road with a caravan running along sweetly behind your car, you're on your way to a good holiday" (Courier-Mail 1954, p. 14). Eventually it was common for critics to satirise how the parks, with their neat rows of ordered caravans, where people put down roots and met the same people year after year, was simply an imitation of the comfortable suburban routines a holiday was supposed to escape (White 2005, pp. 142-143). Like suburbia it threatened few surprises but instead offered the security of mixing with known people with similar interests (and likely, class)

An expression of the group nostalgia associated with caravans and the beach is elegantly expressed by the band The Coolites in their 2015 song Caravan Park Summers (The Coolites 2015). The YouTube clip of the song gives nostalgic views of Australian childhood at the beach, whilst the chorus exhorts: "Caravan park summers, stay casual, stay free". They are building on the casual, relaxed feelings of caravan-based holidays by the beach and the feeling of freedom that the casualness and relaxation were built upon. Yet this was group freedom, where you and your collection of mates were all free.

The ideas of the 1930s to 1950s still have resonance today but two important things have happened since then. First, the nature of caravans has changed. A visit to a caravan show shows how vans have grown in size as the capacity of vehicles to pull larger loads has increased, so that now they may be huge vehicles, containing virtually fully equipped kitchens, complete with flat screen TVs, aerials and computer ports. The small cramped family vans of earlier periods are still available but are now only part of a far wider choice of sizes and costs. And second, many former caravan parks or beach properties used as parks have vanished beneath glassy apartment blocks or hotels or even a casino. These latter changes are strikingly obvious on the Gold Coast (See Figures 7 and 8).

**Caravanning and the Gold Coast**

The Gold Coast is one Australia’s original ‘Sun-belt’ metropolises; the beneficiary of both intra and interstate migration, particularly retirement age migrants, as well as the beneficiary of holiday makers, local, interstate, and international.
The Gold Coast area was opened to free selection in the late 1860’s. Originally it consisted of a number of small ‘villages’, with some of these surveyed in the 1870’s. By the late 1880’s the area was becoming a holiday resort for residents of Brisbane. The Burleigh Heads Hotel was marketed as an ‘unequalled’ ‘health resort’ in the 1880’s, and advertisements for boarding houses in Burleigh were to be seen as early as the 1900’s. The advent of rail to Southport from Brisbane in 1889, and expansion of mail coaches along the coast contributed to the Gold Coast becoming a holiday destination.

The influence of the mass car ownership from the 1950’s was reinforced by the closure of the South Coast railway in 1964. Whereas previous holidays by train were a ‘mass experience’, the car promoted individual or family travel, freedom, and independence -- and tickets were no longer needed. While caravanning and camping had occurred prior to the 1950’s, it was confined largely to the middle class.

The infrastructure needed to service the growth in car use (such as bridges over the Nerang River, and Curumbin and Tallebudgera Creeks) created a coastal linkage road joining these ‘villages’. The completion of the ‘motor road’ between Brisbane and Southport, including road bridges over the Coomera and Logan Rivers, resulted in not only day trippers from Brisbane but flocks of campers. By the mid 1930’s it was estimated that there were 20,000 Christmas campers in Burleigh (big Burleigh and little Burleigh). Camp sites were on town reserves and even then were considered to be overcrowded (Longhurst 1991, p. 55) (Figure 2). Longhurst's history of Burleigh Heads claims that

[a]s in so many other aspects of Australian life, six years of war conditions created a great sense of change on the South Coast. New men arrived, with fresh visions of the resorts’ potential and a new idealism regarding planning and development. Within fifteen years what had been a string of small beach towns dependent on Brisbane holiday-makers, had grown into a burgeoning resort city of international repute (Longhurst 1991, p. 81).

South Coast (or Gold Coast) holidays were mainly for families and the local businesses and authorities catered for them. The South Coast Bulletin (1938) noted that each year businesses geared up for family holidays when "the camping areas are packed with tents, caravans and huts. The business firms are ready to cope with the visitor's demands, while the requirements of the tiny tots are in evidence in the local stores" (p. 5).

Getting close to nature, relaxing by the beach, meeting fellow travellers, having inexpensive family accommodation in sought-after locations, these are all amongst the attractions of caravanning. Caravan parks provided the security and infrastructure to support these desires for aspects of the good life -- but a good life that was normally a break from the humdrum, from work-based and home-based commitments and stresses (though still offering something akin to suburban social surety and security).

Clearly caravanning had an air of adventure and freedom so its popularity exploded. By 1948 the Sunday Mail reports that the Coolangatta and Southport Town Council had restricted parking of vans at most seaside resorts to a maximum of six weeks but that also "the number of caravans brought to the areas had greatly increased in recent seasons and were fast overhauling the number of tents" (Sunday Mail 1948, p. 7).
At both the bayside and surfside camping grounds families would book the same site year in year out. The family car was invariably parked next door to the tent or caravan. The peak times were Easter, the long weekends and school holidays (Davidson and Spearritt 2000, pp. 175-176).

As Figures 3, 4 and 5 show, caravanning and camping were social events; they were hardly events for individuals. The parks were crowded with vans and tents as families enjoyed their holidays by the sea.

While the caravan and camping holiday boomed because of private car ownership it was not a private affair. The camping ground holiday that emerged as the dominant form in the 1950s and 1960s can be seen as a more relaxed, more informal, more laid-back – perhaps more ‘Australian’ – version of the sociability of the Butlin’s ideal (White 2005, p. 141).

The caravan park returnees interviewed in Foley and Hayllar’s (2007) research illustrated clearly that feelings of community, of established friendships and of group cohesion were fundamental to their attachment to the parks. This social life caught up families as well as wider communities. In fact Foley and Hayllar (2007, p. 8) noted that “(m)any Australians, including the authors of this paper, have enduring memories of family holidays in caravan parks.” Their memories of the past were enmeshed in the “fundamentally social emotion” (Sedikides et al. 2015, p. 189) of nostalgia, relating to community and family experiences and connections.

While Surfers Paradise was undergoing significant development in the 1950’s, other areas of the Gold Coast were seeing the development of private caravan parks, similar to the United States’ ‘trailer park’. Whereas camping was once undertaken on the foreshore, the mass of caravans from not only Brisbane but also from interstate (particularly southern areas during the winter) led to the creation of specialised facilities. One of the first private caravan parks to open on the Gold Coast was the Florida Car-O-Tel, Miami in 1956. The original images from this era of caravan parks (see Figure 3) show a large flat site with generally few or primitive facilities attached to a double-storey motel, although the support facilities and professionalization increased over time. The name and the layout indicate the strong American influence. As Davidson and Spearritt (2000, p. 177) claim, ”(c)aravan parks based on the American models began to develop in Australia in the 1950’s. But they developed slowly.” Some local councils developed camping and caravan grounds with facilities such as toilets, shower blocks and laundries (Davidson and Spearritt 2000).

This has now changed. While the number of caravans and other recreational vehicles is increasing, Caldicott and Scherrer (2013, pp. 120-1) note a precipitous decline in the number of caravan parks "driven predominantly by a conversion in coastal areas of beachfront land to high rise units and hotels" (p. 120). The story in regard to the "transformation" of Palm Beach is described by Rogers (2014). The nature of the industry itself is thus changing quite remarkably from its peak in the 1970s.

In terms of the Gold Coast, there are currently seventeen caravan parks in the city. Seven are owned by Gold Coast City Council and run exclusively as short term ‘tourist’ parks. The remaining parks are owned privately and at least four have a significant proportion of long term residents. But since 1990 at least fifteen caravan parks on the Gold Coast have closed (Greenhalgh Minnery and Andersen 2001) resulting in the loss of at least 125 short term holiday sites (as well as 415 long term sites). Tourist caravan parks are undergoing a fundamental transformation; many are shifting from providing basic amenities for visitors to now providing resort style facilities including mini golf, water
parks, spas, buggy hire, indoor games areas, internet kiosks and wifi, as well as licensed restaurants. Some are now ‘holiday parks’ where cabin accommodation takes precedence over caravan and camping sites.

Thus an element of the nostalgia for caravan park experiences derives from a sense of loss for something that has disappeared or is fast disappearing or has changed irreversibly. Some of the parks people used to visit as children have ceased to exist. Others have changed from the simple "stay casual, stay free" places exemplified by The Coolites to high-end holiday resorts. A classic example of total replacement is the former Broadbeach Island Caravan Park located on reclaimed land on Little Tallebudgera Creek which formed part of the broader land reclamation and redevelopment from the late 1950’s that created Florida Gardens and Broadbeach Waters. It was acquired by Jennings Industries for the Jupiters Casino and Hilton Hotel in 1985 (Centre for the Government of Queensland 2015). The casino was officially opened in 1986 (see Figures 7 and 8).

However, a divergence is occurring in the nostalgia for caravanning. Some individuals and families see caravanning as a nostalgic holiday exercise to re-live with their families so they may purchase newer style caravans with a range of modern conveniences. Other individuals and families would prefer the 'total' experience: to renovate or restore an old caravan, particularly of a pre-1970's style. These can be like retro or vintage cars where some enthusiasts restore to authentic condition, and others take licence and see it as an opportunity to express individuality and creativity. This has created a market of books, websites and magazines that provide advice and information on purchasing and restoring retro vans, including appropriate crafting ideas (See Ulman 2013; Field-Lewis and Haddon 2010). (See Figure 9).

The ability to purchase and renovate or restore an old caravan also provides an opportunity for a portion of the community to practice sustainability:

(over time, we began to realise that we needed to find an older van because we couldn’t afford a new one – we’d never seen a new one we liked the look of and a vintage van fitted in with our ideology. We are op-shoppers, recyclers, garage-sale lovers, fixer-upperers. We live by the motto: why buy something new when you can give something old a new life? (Ulman 2013, p. vii).

Tangentially, there is now the ability to hire vintage caravans, either in situ or to take on the road. There are also food vans, mobile bars and other business ventures that use either restored retro vans or ‘new’ retro style vans, and the business of restoring old vans for others (‘bespoke’ projects) or manufacturing new ‘retro’ style vans is growing. Older style vans are seen as ‘charming’ and have their ‘own personalities’. The ownership of a vintage van brings out positive feelings in the community. The 1962 Driftwood caravan owned by Bob and Yvonne Kerr elicits delight when on the road. As Gripper explains:

(m)otorists would smile and wave at them as they zoomed past the quaint, mint-green van trundling along at 80 kilometres an hour in the left-hand lane of the highway. Others would stop on the road and take photographs (Gripper 2015, n.p).

Bob Kerr states that:
(i)t looks friendly and it has a lot of nostalgic value. We think it must remind people of going on holidays to the coast when life was a lot simpler...People really relate to it because the 1960s were a time when overseas travel was not available, but the FJ Holden came onto the market. The average person could buy it and it had enough power to tow a caravan like a Driftwood. One woman even told us she had her honeymoon in a similar van and brought us photographs of it from her album (Kerr in Gripper 2015, n.p).

Initially the renovation and/or ownership of a vintage style van (new or old) may appear to be focused on individual nostalgia, but it is also a social experience. While owners and operators of these vans may not be staying in the same caravan park every year, they are part of a community of nostalgic owners. Additionally, there is also an important common design element, an aesthetic, that represents the values of 'a simpler time'.

Conclusion

This paper has explored caravan parks, caravans, and nostalgia in Australia, with an emphasis on the Gold Coast. It has sought to understand the connection between caravanning and nostalgia.

The key theme that emerges is that caravanning is a group experience; it represents a strongly social experience of nostalgia, focused on family time, community and simplicity. There are group rituals associated with ‘going on holidays’. Some families engage in a ritual of returning to the same place each year and enjoy the sense of the community; if they have children they may also be trying to connect this new generation with this group nostalgia. There is also a social identity attached to having a vintage caravan (or new vintage style van) and becoming part of a specialised in-group. Perhaps this also gives a powerfully visible physical expression of this nostalgia through the aesthetics and simplicity associated with the design. The changes that are occurring to caravan parks, including redevelopment, may also be creating a wistful nostalgia for lost places and times and so for experiences that can never be recaptured. While this is occurring nationally, it is more extreme on the Gold Coast which is well known for its development churn.

Given the massive changes in the nature of caravanning, and the concomitant changes to caravan parks, it is no wonder that there is a growing nostalgia for 'the old days', when caravanning was about freedom, simplicity, bounded adventure and the glamour of exploring the open road and the countryside; but where one could "stay casual, stay free". We may be quietly losing something that is quintessentially Australian.

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Figure 1: Vintage Caravan Magazine from Vintage Caravan Magazine Facebook
https://fbcdn-sphotos-a-a.akamaihd.net/hphotos-ak-frc3/v/t1.0-9/10885112_834626133261020_5309467430720089955_n.jpg?oh=cabfaa370a604f26f06667df&__gda__=1459180183_ace61e208619c012051367180e34623b
Figure 2: Camping Burleigh Heads, 1932 from http://www.gocampingaustraliablog.com/2015/06/australiancamping.html

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Pursuing design excellence in a global CBD
The City of Sydney’s strategic plans, 1988-2008

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This study injects urban design into global city discourse which frequently brushes over the micro-production of the built environment. Yet at this scale, the adaptation of design strategies and controls as a neoliberalist policy tools to shape a global city becomes apparent. The study focuses on the Sydney experience. It analyses the urban design elements in two key strategic plans for the City of Sydney – the CBD of global Sydney – to explore thematic and methodological continuity and change in the pursuit of design excellence. The two plans – Central Sydney Strategy (1988) and Sustainable Sydney 2030 (2008) – bookend the two critical decades in Sydney’s rise to global status. Comparing them reveals an ascending importance of urban design translated into statutory regulations for design excellence. Thematically, the concerns of urban design moved from a singular economic-centric objective to a multiplicity of objectives including global competitiveness, environmental sustainability, innovative capacity, and physical and social connectivity. Methodologically, the urban design elements moved from a prescriptive, architectonic, elitist and intuitive approach to one of urban design as public policy, as place making, and as process of research, consultation and engagement. These findings underpin a new contextual understanding of the evolution of urban design policies for a global CBD at the turn of the century.

Keywords: urban design; global city; Sydney; neoliberal urbanism
Introduction

The global city discourse has always been economic-centric, focusing on contemporary urban transformations, in particular on the connected and competitive relationships between cities in an integrated world economy (Friedmann, 1986; Sassen, 2001; Taylor, 2004). The emergence of neoliberal urbanism in order to achieve a global city status and to enhance global competitiveness has been a major theme (Ancien, 2011). Overshadowed by the overwhelming interest in economic competitiveness and entrepreneurialised planning and governance has been the impact of these processes on the evolution of urban design approach and practice (Gunder, 2011). It is necessary to unravel the particularity of the transformations and roles of urban design in the new context of global cities.

This study injects urban design into the global city discourse through a case study of Sydney, Australia’s major gateway global city (Connell 2000). The CBD experienced a remarkable shift from a resigned and uncritical acceptance of design agnosticism in the post-World War Two decades to an increasing emphasis on urban design and the pursuit of design excellence especially from the late 1980s (Hu, 2012b; Punter, 2005). The year 1988 marked a key line as the city became the locus of the nation’s Bicentennial celebrations and staging of the 2000 Olympics provided a further fillip to design-driven planning in the Sydney CBD (Punter, 2005). By 2008 policies driving that aspiration were well established.

Our paper considers the urban design policy transformations of Sydney central business district (CBD) by comparing two major strategic plans of the City of Sydney, namely the Central Sydney Strategy (1988) and Sustainable Sydney 2030 (2008). The time span of two decades covered by these documents witnessed Sydney’s rise as a global city. The urban design elements in the two plans are examined under a neoliberal urbanism framework to interpret how design ambitions and strategies have evolved over this period. Rather than investigate individual design projects, comparing the two plans captures the transformative urban design policy making in the context of an emerging global city. The paper builds on and extends previous work: Punter’s (2005) work on post-war urban design in Sydney CBD to 2002; Hu’s (2012b) analysis of the City of Sydney’s planning transformation in the 1980s and 1990s; and McNeill’s (2011) examination of the City’s new design initiatives in 2008. In so doing the study offers a systematic understanding of the historical evolution of the urban design policies for Sydney CBD from the late 20th century to the first decade of the 21st century.

The paper is organised as follows. This introduction is followed by a brief contextualisation of the nexus between global cities, neo-liberalism and urban design. The next section sketches the emergence of global Sydney. The next two sections outline the urban design elements in the two plan documents from 1988 to 2008 for a historical comparison. The penultimate discussion section seeks to analyse the thematic and methodological continuity and change in urban design policies. The article concludes with a summary of major findings and relates the trends uncovered to the broader contours of neo-liberal economic and political philosophies.

The Global City

The global city discourse has emerged to respond to the urban impacts of contemporary globalisation and the emergence of a group of global cities that represent key nodal points in the
The increasingly integrated global economy has been generating simultaneous processes of dispersion and concentration – the dispersion of production and retailing activities across the world and the concentration of specialised services and command within a few global cities (Sassen, 2001). The increasing importance of transnational corporations (TNCs) as actors within an integrated global economy, accelerated global competition, and the macro transition towards a knowledge economy have led to greater complexity in managing, controlling and coordinating global activities and organisations. This has required greater use of advanced producer services, including finance, banking, accounting, law, advertising, and marketing and management (Sassen, 1995, 2001; Taylor, 2004). Global cities have become the command and control centres of the global economy and key locations of global firms of the advanced producer services (Sassen, 2001). These defining functions and activities of global cities are usually located in the CBDs (Sassen, 2001).

Related to this economic turn, theories of neoliberal urbanism – encompassing “neoliberalising urban regeneration” (Lovering, 2007) and emergence of a “new urban politics” in a broader sense (Cox, 1993) – have added considerably to the understanding of urban development in the past two decades, including the workings of urban entrepreneurialism, urban regimes, growth coalitions, urban growth machines, and public-private partnerships (Ancien, 2011). Neoliberal urbanism provides a useful framework to approach urban transformation driven by market forces and priorities including the role of urban design policy. Urban design has been increasingly incorporated into broader planning and local politics, constituting a decisive change agent in the global spread of “authoritative neoliberalism” (Lovering & Türkmen, 2011). In the reconfiguration of central cities and downtowns, the local policy role has also extended well beyond conventional regimes of regulation, in the form of development control and growth management, to include transformational visions and assertive implementation programmes (Hutton, 2004). Although locally based, neoliberal urbanism has played an important role in constructing a neoliberal globalism, making itself a “globalised” force.

Plans prepared for many large cities from the 1990s were geared towards enhancing their “world city” status, and were oriented to attracting inward investment, through particular institutional arrangements and strong private sector influence (Thornley, 1999). The logic was that economic globalisation was leading to increased competition for investment between cities. Within the planning sphere, urban design specifically was recognised as a ready tool in the making of global urban forms and spaces: as a largely elitist activity, it was readily deployed in the direct promotion of economic competitiveness, in the direct aspiration of capital interests and values, and in the direct attraction to the creative classes in their desire for gentrification and inner city living (Gospodini, 2002; Gunder, 2011).

**Global Sydney**

In line with this global city discourse, a global Sydney is now identified from the perspective of its growing employment in advanced producer services, and the concentration of these activities in or near Sydney’s CBD. Searle (1996) affirmed Sydney’s rise as a global city in the mid-1990s in terms of changes in employment structure, international economic connections, and growth in global
command and control functions. A global Sydney has since been strengthened through regional headquartering of TNCs, financialisation of economic activities, and continued growth in advanced producer services (O’Neill & McGuirk, 2003, 2005; Stein, 2002; Tonts & Taylor, 2010). “Sydney’s global city status is based firmly on an essentialisation of the CBD and historic core” (McNeill, Dowling, & Fagan, 2005, p. 939). Compared with the metropolitan Sydney region, the concentration of advanced producer services in the CBD was strengthened (Figure 1). As indicated in Figure 1, the location quotient (LQ) measures the concentration of employment by industries in the City Sydney in relation to metropolitan Sydney; the concentration of major advanced produce services increased in 2006-2011.

![Figure 1: Concentration of Advanced Producer Services in the City of Sydney, 2006 – 2011](image)

**Source:** Data from Australian Bureau of Statistics, diagram made by the authors.

**Note:** The location quotient (LQ) measures the concentration of employment by industries in the City of Sydney in relation to metropolitan Sydney; the sizes of the bubbles are proportional to the employment shares of the industries in the City of Sydney.

Economic transformations made profound spatial and workplace imprints on the Sydney CBD. As argued by O’Neill and McGuirk (2003), the CBD experienced complex reconfigurations of office work and office workers under the impact of economic financialisation, including association and interaction in office work, new knowledge workers, and shared and communisation space. The changes have been twofold. At the macro level, the CBD experienced a remarkable increase of living and urban amenity spaces (residential, visitor accommodation, and entertainment/leisure). Office space also had a substantive growth, although its share of total floorspace declined (Hu, 2014). At the micro level, there was a shift towards less workspace per worker in the move towards de-partitioned and open plan workspaces and this also increased shared space per person. These shifts reflect broader corporate, lifestyle and work practice trends affecting all major cities (Newmark Grubb Knight Frank 2015).
For Sydney, competitive globalisation presented a new urban context for the challenges of planning urban development. The success of planning a prosperous Sydney was linked to a richly informed and fine-grained understanding of the complex spatial outcomes of its ever-deeper global integration (O'Neill & McGuirk, 2002). This has been reflected in planning for both metropolitan Sydney and the CBD. From the 1990s, economic competitiveness was a central aspect of Sydney’s successive metropolitan strategies, heavily influenced by pro-development aspirations (Bunker & Searle, 2007; Searle, 2004, 2006). A similar transformation was observed in strategies for Sydney’s CBD, with a clearly articulated vision for a global Sydney (Hu, 2012b). Below we chart the implications of this for urban design as captured in two iconic strategies, twenty years apart. Both are briefly described in turn.

Central Sydney Strategy (1988)

The 1988 Plan was prepared by the Central Sydney Plan Unit jointly established by the New South Wales Department of Planning and the Council of the City of Sydney (Central Sydney Plan Unit, 1988). It was the first comprehensive revision of the innovative City of Sydney Strategic Plan 1971, the city’s first such goal-orientated statement, to accommodate growth challenges that had emerged. The 1988 Plan was later translated into a statutory Local Environmental Plan and Development Control Plan. An A3-sized document of 112 pages, the 1988 Plan was centred on three broad strategies for the future of Central Sydney:

- Sydney as the central place;
- Sydney as a special place;
- Sydney as a place for people.

“Sydney as the central place” addressed Central Sydney’s urban functions. The primary objective was to grow finance and commerce, tourism and recreation, retailing, and commercial port functions. The Plan also tried to seek new growth opportunities within the city centre and surrounding areas. Although urban design was not a major component in this strategy, it did suggest a need to facilitate the Port’s visual and physical integration with the city centre.

“Sydney as a special place” was filled with urban design issues, covering the city setting and the city centre. City setting issues included the harbour, the parklands, the gateways, shape, form, and colour. City centre issues included precincts, streetscapes, heritage, malls, squares, and parks. Both categories of urban design issues converged on two human-centric objectives: good accessibility and good visual image. The former referred to good pedestrian accessibility to public spaces (harbour, parklands, precincts, and streets) and facilities (malls, squares and parks). The latter referred to good visual images of city shape and form, streetscape, architectural characteristics, and gateways. These two thematic attributes were embedded in almost all objectives of this strategic direction. Here are two objectives to illustrate the pursuit of good urban design:

- Develop a city shape and form that creates a dramatic visual image (shape, form and colour);
Reinforce the City Centre’s distinctive street pattern and streetscapes with buildings which are compatible with each other and which create a sense of enclosure, human scale, order, comfort and enjoyment for people walking in the City (streetscapes). (Central Sydney Plan Unit, 1988)

“Sydney as a place for people” dealt with how to create an enjoyable environment for people moving and living in Central Sydney. The major issues included movement of pedestrians and vehicles, a comfortable environment, and a diversity of living spaces and facilities. The movement objective was to enhance the experience of pedestrians, encourage the use of public transit, and reduce traffic congestion. A comfortable environment was to be created through providing pedestrians with protection from rain, wind, and sun. A diversity of living spaces and facilities included housing, culture and entertainment, and community facilities and services. The element of creating a comfortable environment suggested very specific urban design recommendations for Central Sydney:

- Protect pedestrians from rain and summer sun in the City Centre’s streets (pedestrian protection);
- Develop a city form which helps sea and other pollutant-dispersing breezes to penetrate the City Centre and require building forms which reduce high wind speeds at street level (wind);
- Maintain sunshine in parks during winter lunch hours and ensure adequate sunshine for plant growth (sunshine).

The 1988 Plan established standards and guidelines to achieve the urban design objectives. It indicated a need to make development control “simple and clear”, and to create “a climate of certainty for both developers and the community and emphasise urban design” (Central Sydney Plan Unit, 1988, p. 77). The control plans of the City of Sydney Strategic Plan (1971) regulated the density of development without urban design controls, and had problems of a complex bonus system for floorspace and coding inconsistency. To redress these deficiencies, the 1988 Plan proposed principal controls on development design, heritage and height, used floorspace ratio as the upper limit on development potential, and offered only one bonus element for the conservation of heritage.

The 1988 Plan increased the basic floorspace ratio to 10:1 throughout the city centre (excluding the fringe districts of Millers Point, Ultimo and Pyrmont, and the areas under the control of the Sydney Cover Redevelopment Authority and the Darling Harbour Authority), and set the upper limit at 12.5:1. In comparison, the 1971 code set the maximum floorspace ratio range from 10:1 to 13:1 in the core centre, and range from 0.75:1 to 4:1 in the immediate surrounding areas. Building heights were governed by policies on overshadowing, heritage conservation, penetration of refreshing breezes, reduction of high winds, and reinforcement of streetscapes, squares, places and parks with prevailing parapet heights. Consequently, the building heights would range from 45m on the eastern edge of the core centre to 300m along much of the north-south spine. In addition, new development in the vicinity of heritage items needed to be consistent with and reinforce the existing character.

The 1988 Plan specified technical requirements to achieve the desired urban design (Figure 2). It provided 22 design principles for development applications to “create a comfortable, attractive and coherent setting for those who work, live, visit and walk around the city; and integrate new
development into the existing city” (Central Sydney Plan Unit, 1988, p. 92). These principles regulated streetscapes, vistas and views, skyline, building form, parks and squares, pedestrian protection, signs, sunshine, and wind. New buildings should respect the grid of the city in the orientation and form of building towers. Further, the 1988 Plan suggested characteristic building heights of Sydney at 30, 50, 70, 110, 180 and 240m by building setbacks, façade modulation, and articulation at those characteristic heights common to the immediate context. This was to respond to the overlay of all the buildings between King Street and Circular Quay that shows certain predominant building forms and heights characteristic of Sydney (Figure 3).

Figure 2: Principles Diagram for Urban Design in Central Sydney
Source: Central Sydney Strategy, reworked by the authors.

Figure 3: Central Sydney’s Urban Form and Characteristic Building Heights
Source: Central Sydney Strategy, reworked by the authors.
Sustainable Sydney 2030 (2008)

Two decades later, the 2008 Plan comprised two documents: a mission statement of 215 pages and a support document of 356 pages (City of Sydney, 2008). It set a vision for Sydney as a “green, global, and connected” city. A green Sydney refers to an aspiration for recognition of outstanding environmental performance and fostering a new “green” economy. A global Sydney refers to enhancing its status as Australia’s most significant global city with premium spaces for business and global talent, innovation and global knowledge exchange. A connected Sydney refers to an accessible and integrated transport network, social connectivity of diversity and inclusion, and partnerships across multiple stakeholders.

The vision of a green, global and connected Sydney was underpinned by 10 strategies:

- A globally competitive and innovative city;
- A leading environmental performer;
- Integrated transport for a connected city;
- A city for pedestrians and cyclists;
- A lively, engaging city centre;
- Vibrant local communities and economies;
- A cultural and creative city;
- Housing for a diverse population;
- Sustainable development, renewal and design;
- Implementation through effective partnerships.

Urban design goals directly underpinned strategies concerning movement of pedestrians and cyclists, amenity space, and development and renewal. The Plan proposed a green corridors system for pedestrians and cyclists, consisting of a network of safe, linked pedestrian and cycle paths integrated with green spaces (Figure 4). Greater priority was given to cycle and pedestrian movements and amenity to promote green travel for major workplaces and venues. Pedestrian streets and dedicated cycle lanes were to be significantly increased. A lively, engaging city centre would be created through making more public spaces for activities, meeting, rest, and leisure. The Plan identified a central spine aligning major squares (Circular Quay, Town Hall, and Central Station) with a high level of attractiveness (Figure 5). Meanwhile, the Plan highlighted the need to increase and supply small scale amenity spaces for retail and small businesses on streets and lanes, such as diverse, new bars and restaurants. For development and renewal projects, the Plan proposed new approaches to achieve green development and design excellence through contrasting current practice and desirable practice (Figure 6). Urban design was used to achieve objectives of both a sustainable and a beautiful city:

- Ensure renewal areas make major contributions to the sustainability of the City;
- Define and improve the City’s streets, squares, parks and open space, and enhance their role for pedestrians and in public life;
- Plan for a beautiful City and promote design excellence;
- Continually improve development controls and approvals processes to minimise compliance and supply side costs;
- Ensure new development is integrated with the diversity and “grain” of the surrounding City;
- Plan for the longer term structure of the City. (City of Sydney, 2008)

Figure 4: Green Corridors System Source: Sustainable Sydney 2030

Figure 5. Central Spine of Public Spaces Source: Sustainable Sydney 2030
Urban Design Policies: Continuity and Change

The 1988 and 2008 Plans demonstrate both continuity and change in terms of approach, issues, process, and implementation of urban design. These characteristics are summarised in Table 1. In terms of continuities, both plans had a globalist aspiration and were pro-growth. Both plans were essentially urban design plans – urban design is a major tool to shape a global Sydney and guide the city's growth. Both plans employed a human-centric design approach.
### Table 1. Urban Design Policies for Sydney CBD, 1988 vs. 2008

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Continuity</th>
<th>1988</th>
<th>2008</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Globalist aspiration</td>
<td>Global competitiveness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pro-growth</td>
<td>Environmental sustainability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Design-focused</td>
<td>Innovation and creativity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Human-centric design approach</td>
<td>Integrated and connected transport</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change</td>
<td>Economic centrality</td>
<td>Global competitiveness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Prescriptive design</td>
<td>Design as public policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Architectonic design</td>
<td>Design as place making</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Design for comfortable and beautiful space</td>
<td>Design for sustainable, amenity, comfortable, and beautiful space</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Elitist and intuitive solutions</td>
<td>Research, consultation, and engagement</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Authors

The 1988 Plan ushered in a series of design initiatives to shape a global Sydney (Hu, 2012b). All enterprises converged on a central goal of retaining and enhancing the dominance of Central Sydney as the national, state and regional centre for commerce, government, tourism, culture and entertainment. The Plan redefined Central Sydney, offered directions and locations for future growth, and established urban design and heritage principles. A human-centric approach was employed to achieve comfortable walking and access to quality light, air, and sunlight in the streetscape. For implementation, it provided detailed development control policies of floorspace ratio, height, heritage, urban form and design principles for streetscapes, vistas and view, skyline, building form, parks and square, pedestrians and sign, sunshine and wind.

The 2008 Plan emphasised more the City’s global competitiveness and innovation through growth and change. An equally important aspiration was the City as a leading environmental performer, to be achieved through weaving natural processes into built environment and green infrastructure. A human-centric approach was again employed to achieve both a sustainable and a beautiful urban form. The 2008 Plan recognised a need to improve the pedestrian networks and services to attract walking and cycling. To achieve this, the Plan proposed to increase the connectivity through integrating street spaces with sustainable transport, and to reinforce and revitalise public domains through place making in conjunction with preserving a unique natural setting, heritage and landmarks.

Underneath the pursuit for a global Sydney lay important changes of urban design policies between the 1988 Plan and the 2008 Plan. The first change was the expansion of prominent issues. In the 1988 Plan, economic growth was a primary issue, prioritising the City’s economic centrality in the region, state and nation. The 2008 Plan enhanced the aspiration for global competitiveness, and incorporated new dimensions of innovation and creativity. Further, the 2008 Plan put environmental sustainability and transport connectivity in parallel with economic competitiveness. In contrast, neither environmental sustainability nor transport connectivity was highlighted in the 1988 Plan. The overarching theme of sustainability was embedded in most strategies, objectives, and actions in the 2008 Plan to various degrees, which marks a major difference from the 1988 Plan.
Methodologically, the two plans demonstrated significant differences in urban design approaches. The 1988 Plan was highly prescriptive through detailed specifications on architectonic design. It not only provided a set of principles and requirements of urban design, but also suggested urban forms and building shapes to achieve desired design effects. The 2008 Plan, in contrast, was more reflective of “urban design as public policy” (Barnett, 1974). Architectonic design was a tool of spatial analysis to support the suggestions and effects of place making to be achieved. This allowed for flexibility and creativity during the process of designing individual projects. Compared to the 1988 Plan’s strong prescriptions on urban forms and building shapes, the 2008 Plan emphasised more the making of usable and attractive public spaces. Both plans employed a human-centric design approach, but the objectives were expanded. In addition to making comfortable and beautiful spaces in the 1988, the 2008 Plan expanded the scope to include the securing of sustainable development and amenity spaces.

While the 1988 Plan’s approach to plan making was elitist, in the sense of relying largely on intuitive solutions by specialists, production of the 2008 Plan was more research-based and participatory. Disciplinary consultants were commissioned to prepare study reports to inform the preparation of the plan. Two reports - Public Spaces Public Life Sydney (Gehl Architects, 2007) and The Fine Grain: Revitalising Sydney’s Lanes (Six Degrees Architects, 2008) - were incorporated into the 2008 Plan. These commissioned studies in particular informed the urban design strategies of “a city for walking and cycling” and “a lively, engaging city centre” (City of Sydney, 2008). The making of the 2008 Plan was also influenced by external agents, including international cases and inter-city learning from Melbourne (e.g., successful laneways) (McNeill, 2011). Apart from specialist research and consultancy, the 2008 Plan was said to be “a response to the community’s ideas”, and based on “the most comprehensive consultation ever undertaken in the city” (City of Sydney, 2008). The engagement process involved thousands of residents, business people, and arts, cultural and educational institutions and many community organisations. Every strategy contained a section on “what the community said” to indicate how the objectives were aligned to the community voices.

The 2008 Plan captured the City’s engagement with urban design excellence which was pursued through statutory urban design codes, launching special urban programs, renewing public spaces, and requiring design competitions for all major development projects. As a result, quite a few globally operative iconic architects (e.g., Renzo Piano, Norman Foster) attracted design commissions, their profiles helping to lubricate the planning approval process and to add value to the building (McNeill, 2007). Urban design was utilised to popularise the inner-city redevelopment of high-rise apartments through its “new urbanist” appeal (Bounds & Morris, 2005). A “finer grain” urbanism was promoted to create more amenity and attractive spaces, based around support for small shops and services, civic spaces oriented towards pedestrians, and the reinvigoration of intra-block laneways enlivened by small bars and cafés (McNeill, 2011).

The preparation of the 2008 Plan represented a maturation of the design thinking introduced in 1971, accelerated in the 1988 Plan, and highlighted through preparation for the Olympics in 2000. The City’s “Living City” vision from the early 1990s encouraged the search for a new direction for the CBD away from a homogenous business zone. The year 2004 was also a critical catalyst with two important events: the amalgamation of the City of Sydney with South Sydney with an enlarged working class residential population, and election of Clover Moore as an independent Lord Mayor. Moore campaigned on Central Sydney’s overdevelopment and planning problems, and received a
landslide victory from an enlarged community base. She orchestrated the 2008 Plan, and adopted it immediately upon her re-election in 2008. The 2008 Plan’s vision for Sustainable Sydney 2030 indicated significant shifts in direction through its green/global/connected mantra. Its pursuit of design excellence is institutionalised in the statutory Sydney Local Environmental Plan (LEP) 2012, and the Sydney Development Control Plan (DCP) 2012. Together, they are working to raise the bars of the City’s design quality and recognition in partnership with the private sector with a shared philosophy that acknowledges the financial, environmental and social dividends in a globally competitive development environment. Recognition of quality has come through the City already receiving over 40 national and international industry design awards. Among them, the Surry Hills Library and Community Centre won the Best New Global Design prize at the 2011 International Architecture Awards in Chicago.

**Conclusion**

This study approaches contemporary urban transformations from a different perspective by injecting urban design explicitly into global city discourse. Based on a case study of Sydney, it has analysed two strategic plans for the CBD through a critical period of development, one from the late 20th century, the other from the early 21st century: Central Sydney Strategy (1988) and Sustainable Sydney 2030 (2008). A comparison of their urban design elements reveals the transformations of urban design policies during the process of Sydney’s rise as a global city across the juncture of the new Millennium. An examination of the thematic and methodological continuity and change of these plans indicates the ascending importance of more nuanced urban design policies in shaping a global city. It reveals a multiplicity of urban design objectives for a global city in moving from an economic centrality to multiple dimensions including economic development, environmental sustainability, transport accessibility, place making, and social connectivity. This captures how urban design has evolved from being prescriptive and regulatory towards being a negotiable, competitive and place-bound commodity befitting the political economy of the neo-liberalist city (Brenner & Theodore, 2002).

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**References**


Shifting Discourses in Landscape
Exploring the value of parks in New York City

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Urban parks are valued by residents and tourists alike as they are a pleasant juxtaposition from the intensity of the surrounding city. But parks haven’t necessarily been considered in the same economic or political terms as other parts of the city. In recent years, the potential of urban landscapes to contribute to the economic health and vibrancy of the city has become more apparent to the political elite in the higher profile parks such as New York City’s High Line Project. However, some aspects of the political role that urban parks play still have not been recognised. Contrary to the economic value that has been attributed to some other high profile parks in New York City, the cost of Freshkills Park is enormous and this suggests that there are other political narratives associated with the closure of the landfill and the creation of the Park. That is, the Park offers some form of political value to the New York City administration.

This paper situates the history of Freshkills Park in recent political and environmental events that have impacted New York City. The closure of the Fresh Kills landfill and associated waste management problems for the city, the 9/11 terrorist attack on the World Trade Centre and the 2012 Superstorm Sandy, are events that reveal the political positioning of Freshkills Park. Not only does this raise the profile of the Park in the minds of the residents of New York City, it also increases the Park’s relevance to the political elite by revealing some of the issues that are impacting the welfare of the city. By examining the relationship between these events and conception of the Park, this paper considers the value of Freshkills Park as a political object in the city, and thereby, offers a different conception of the role and value of landscape in a modern city.

Keywords: Landscape architecture; Freshkills Park; Biopolitics
Introduction

New York City (NYC) is one of the world’s most vibrant and dense cities. Land is expensive, creating an interesting relationship between parks and the city. In one sense, the real estate value of the land creates intense pressure to use land productively; but, the intensity of the land use means that parks are more valued as a temporarily escape from the intensity of the city. Currently, twenty-five percent or 52,000 acres of land in NYC is dedicated to parks, reflecting the commitment that recent administrations have made to parks. Previous NYC Mayor Michael Bloomberg had committed to the goal that by 2030 every New Yorker will live within a 10 minute walk of a park (Bloomberg 2011, New York City Department of Parks and Recreation 2014: 1). This has been reiterated by the current de Blasio administration (New York City Office of the Mayor 2014).

Attitudes to parks in NYC are rooted in iconic parks such as Central Park and Prospect Park that encapsulate a certain romantic discourse of landscape design. Recent additions to the assemblage of parks in NYC, such as the High Line, have also shown how parks can contribute significantly to the economic welfare of the city. The economic benefit of parks to the city cannot be the only measure of value from a political administration perspective. Other measures that determine the value of parks include the opportunity for exercise, community interaction and ecological functions (New York City Office of the Mayor 2014, 34). But when the full opportunity cost of building and maintaining parks is taken into consideration, the gap between the cost of parks and the value to the community appears a little incongruent. This paper argues that this gap can be explained through the political capital that is gained from parks, and this becomes evident by examining the commissioning and development of Freshkills Park.

Twentieth Century Account of NYC parks

One of the primary roles of Central Park and other early parks in New York was to provide a space that had an “overall impression of tranquilly beautiful and ruggedly Picturesque rural scenery” (Rogers 2001, 339), that provided the “best practicable means of healthful recreation for the inhabitants of all classes” (Olmsted Sr 1973, 44). Parks were situated within prosaic notions of experiencing ‘nature’ for the enlightened middle class. From these romantic beginnings, the role of parks evolved and by the early twentieth century, functional requirements of parks in NYC took precedence. Social reformers of the Progressive Era (1890-1920), and later Robert Moses, head of the city’s Parks Department from 1933, promoted parks for specific recreational activities such as swimming pools, bowling, croquet and tennis (Rogers 2007). The progressive era approach to parks was to see them as spaces in which organised activities could be provided for a population that now had more leisure time than ever before (Cranz 1982). However valuable parks became as a recreation resource, they were not immune from funding cuts. By the 1960s, the wholesale middle-class flight from the inner city, made it more difficult to justify park funding (Cranz 1982). This was exacerbated during the fiscal crisis of the 1970s. As the city was almost bankrupt, spending money on parks was a low if not non-existent priority (Serazio 2010). Central Park, among others, fell into decline as a result. Any perceived benefits of living near the Park were eroded by the rise in criminal and antisocial activity in the park itself. It was a place into which few were willing to venture (Rogers 2007, Vanderkam 2011: 1). Figure 1 shows the degree to which the condition of the park deteriorated as infrastructure was neglected.
Figure 1: Central Park Meadows in the mid-1970s.

The meadows were bare, compacted and with standing water because of the collapsed drainage system. (Source: Rogers, E. B. (2007). "Robert Moses and the Transformation of Central Park." Site Lines: A Journal of Place 3(Fall): 3-12.)

Work to restore some of Central Park’s original character did not gain traction until NYC Park’s Commissioner Gordon J. Davis and Founder of the Park conservancy Elizabeth Barlow Rogers were able to provide an alternative private funding source to state revenue (Vanderkam 2011: 2). It was only through the creation in the 1980s of the not-for-profit Central Park Conservancy that Central Park could be restored (Vanderkam 2011: 2). Funded privately through donations, the capital raised to maintain Central Park has given a financial measure of the value of Central Park to New Yorkers. Since then, funding has largely been secured for Central Park by private contributions. The Central Park Conservancy raises approximately 75 percent of the funding for the Park’s annual funding (Central Park Conservancy 2015), of which around 85 percent is private funding that comes from people living within ten minute walk of the Park, firmly establishing a social and economic co-dependency between the Park’s fortunes and the residents who benefit (Vanderkam 2011: 1).
Relatively free of visitors on this day, the High Line is the most visited park in North America, attracting 600,000 visitors per acre per year. (Source: Photo by Philip Hutchinson, 10 May 2014.)

More recently parks have been viewed as opportunities for economic revitalisation and a number of interesting projects have emerged based on reclamation of post-industrial sites (Kirkwood 2001). The Bloomberg administration was particularly active in creating a number of other high profile developments in the city including High Line, Brooklyn Bridge Park and Governors Island. The High Line for example is a ‘linear park’ created on the remains of a disused, elevated goods railway line ten metres above street level on the western shore of Manhattan Island (see Figure 2). The economic benefits of the project have been extraordinary and the west side of Manhattan has been transformed from a “once-gritty, truck-filled area” into an precinct “now dominated by upscale fashion retailers, art galleries and restaurants” (Gratz 2010, xxxv). “Over $2billion in economic benefits [are] tied to the High Line, which is a combination of tourism money, visitation money in galleries and restaurants and hotels, and economic development in terms of new building, new residents and new businesses moving into that part of the city” (Corner 2014, personal communication, 21 May 2014). From a low point in the 1970s, parks have once again become an integral part of the city. The political benefits of parks are once again being recognised, from the perspective that parks have a positive effect on the economic health of the city.

However, not all parks do well under conservancy funding models. Most parks located in areas that are not surrounded by wealthy benefactors struggle to attract necessary funding (Arden 2010, Doulis 2010), and consequently draw from the purse of the administration which can struggle to maintain
all of the parks in the city, especially those without additional private funding. In 1996, over one third of money given to conservancies went to Central Park and approximately 81 percent of funding went to the top five parks (out of 41 parks) (Citizens Budget Commission 2007, 26). The problem faced by New York is that “no other parks system in America relies as much on other people’s money” so that “half of the city’s 1,800 parks and playgrounds now depend on some type of private group for maintenance, according to the Parks Department” (Arden 2010).

Political History of Freshkills Park

Freshkills Park (FKP) is located on the western edge of the borough of Staten Island, on the former Fresh Kills landfill site, the world’s largest rubbish tip and the last to operate in New York City. It is approximately three times the size of Central Park at 2200 acres (890 hectares). The Park’s design is based on the 2006 master plan design, Lifescape, derived from the winning competition concept design entry by Landscape Architecture firm Field Operations. Even though sections of the Park have been constructed, the Park has not been officially opened to the public to date.

Figure 3: Fresh Kills circa 1947


Before the landfill was established in the late 1940s, Fresh Kills was a stream that flowed into a tidal wetland. The name ‘Fresh Kills’ was given by the Dutch who were the first Europeans to explore the area – the word ‘Kill’ is derived from the Dutch for river. It was apparently a beautiful area (see Figure 3). Frederick Law Olmsted argued in 1871 that the location was sufficiently beautiful that it should be “developed into a series of ‘water preserves and public commons’” (Staten Island Improvement Commission 1871, Greene 2013). In 1948, the city began dumping rubbish on the wetland to fill in what was considered as waste land so that a parkway between Brooklyn and New Jersey could be built; followed by housing and industrial facilities (Miller 2000). As the landfill grew,
it began to impact the lives of many Staten Islanders, both physically by its presence, and the all-pervading stench (see Figure 4).

Figure 4: Fresh Kills circa 1950

The environmental impact that Fresh Kills landfill had on the community of Staten Island were well known to the city administration. It was perhaps the psychological impact that the landfill had on Staten Islanders that was most significant. Other boroughs looked down on Staten Island as it was known primarily as the borough with the city dump. Staten Island became known as the forgotten borough as former Borough President Guy Molinari complained the landfill “was atrocious and I always got the feeling that people in the other boroughs did not give a damn about us” (Levison 2012). Despite repeated promises to close the Fresh Kills landfill, it was not until 1998 that Mayor Rudi Giuliani gave a firm promise to close the site (Staten Island Advance 2013). Fifty years of inaction and broken promises to close the landfill, finally ended.

The political nature of the decision to close the landfill cannot be underestimated. The decision to close the landfill, made in 1996, was only possible when a rare political alignment of politicians from the same party holding office at the borough, city and state government levels were elected - Rudi Giuliani as Mayor, George Pataki as Governor and Guy Molinari was Staten Island Borough President (Miller 2000). A referendum for secession of the borough from NYC was conducted during the 1993 election that brought Giuliani to power (Molinari 2001). Giuliani attributed his victory to Staten Island, stating in 2008, “when I got (sic) elected Mayor of New York City ... the place that kind of won the election for me was Staten Island” (Kramer and Flanagan 2012, 10). “There was a political debt there to pay” argues the former Staten Island Borough Parks Commissioner, Tom Paulo (2014, personal communication, 6 May 2014). Adrian Benepe, Commissioner of Department of Parks and Recreation during the time of the establishment of Freshkills Park, was more circumspect about the
reason for the political decision to create the park. The politicians understood that there a sense of social justification because Staten Island had borne the brunt of accommodating the problem of disposing of the city’s waste (Benepe 2014, personal communication, 6 May 2014). Other factors such as the recognition of environmental damage and social equity issues also played a part (Benepe 2014, personal communication, 6 May 2014, Paulo 2014, personal communication, 6 May 2014, Laird 2014, personal communication, 20 May 2014).

Despite some obvious limitations to develop the site resulting from the landfill mounds, a park was not the only option considered. The trash mounds represent about 45 percent of the site and the remaining 55 percent of the site is made up of creeks, wetlands and dry lowland (New York City Department of City Planning 2013: 2). Joshua Laird, Commissioner of the National Parks of New York Harbor Philadelphia and former planner with the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation during the time of the establishment of FKP argued that “normally any sizeable parcel of land becoming available in the city, instantly people would zero in [on]” the potential use of land for “development potential” for a range of different uses (Laird 2014, personal communication, 20 May 2014). Despite pressure to develop the site for commercial operations, the decision to construct a park was a politically obvious and popular option for the administration. Subsequently, there was “no in-depth analysis” and “no study or assessment” for alternatives (Laird 2014, personal communication, 20 May 2014). In the end the decision to create a park was political expediency, it was “basically made as a Mayoral decision” (2014, personal communication, 21 May 2014).

Whether known or not, once Fresh Kills landfill was closed, NYC had no way of dealing with the rubbish generated within its municipal boundaries, and therefore the cost of rubbish removal almost doubled (Gamerman 2012, Rosengren 2015). As soon as the capacity of Fresh Kills landfill was reduced and ultimately closed, the city entered into expensive contracts to export rubbish to landfill sites down the eastern seaboard to Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Carolina and Virginia (Miller 2000, Gamerman 2012, Nagle 2014, personal communication, 13 May 2014, Rosengren 2015). The cost of rubbish removal from NYC is “staggering” (Nagle 2014, personal communication, 13 May 2014), argues academic and author, Robin Nagle. It is estimated at almost $368 million in 2016. In effect the closure of the park magnified the problem of waste management. The costs associated with rubbish removal has been a logistical and financial problem for many years and since the closure of the landfill, the exporting the city waste interstate has become environmentally and financially unsustainable (Rosengren 2015). Management of the residual waste since the closure of the landfill has also presented significant logistical challenges. The half a century of accumulated waste has been capped by an impermeable plastic membrane and covered with soil. The landfill is in the process of being decommissioned by the NYC Department of Sanitation – a process that will take approximately twenty-five years – and the rubbish will remain permanently hidden beneath the surface.

Once the decision was made, the political expediency shown in closing the landfill and subsequent decision to create the largest park in NYC culminated in the launch of a design competition, coincidentally one week before the terrorist attacks on the world trade centre now known as 9/11. Although these events are unrelated their trajectories overlapped in the following decade in ways that shed light on a tumultuous decade for the city and the park.
Lifescape: The winning competition entry for Freshkills Park.

On 5 September 2001, the NYC launched an International Design Competition for Freshkills Park. In December 2001, the three finalists were chosen with the opportunity to compete for the consultancy to produce a master plan for the Park. Field Operations, a landscape and urban design firm based in New York under the direction of James Corner, was awarded first place for their entry called ‘Lifescape’ which formed the conceptual basis for the Master plan completed in 2006. Field Operation’s entry, Lifescape, offered a comprehensive approach to deal with the size, scope, complexity and timing issues that the site presented. It attempted to create a world-class, large-scale park that capitalized upon the unique characteristics of its metropolitan location, vast scale, openness and ecology. The key design goals for Lifescape were captured within three coordinated organisational systems: habitat, program and circulation (New York City Department of City Planning 2013: 3). The programs organisational system involved creating a wide variety of public spaces and facilities. The Park plan offered the space for a range of activities and programs that are unique in the city. Activities were designed to be based around extensive active and passive recreation, educational amenities and cultural enrichment and include sports fields, canoeing, cycling and mountain biking, walking, community events, education, extreme sports, public art, horseback riding, bird watching and outdoor dining (New York City Department of City Planning 2013: 3). Activities such as canoeing and horse riding demonstrate the scale of FKP and the potential range of activities available. Activities such as community events, education, public art, bird watching and outdoor dining demonstrate that the role of FKP is being pushed into a wide range of other services.

One of the key challenges to implementing the design was providing a staged approach so that maximum public access to the site could be provided as early as possible while ensuring that such access could be done safely, and without affecting the ongoing landfill closure, maintenance and monitoring operations (Field Operations 2006: 1, 14). An approach was adopted that involved developing the park as a patchwork of projects that could be constructed through periods of intermittent funding but “add up to a unified whole” (Corner 2014, personal communication, 21 May 2014). In that sense, the master plan was less a completed vision for the park as much as it was a plan to manage the complexity of the task over a long time frame, with unsecured funding and tremendous site difficulties.

Laurie Olin, Landscape Architect and member of the competition jury, commended the approach by Corner as “a robust armature to accept the changes in understanding, the changes in social pressures and [changes in] economic cycles” argued (Olin 2014, personal communication, 16 May 2014). Lifescape was an unparalleled solution to the problem of creating a park at the site; set against the enormous difficulties, including the time frame over which the landfill decommissioning was to take place.

A Question of Value

At the time the Draft Master Plan was completed in 2006, Fresh Kills Park was envisaged to be built “in three ten-year segments at a cumulative cost of about $650 million” (Citizens Budget Commission 2007, 68). Of this, approximately $251 million was to be directed to closing the landfill and safely sealing waste. As to the Park itself, “$150 million will be used during the first ten-year
construction phase, $143 million for the second phase, and $80 million for the third and final phase” (Citizens Budget Commission 2007, 68).

The question of the value of parks comes into sharp focus when these direct and indirect ongoing costs are contemplated. Significantly, the opportunity cost incurred in not selling or developing land that could be built on, and the future maintenance cost incurred in maintaining such a large park are considerable. In a city famous for its capitalist spirit it seems counterintuitive that the cost burden on the whole city has been accepted without some sort of real estate or other return. The metrics of economic value – that is, the economic benefits that can be attributed to parks such as Central Park or the High Line – cannot be applied to FKP. This is not to say that other parks in New York attract similar funding as Central Park. Approximately 81 percent of funding went to the top five parks out of 41 parks (Citizens Budget Commission 2007, 26). However, the cost implications of Freshkills Park are of a higher order.

The cost of maintaining Freshkills Park will also be significant due to its size and is the biggest issue facing the Park’s administrator, Eloise Hirsh (Hirsh 2014, personal communication, 7 May 2014). In addition, the Park will struggle to attract significant private funding due its location, the stigma that is attached to the site and the comparative low density of Staten Island (Laird 2014, personal communication, 20 May 2014).

Part of the massive investment can be understood by the political role that the Park plays in promoting issues that are linked to the events and situations that threaten the state. In 2001, Lifescape, the competition winning design met the requirements of the brief, embodying many of the elements of discourse in parks that had evolved through Central Park and others, such as its social values, scenery, and space for recreation. Field Operations very much intended to hide the history of the site (Nagle 2014, personal communication, 13 May 2014). Reflecting a sentiment shared by some Staten Islanders, many of whom are still very suspicious about the site’s capacity to transform to a recreation space. However, between the competition winning design of 2001 and the completion of the master plan in 2006, the plan evolved through a process of consultation with the Staten Island administration, local residents and the NYC administration. While the general layout and key aims such as ecological outcomes, recreation and sports, space for arts, educational activities and events were broadly retained, there were key aspects of the park’s function that were altered.

The most significant change to Lifescape between the original winning entrants to the 20006 Masterplan emerging from the consultation process was the inclusion of renewable energy projects. While methane was always going to be produced at the site through the decomposition of the waste, the possibility of other sustainable energy demonstration projects that harnessed solar, wind, water and methane power was also raised in the public consultation processes. Wind farms were not included by Field Operations or at least did not feature in early renderings of FKP, but by 2006, they featured prominently. The possibility of wind farms and solar arrays at the site was raised initially by Borough President James Molinaro (Chan 2008), and reiterated by the next President, James Oddo. Deputy Borough President Burke suggests that the Borough President “felt that poetic justice and also a practical step forward” to find a way to produce clean energy at the site argued Deputy Borough President Ed Burke (2014, personal communication, 12 May 2014). It was felt that these experiments would give the Park a cutting-edge identity and augment its educational value
Currently wind turbines are being considered for the Park, and a solar array has been approved for installation in the coming years.

Introducing renewable energy production facilities at Freshkills Park also has a significant association with the threats of climate change (see Figure 5). Freshkills Park stands as a symbol of a response to climate change since Superstorm Sandy as it provided a buffering effect against the worst of the effects of the storm. Freshkills Park blunted Superstorm Sandy’s impacts on adjacent neighbourhoods (New York City Department of Parks and Recreation 2013: 1, 1) as it “absorbed a critical part of the storm surge” (Kimmelman 2012). While this was also true of other urban landscapes areas in New York, the wetlands in particular have subsequently been identified as essential natural elements needed to mitigate damage to property in the likely event of similar storms in the future. Hence there is a new resolve from the New York City administration to protect the wetlands and other natural areas because according to the NYC Mayor, “wetlands, streams, forests and other natural areas offer substantial sustainability and resiliency benefits” (New York City Office of the Mayor 2014, 199).

The relationship between the park and the sites landfill history also changed in 2001, due to the temporary re-opening of the landfill to receive the residue from the collapsed towers destroyed during the 9/11 attacks. The connection between the Park and the event is significant as the remains of the people killed in the attack will forever be contained at Freshkills Park. Indeed the 9/11 terrorist event is another example of how FKP has come to symbolise the vulnerability of NYC.
By locating the memorial of the collapse of the Twin Towers through a terrorist act in 2001, binds FKP with the discourse of the vulnerability of the state, not just NYC but all of the United States of America.

What has resulted is that Freshkills Park has become integrally associated with issues of waste, climate change, renewable energy and existential threats associated with terrorism. Yet the success of the Park will also depend on continued political support. At any stage funding could dry up (Benepe 2014, personal communication, 6 May 2014). Consequently the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation have the task of building support for the Park. The key strategic aim has been to change public opinion towards the site and part of that strategy is to engage in these bigger narratives associated with the site. This of course has political implications. The Park becomes a means of communication, and awareness raising about some fundamental issues that impact upon New York City. In that sense, the Park can be understood as a political tool – it has political value. Consequently, it represents the extension of landscape beyond a benign narrative into the realm of politics.

**Conclusion: The Changing Discourse in Landscape**

The introduction to this paper argued that landscape in New York City is often encapsulated by romantic notions associated with iconic parks such as Central Park and Prospect Park. While economic aspects are becoming more prominent, the larger political aspects of ‘landscape’ are often ignored. The political aspect of FKP emerged in part through the political circumstances around the closure of the landfill and the emergence of the park. Power relations crystallise out into different structures in different historical moments (Harrison 2012), and in this case, the structures of the effects of power are seen in the constitution of the Park. Different groups and people act upon the Park, changing the concept of a park, changing the discourse of the Park, from one like Central Park to something new and different, a park for the twenty-first century. This is perhaps not unexpected at FKP as it was borne out of the political turmoil of half a century of the landfill, and given form in light of the events during the first fifteen years of this century.

At Freshkills Park, discourses associated with aspects of politics have come to the fore and are linked to the value of the Park. The fears of the state in the modern age can be understood in terms of increasingly unpredictable natural forces, but also the accretion of landscape values by excess and waste. FKP embodies these fears and the hopes for an alternative future than the one that appears inevitable. FKP stands as a symbol of a response to the events of the twenty-first-century. This is where FKP separates from the discourse normally associated with parks and that exemplified by Central Park. As discussed above, this change in the discourse of parks was brought about by political aspects that have been a part of history of FKP and the Fresh Kills landfill. In that sense FKP is genuinely a twenty-first century park as it is a medium for the persuasive issues of the age. Understanding landscape within a political context adds scope and depth to perceived role and value of landscape in the modern city.
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Ironic Icons
Hypersexualisation and the Surfers Paradise Meter Maid

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The Surfers Paradise Meter Maid wears a gold bikini to promote the region of Surfer’s Paradise on the east coast of Australia. The “celebrity” Meter Maid first appeared in 1964 and can be mapped to coincide with a range of conflations during that time where women were groomed to perceive beauty and women’s power and prestige as inextricably linked. The nostalgia associated with the Meter Maid has kept her buoyant, even through feminist campaigns against women’s objectification. Zoom forward to 2016 and the Meter Maid and Surfer’s Paradise are still present, but charged with new responsibilities firmly located in a hypersexualised world. Newspaper articles make regular reference to the original Meter Maids seeking to recognise their iconic entity as “historic landmark” entrenched in what the Gold Coast “represents” as a liberal and freedom-seeking holiday destination.

This paper explores the precinct of the Meter Maid as “live” and mobile advertising, employed as a “brand” and able to imbue a hypersexualised aesthetic into the urban space of the Gold Coast. The gold lamé bikini is the “institutional skin” that identifies her specific function yet also defines the behaviours of others. In the same territory as six Surfer’s Paradise strip clubs her female body is idealised, responsive, spontaneous and flexible and able to represent a range of promotional requirements that extend the presence of the sex industry. Her mobility means that she is not subject to the same kinds of regulation as built forms of urban media. As street encounters with the “iconic” Meter Maid accumulate and are reiterated, they normalise sexy and sexist behaviour constructing social interaction in specific ways that fail to contribute to women’s equity and equality.

Keywords: Surfers Paradise, hypersexuality, Meter Maid, urban planning, sexuality.

Icons often emerge in a context of controversy and debate. Many architectural icons obtain increased cultural capital from this dichotomy where, in recent years, the power of advertising and social media has increased. In this paper my primary discipline of architecture and urbanism is explored alongside theories from cultural studies and gender studies to establish that the iconic Surfers Paradise Meter Maid has become an ironic, hypersexualised icon in a media-saturated
economy. At a time when sexual violence is a key agenda for social politics it is imperative that we develop a dynamic understanding of sexualized representations of women in public space. By exploring the hypothesis that the meter maid prompts urban hypersexualisation I suggest that her continued presence normalises gender stereotypes and women’s objectification.

Like the evocative Surfers Paradise skyline, sentiment about the Meter Maid is divided and full of nostalgia. Originally a place that challenged the conservative positions of the 1950s, Surfers Paradise became a premium beach destination for holidaymakers and attracted those with liberal ideas about individual and sexual freedoms. From the 1970s to 1990s Surfers Paradise experienced a building boom that transformed the beachside town into a booming metropolis complete with its own iconic skyline. Since the 1990s the city has seen a decline with its small centre now a notorious cluster of strip clubs. Within this urban and cultural change the Meter Maid has persisted for fifty years. As a “good-girl-turned-bad” she tries hard to sparkle on the streets of Surfers Paradise yet fails to mask the systemic and sexualised problems in the area.

![Figure 1: Surfers Paradise Meter Maid Veronica Taylor in 1966. (Source: http://www.dailytelegraph.com.au/parking-meters-a-fine-way-to-boost-kitty/story-fn6ccwsa-1226052817534)](image)

Bernie Elsey implemented the “good girl” initiative on the “glitter strip” in 1964 to address the backlash from local businesses when parking meters were installed. Dressed in a gold lamé bikini and adorned with a cape and tiara they rode around on scooters and fed 5-cent coins into expired meters leaving a “calling card” on the car windscreen. The card stated: “To save you the inconvenience of a fine, our Meter Maid has inserted a coin in the meter. By courtesy of the Surfers Paradise Progress Association.” (Marks, 2010). Local government and businesses along the parking meter-affected strip contributed a few dollars a day to the Meter Maid’s salary.

The iconic status of the Meter Maid developed in the late sixties and was fed by the burgeoning “cult of celebrity”. Coinciding with a time when women were groomed to perceive their beauty and their value as inextricably linked, beauty pageants became increasingly popular and well publicised during this time. Miss World (founded 1951), Miss Universe (founded 1952) and Miss International (in 1960) were demonstrably similar feminine “types” to the early Meter Maid with their “wholesome” disposition, swimsuit and sash (figure 2). Similarly the bikini clad Meter Maids were widely broadcast on television and in the press media from the mid 1960’s and were initially controversial and considered “racy” by some (Bartsch, 2000).
In 1967 the Meter Maid was acclaimed for their role in helping to promote the region after a tropical storm dramatically affected tourism. This was a positive turn for the Meter Maid and a time when Australian’s began to connect with the ‘angelic’ social service that the Mater Maid provided. By the 1980s the Meter Maids were so iconic that they greeted the then Prime Minister Bob at the local airport. Over the next two decades the Mater Maid became further institutionalized in Gold Coast culture. Her status began to neatly fit with Rojek’s polarised definition of celebrity as both “glamorous” as well as “notorious” (10, 2001).

The notorious aspects of the Meter Maids were amplified when they were forced to transform their role after the implementation of meters with a non-coin credit card system. Their functional task disappeared risking their irrelevance. Various incarnations of the Meter Maid are documented in the media. For example, in the 1990s some Meter Maids began to pose for soft – and sometimes hard-core – pornographic magazines. One of these was Penthouse – a magazine that “tends to be more explicit in its focus on women’s genitals, simulated sexual intercourse, sexual violence and group sex” (Dines, Jenson, Russo 1998). This boosted their profile but also shifted the iconic status into a transgressive context associated with pornography. The sexualised foray of the Meter Maid placed her firmly in the middle of the thriving “raunch culture” or “bad girl” phenomenon of the 1990’s which encouraged women to publicly objectify themselves as an expression of transgressive sexual empowerment (Lumby, 1997). At the time the insistence of the female body as a sexualised subject meant that the Meter Maid was able to claim that her position rejected conservative standards of feminine behaviour to suggest newly politicised discourses of pleasure.
By 1997 the sexualised development of the Meter Maid brand was under fire when the Sunday Mail reported that they were, in fact, touting for the local strip clubs (Stoltz, 1997). In 1999 an issue was tabled about the Meter Maids being mistaken for women who promote venues “for the sex industry.” Roberta Aitchinson stated that she hoped that people will see that “that’s not what it’s about (Bartsch, 1999). We have bikinis and things – it’s a bit cheeky but tasteful”. More touting for strip club allegations occurred again in 2001 – this time reported by the Courier Mail (Sommerfield and Doneman, 2001). In 2010 the Herald Sun reported that Councilor Bob La Castra of the Gold Coast City Council supported the Meter Maids when issues about illegal “touting” for the local strip clubs were raised once more, he stated: “We recognise clearly that the Meter Maids are an iconic entity and very much part of our history” (Bartlett, 2010).

Zoom forward to 2015; the Meter Maid is still present in Surfers Paradise, but both her task and the context in which she works has changed. Now privately owned by one-time Meter Maid – Roberta Aitchison – the tasks of the women who work the glitter strip requires them to replicate aspects of striping culture and is framed by the sexualised context now deeply aligned with Surfers Paradise. While the perception of transgressive sexual behavior in the public sphere is certainly nothing new the determining difference with regard to the hypersexualized culture presented by the Meter Maid is the public’s interactivity with the sexualized and porno chic syntax that she communicates.

The term hypersexual is used to describe the overwhelming abundance of simulated sexual images, practices and narratives where the representation of sex and sexuality undermines or becomes dissociated from sexual experience. Borrowing from the aesthetics of pornographic and strip club culture, hypersexuality intertwines female personal power with sexualised identity. This is directly linked to the media’s publicity of the Meter Maid; all of which challenge our calibration to the nuances of this hypersexual icon.
The incongruous coupling of the Meter Maid as an “iconic” part of the Gold Coast but simultaneously a “bad girl” parallels the irony embedded in some post-feminist rhetoric. For post-feminism the use of irony means that “unpalatable sentiments” can be expressed without the implication of what these sentiments might mean (Gill, 2007). Placing the Meter Maids’ autonomy, choice and “beauty” against the surveillance, discipline and vilification required to meet these standard (Gill 2007, 163) creates an urban contradiction. For the Meter Maid, as well as for the Surfers Paradise “glitter strip”, this kind of paradox has dire consequences for urban life.

Constructing a nuanced argument around the Meter Maid requires understanding the sexualised context and underlying connections to hard-core porn media. In this research I refute post-feminisms suggestion that women’s participation in the sex industries may be an empowered choice. I argue that the sexualised culture of Surfers Paradise does not evidence positive, neo-liberal attitudes to sexuality but, indeed, a heterosexist engagement with porno-chic culture and the sexual exploitation of women and girls. The aim is to make a clearer and more nuanced position around the iconic and sexualised Meter Maids of Surfers Paradise in order to impact future planning and legislation in the area.

Glitter Strip: an Urban Strip Club

The “glitter strip” in Surfers Paradise is a precinct of streets operating across 2000 square metres (figure 4). The consolidation of strip clubs in the district coincides with the IBIS report on Australian ‘sexual services’ that notes continued annual revenue growth at a rate of 4.2 per cent from 2009 to 2014. The Meter Maid is deployed in this sexualised nexus of strip clubs, nightclubs and bars. Cavill Avenue, Orchid Avenue, The Esplanade and the Gold Coast Highway are the edges of her roaming territory with an environment that includes: Hollywood Showgirls (Orchid Ave), Player’s Showgirls (Orchid Ave), Bad Girls (Cavill Ave), Santa Fe Gold (Orchard Ave), Crazy Horse (Orchid Ave), The Toy Box Showgirls Gentlemen’s Club (Surfers Paradise Boulevard). While it may be a coincidence, on February 20 2009 the Courier Mail reported that these clubs have been regularly “caught breaking adult entertainment laws against a backdrop of sexual assaults on dancers and prostitution claims”, and many of these crimes have impacted on the urban spaces of Surfers Paradise.
Figure 4: Territory of Meter Maid, Surfers Paradise, Australia, Nicole Kalms, 2014.

The Meter Maids’ daily camaraderie involves engaging and managing the jibes of men “trained in the commercial sexual use of women” (Jeffreys 2008, 152). Meter Maids are required to sell sexualised merchandise to supplement their income. The merchandise itself reflects her iconic yet sexualised status. For example: $10 for a Meter Maid Poster; $20 for a Meter Maid calendar as well as “Bikini” Coolers (sculpted to the form of a women’s torso and breasts shaped to sit around a can); T-shirts, mugs and bar runners, all rendered with images of hypersexualised and scantily clad Meter Maids. A photo with the Meter Maid is $10.
The “hidden” activities of the strip clubs are reciprocally play out by the Meter Maid under the guise of tourism promotion and “harmless sexualised fun” (Jeffreys, 2010). For example, the Meter Maid (despite no longer filling expired meters) is often photographed fondling a parking meter pole. This directs a syntactic relationship to the pole apparatus used for pole dancing and furthermore to the aesthetics of stripping per se (figure 6). These playful yet heterosexist tropes further conflate direct connections to stripping and prostitution. Some people may nostalgically perceive the Meter Maid as a local icon yet dressed in a gold bikini and stiletto heels she is an actively hypersexualised and mobile billboard that promotes and reinforces the sexualised “glitter strip”.

The nostalgia associated with the Meter Maid has kept her buoyant and allowed an iconic status to persist against feminist critic. Newspaper articles make regular reference to the original Meter Maids and their iconic place in the tourist-focused society. Headlines read for example: “From dunes to carpet” (1983), “Golden girls still maid to measure after 35 years” (2000) and “Golden idea still going strong” (2005). On August 3 2006 the ABC news reported that “Gold Coast meter maids nominates as Qld icons” when the Meter Maid was one of 36 nominations for Queensland cultural icon status at the Queensland Museum. While they did not make the final cut, the proposition stirred public debate and helped to perpetuate media around their iconic position within the community. When reporting on a new local Meter Maid museum in 2007 Brian Mossop relays the first Meter Maid – Annette Bryant’s – fond memories of her time as an “ambassador”. These continued nostalgic attitudes discount the feminist challenges to the Meter Maid and more broadly to women’s objectification.

**Transgression: From Margin to Centre.**

In 2014, the global revenue from the strip club industry was estimated at 75 billion dollars (Jeffreys 2009, 86) and this figure is reflected in the social acceptance of strip clubs and sexual precincts in late capitalist cities. The normalisation of stripping propels porno-chic trends and the glamorisation of the sex industry. As evidenced by the Meter Maid and the Surfers Paradise “Glitter Strip”, stripping and sexualised practices are no longer marginalised on the urban fringe or in liminal sites of society but are part of mainstream urban life.

While stripping is not a new phenomenon, the perception that stripping is a sensual dance, a harmless carnivalesque undressing or form of sexual empowerment needs to be revised. This concern is address by academic Annette Lynch where she suggests that the focus in stripping has moved increasingly to more explicit forms of exposure (Lynch 2012, 178).

The social acceptance of strip clubs and sexual precincts is difficult to separate from other ways women are systematically prostituted. My research supports a feminist critique that understands stripping as integral to the larger system of prostitution and that stripping forms part of the organised industry that profits from sexual violence (Stark and Whisnant 2004, 40). Problematically, strip club precincts and mobile sexualised extensions of stripping – like the Meter Maid – reinforce the larger systems of prostitution that profit from sexual exploitation of women. In turn, hypersexualised culture comes to shape behaviours and relationships within these urban spaces with dire consequences for all women (Stark and Whisnant 2004, 40).
The shaping of urban life occurs in the harmful stereotypes and heteronormative behaviours that extended from behind the façade of the strip club to be publically legitimised by the Meter Maids. Her acceptance, longevity and, at times, celebration means that some people may come to expect women to accept less than equal relationships, even sexual harassment. Spatial and interactive analysis of strip clubs show how men remain in control in the space of the strip club and direct the nature of the interaction (Erikson and Tewksbury, 2000); these same behaviours and prescriptive modes of relating may become present when the aesthetically similar apparatus and syntax of the Meter Maid enter the public space of Surfers Paradise. When transferred into urban space, the same exploitative and often violent behaviour is likely to follow. For example, the Meter Maid is offered financial incentives to sell merchandise and to manage sexually harassing behaviour whilst being remunerated for a photograph. These are similar incentives to those women in strip clubs where men who pay more money will have more access to their bodies, to their nakedness and often to physical contact.

Like the stripper the Meter Maid is required to wear a bikini “uniform” and high heel stilettos that are representative of strip club stereotypes signaling that certain behaviours may be tolerated. The dancer and the client relationship in the strip club may also extend into urban space as a result. This may mean that women are expected to mimic aspects of the sex industry and subjugate themselves to men’s desires. Similarly, it may mean that sexual aggression towards women becomes expected and tolerated (Jeffreys 2009, 86-106). Meter Maids are certainly expected to perform their roles playfully, to be receptive to their audience and to be happy. They are symbolically primed to be viewed as sexually desirable through both their attire, make up and grooming implied by their “uniform” and accessories. Male behaviours from the strip club may make a previously un-sexualised urban space into a hypersexualised space. Importantly, as these behaviours emerge in social life, then urban space legitimises and affirm this highly specific type of hypersexualisation “pervaded by images and norms that openly objectify women” (Erikson and Tewksbury 2000, 289).

Other nuanced affects in the urban space which planning regulations find difficult to quantify. A report by activist group OBJECT titled “Stripping the Illusion: Countering Lap Dancing Industry Claims” (2015) found that Strip clubs create “no go zones” that “reduce ... [women’s] sense of security and entitlement to public space”. Public infrastructure and transportation zones like bus stops become sites of harassment, intimidation or any anti-social behaviour. Where hypersexual representation dominates, women’s perception may be that their occupation of these “no go zones” is only partial and conditional.
Figure 5: Meter Maids in Surfers Paradise pose for photos. (Source: http://www.hayabusa.org/forum/random-thoughts/113327-meter-maids.html)

Mobile Bodies

Hypersexualised phenomena and the post-feminist rhetoric of sexual empowerment are saturated with references to women who choose to participate in sexualised culture. The press media assist in enabling these positions by reporting on the iconic and desirable status of the Meter Maid with “dreams realised” instead of on the reality of their daily role. My research is interested in challenging the tendency to privilege individualised and subjective experience of empowerment over the social impacts that the Meter Maid brings to Surfers Paradise. I am particularly interested in how a post-feminist position may obscure the meaning given to these activities by a wider audience.

The rhetoric of choice avoids the deeper, complex issues of hypersexual urbanism, professing to accommodate “most” viewpoints. Under the mantra of “choice”, women appear to be granted the “right to choose”, men choose whether or not to participate, others choose whether or not to look, and not participating is also a “choice”. This “choice” rhetoric assumes that if women are undertaking the role of stripper or Meter Maid without coercion, this evidences her sense of “agency”. But what about the “choice” of women on the street, when hypersexuality moves into urban space more broadly? Or, indeed, when the women who move through these spaces are potentially impacted by men’s offensive or sexist or violent ways of relating to them?

Women may minimise and deny the abuse that they have suffered as a way to cope. Others may be influenced by dominant post-feminist rhetoric, as they may not wish either to describe the
hypersexualised events and associated sexual harassment as offensive or to see themselves as victims of assault (Kelly 1989, 145). Jeffreys (1997, 252) offers the following insight:

naming the abuse in prostitution as work or entertainment makes it particularly hard for women to identify what is happening to them as abuse. The cheerful accounts of stripping or tabletop dancing that are obtained by journalists or researchers who do not start from a sensitive understanding of male violence are possible only because the prostituted women have not developed ways of talking about sexual harassment.

This suggests that there may be psychological issues that can affect women’s reflexive response to sexual violence.

Hypersexualised phenomena and the post-feminism rhetoric of raunch, as indicated in the discussion of the Meter Maid, are saturated with references to choice. The reliance on individualised experience privileges the primary act of choosing, but may also obscure the how meaning is given to these actions.

The notion of subjective “choice” for women in sex industries is insufficient when the reality of the impact of the commercial sexualisation is explored. Like the strip club owners who reap the benefits of the work of stripper, the Meter Maid is working to benefit sexualised urban culture whether directly as alleged touters or indirectly as sexualised bodies to be harassed and leered at. Furthermore, the urban exposure of the Meter Maid places the responsibility on the female worker to “distinguish between paid-for sexual attention and sexual harassment” (Jeffreys 1997, 265). As such, the Meter Maid circulates the urban space of the Glitter Strip where “power operates … not by silencing or suppressing female sexual agency, but by constructing it in highly specific ways” (Gill 2008, 53). The hypersexualised Meter Maid not only celebrates heterosexist masculinity but also perpetuates a mistakenly positive perception of the sex industries. This constitutes a form of sexual violence (Coy, Wakeling and Garner 1990, 442). Social worker and academic Christine Stark (2006) suggests that “stripping, massage parlours and brothels, saunas, prostitution rings, international and domestic trafficking, mail order bride services, street prostitution, escort services, phone sex, live sex shows, peep shows, and pornography” must not be analysed as occupations but as “organised sexual abuse”. Detailing the way in which sex as commodity creates an interconnecting structure, she states: “prostitution rings may make pornography, sell women and girls in strip clubs, escort services, massage parlours, saunas, and on the street; put on live sex shows; and traffic women and girls domestically and internationally”. The Meter Maid teeters alongside these sexualised practices to reinforce larger systems of exploitation and violence against women and girls.

This precarious position is nuanced and layered and can be highlighted by the photographic work of Fiona Morris. In the introductory catalogue essay to the 2013 exhibition “Sexualising the City” at the Gold Coast Art Gallery, Virginia Rigney (2012) reflects on the place of the sexualised image on the Gold Coast. She suggests that while it is a strong motif, there are other representations that emerge from the visual culture of the region and also shape the city. One example Rigney provides is the documentary-style photographic works of Morris, who spent a week with the Meter Maids in 2005. In one daily portrait of a Meter Maid Morris tracks 15-year-old “Hannah” as she travels from her life at high school to assume her identity as a Meter Maid and in another Meter Maid “Michelle” is set in contrast to domestic life.
Figure 6: Meter maid Michelle, in bunny outfit standing beside a vehicle, Chevron Island, Surfers Paradise, Queensland, Fiona Morris, February 2005. (Image: courtesy Fiona Morris).

Morris’s work seeks to redefine the iconic street presence of the Meter Maid through a quotidian excavation of the mundane aspects of her life. These images can therefore serve as a supporting case study as to why the Meter Maid should not be portrayed as a Surfer Paradise icon. In Morris’ images the reality of the Meter Maid’s hypersexualised position keeps appearing. Among the portraits are a mini-van full of wolf-whistling larrikins and leering men alongside images of Hannah repetitive checking her scantily clad buttocks, bosom and general appearance. The photographic documentation also announces concerns about the age of the Meter Maid who is describes as 15 years old and under the Australian age of consent and therefore potentially appealing to pedophilic men. The images, while revealing the individual and vulnerable identity of the girls and women who perform as Meter Maids cannot reframe the effect of their sexualised presence in urban space and reciprocally the effect of the urban context on the Meter Maid herself.

As the “iconic” Meter Maid unravels she reveals a hypersexualised body as “live” advertising, Employed as a transgressive brand for Surfers Paradise and expected to imbue a hypersexualised aesthetic into the urban space of the Gold Coast for commercial purposes, she is a satellite site that indirectly and directly refers to strip clubs and strip club culture. Here, the Meter Maids’ body is idealised, responsive, spontaneous and flexible, and able to represent a range of promotional requirements. The Meter Maid is expected to provide “teasers”, to increase awareness of her merchandise and to create an association in the consumer’s mind between her brand and a sexualised “idea” of space. Her mobility means that she is not subject to the same kinds of legislation or regulation as built, static urban space is. While these planning policies attend to infrastructure and land use the Mater Maid slips between a fixed business model and the anti-touting laws aimed
to control the selling of goods to tourists. As the unregulated street encounters of the Meter Maid are reiterated and accumulate, they normalise sexy and sexist behavior. The Meter Maid communicates Surfers Paradise as a highly sexualised space where you will find women continuously available and agreeable. She constructs social interaction in specific and stereotyped ways that fail to contribute to women’s equity and equality.

**Hypersexualisation and violence in urban space**

Issues of women’s inequity and inequality are evidenced by the violent behaviors towards Meter Maids documented in the local press. A Meter Maid stalker named “Cameron” follows the girls intensely, taking photos of them and wearing these images of the girls around his neck. On July 1, 2014 a newspaper headline in the Daily Mail states “Meter Maids on the Gold Coast have found their biggest fan... and he follows them around twice a week”; this article minimises offensive and potentially violent behaviour by applying the euphemism “fan” to the person who sexually harasses these women. Gill (2007, 147-166) discusses post-feminism’s relationship to irony and states: “if we suspend disbelief in the notion that it’s ‘just a laugh’, we are left with a fast-growing area of media content (itself profoundly influencing other media) that is chillingly misogynist”. This is highlighted by a 2014 report by Ryan Keen in the Gold Coast Bulletin where he describes not the sexual harassment of the Meter Maid but instead the “playful” jibes of men. This contributes to ways the objectification and subjugation of all women may remain unchallenged. Indeed, the acceptance of such harassment may also be a learned aspect of being a Meter Maid. In 1975 Meter Maid Debbie Thomas conveys her own strategy for managing sexual harassment in the Gold Coast Bulletin. She states: “If anyone says anything rude I just give the person an extra big smile. Like this week. A car of yahoos kept following me up and down Orchid Ave. Eventually they got tired of their game when I just kept smiling at them”. Like the stripper in the strip club, the Meter Maid’s presence creates a “hypersexualised, heteronormative environment” where men receive guaranteed sexual attention “even if counterfeit” from female entertainers (DeMichele and Tewksbury 2010, 550).

This shaping of urban space has consequences for all women. When hypersexualised promotion is sited in urban space with sexualised interaction – and where women may be required to dress or act in gender specific and sexualised ways – the implications necessitate analysis. For example, the consumer’s connection to the hypersexualised “live” experience of the Meter Maid shapes behaviour in social space, and is reciprocally observed by many others who may be involuntarily engaged as forced participants. Similar to the interior strip club environment where women are objectified, men’s sexual desires may become dominant in social interaction and reproduce the expectation that the possibility of these desires being refused is miniscule. This may also affect other women in urban space and not only the hypersexualised employee. This condition makes it acceptable for men to display sexist and harassing behaviour towards women in urban space. Indeed, accepting this harassing behaviour, at peak times, security staff were employed to ensure the Meter Maids safety. Architect and planner Leslie Kanes Weisman suggests that a general fear of sexual harassment and rape, perpetuated by unsafe areas of the city, is actually present as a “constant state of fear” for women in urban space (1994, 69). This recent installment of an external urban “bouncer” in Surfers Paradise indicates that the threat is not just imagined but real and replicates the infrastructure inside strip clubs where the bouncer is employed to observe strippers and patrons to ensure women are not sexually assaulted.
Conclusion

In 2014 ABC Gold Coast reported a new pitch for the Meter Maids to act as “tourism ambassadors” that could warn beachgoers “about the hazards and the dangers of the choices they’re making”. More recently the Gold Coast Bulletin reported that an application had been made for the Meter Maid to serve food and drinks to punters on the beach via an iPhone app ordering system (2014). Amid this, local business owners continue to debate whether the Meter Maids are in breach of the council’s anti-touting laws and the Gold Coast Central Chamber of Commerce president – Peter Yared – told the Courier Mail on April 18 2015 that time had expired for the meter maids: “I think it’s time they moved on,” he said.

In this paper I questioned why – despite the changes in the Meter Maids role and contextual connections – she continues to shape the territory of Surfers Paradise. Reciprocally connected to the commercial strip club industry, the persistent recitation of the Meter Maid as a cultural icon reveals a concerning visual, spatial and mediated construction of hypersexuality in the urban spaces of Surfers Paradise. My discussion of the Meter Maids mobile and hypersexualised body suggests that she can transform any urban place into a hypersexual space, thereby negating planning legislation and advertising as fixed, static or able to be “zoned” or controlled.

The occupation of urban space by hypersexual representations plays an important role in crafting sexual norms that reflect sexist practices. The veiling of the Meter Maid as an hypersexualised “icon” raises concerns about how urban space shapes identity, legitimising some types of conduct and offering social incentives for hypersexualised behaviour. In most cases, the hypersexualisation of urban space works in subtle ways, informing our social relations, self-perceptions and perceptions of others. But as these experiences are reiterated and accumulate, they normalise sexist behaviour and thereby have a negative impact upon women’s experience. As Coy et al state: “The process of the normalisation and increased visibility and availability of sex industries in urban space contributes to the ‘gendered consumption of women’s bodies by male buyers’” (2011, 442).

The Surfers Paradise Meter Maid provides an example of how strip precincts create urban spaces that aim to entertain men with the “physical, sexual and emotional labour of women” (DeMichele and Tewksbury 2010, 556). I argue that architectural researchers, planning policy-makers and spatial practitioners need to pay attention to the iconic Meter Maid’s industry’s power to legitimise the larger infrastructures of sexual exploitation and stereotypes that already oppress women.

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An Australian Pooleyville?
Fred Pooley’s 1981 visit to Australia and its impact

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When ‘quiet voiced pragmatist’ Fred Pooley (1916-1998) visited Australia as guest of the Royal Australian Institute of Architects in the summer of late 1981, he was recently retired from practice; a past president of the RIBA and seemingly best known for his role – such as it was – in the development of Milton Keynes. Indeed, Pooley himself was far more formative in the creation of MK’s unrealised precursor, the futuristic North Bucks New City, also known as ‘Pooleyville.’

Pooley’s visit was planned so that he might address audiences in all state capitals, as well as Darwin, Cairns, Townsville, and Canberra; this last he praised as ‘an outstanding example of city planning.’ It might be surmised that both planning and architecture – and the symbiotic relationship that so often exists between the two, particularly in new purpose-built township and city environments – was sufficiently developed in Australia in the early 1980s that Pooley is unlikely to have strongly affected its direction. He was almost a decade on from presidency of the RIBA, and ‘Pooleyville’ was almost two decades in the past.

But do these facts negate the value of Pooley’s experience – or of Australia’s experience of Pooley? This paper examines the Pooley visit and its outcomes at a time when Australia, having all but abandoned its interests in new town construction, was nonetheless continuing to explore mechanisms to expand and extend its existing cities and house an increasing population. The milieu of the early 1980s, Pooley’s message, and his own response to Australia, are examined in detail in this paper.

Keywords: Fred Pooley; 1980s Australia; public architecture; town planning

Fred Pooley and his wife Hilda travelled to Australia in October-November 1981. It seems hardly in doubt that it was a whirlwind visit, planned and announced in such a hurry as to be almost
whimsical. The proof of this lies largely in the lack of publicity the journals of various chapters of sponsoring body, the RAIA, mustered in the months leading up to it.

Naturally, this does not make the trip unworthy of historical analysis – the limited reportage of the Pooley visit is merely an aspect of the whole. Not only is Pooley a fascinating figure in himself, his career peaking in a series of important roles in the last ten years of his working life; he was also visiting Australia at a key moment in public architecture, particularly but not exclusively in changes not only to the way public housing was conceived. His visit in late 1981 allows us to take a snapshot of the places he visited, accompanied by his reported responses to at least three of them.

Pooley’s career was diverse. As architect for Buckinghamshire County during the 1960s, he had presided over an extraordinary plan for a ‘North Bucks New City’ announced by Buckinghamshire Council in 1964 and intended to house 250,000 people, none of them more than five minutes’ walk from a ‘free’ monorail. Two years later, ‘NBNC’ was abandoned in favour of Milton Keynes, the last of the second iteration of the British New Towns. ‘When the Milton Keynes Development Corporation was formed,’ recalls Bill Berrett, who worked on both NBNC and Milton Keynes with his friend Pooley, ‘he was appointed Special Adviser. He always thought it was a way of involving him without his being able to influence things’ (B Berrett 2015, pers. comm., 8 November). Pooley had also, in the decade prior to his Australian trip, been Controller of Transport and Planning at the GLC from 1974-1980 and for the last two of those years additionally GLC Chief Architect. His roles in London allowed him to work extensively in one of his areas of greatest interest and experience – public transport – and also saw him ‘in on the ground’ in the initiation of the London Docklands development.

As mentioned Pooley’s Australian visit, a lecture tour, seems to have been presented as a fait accompli to the RAIA’s chapters; there is no recorded mention, for instance, in the RAIA’s Victorian chapter archives that he is expected, or any request or proposal regarding the advisability of his visit. The extent to which his arrival was a surprise might be deduced from a letter from the President of the RAIA in Victoria, Peter Sorel, to Gerhard Murjahn at the Goethe-Institut regarding the glass artist Ludwig Schaffrath’s visit to Australia in November; Sorel advises that the RAIA cannot find room for Schaffrath ‘within its present program’ (Sorel 1981). Yet there is no mention in the RAIA’s Victoria Chapter’s minutes or correspondence anywhere of Pooley’s visit until 6 November of that year and ‘The Executive recommendation THAT a Cocktail Party be held at RRH at 6.00 p.m. on November 11, 1981 for Councillors and their wives, Board Chairmen and their wives to greet Mr. and Mrs. Pooley’ (RAIA 1981a; 1981b; 1982c).

Similarly, there was no discussion of the Pooley visit in most journals after the fact, with exception of those of the Queensland and South Australian chapters, which published the same text – an edited version of Pooley’s address in Brisbane. Architect and Builder, the journal of the RAIA’s South Australian chapter, did not publicise Pooley’s visit in its September or October issues; even more tellingly, it published sections from his Brisbane address in its January 1982 issue with an ‘Editor’s Note’ requesting ‘any comments or impressions of S.A. architects concerning Fred Pooley’s visit here.’ Indeed this ‘Editor’s Note’ is so phrased that it may indicate Pooley did not speak in Adelaide at all, and editor David Ness speculates that he may not even have visited (and that the ‘here’ referred not to Adelaide, but to Australia) (D Ness 2015, pers. comm., 10 November).
We can only assume Pooley gave the same talk in all the cities he visited; though he did not publish, Bill Berrett advises that he was a skilful verbal communicator. In his Brisbane address, Pooley spoke of the future, best viewed in 1981 when ‘society’ as he saw it was ‘in a transitional stage.’ He detailed his own life experience, beginning work as an architect in the early 1930s ‘at the height, or depth, of the Great Depression’, his career then interrupted by war. In the late 1940s, he was a part of a reconstruction executing ‘policies which emerged to fashion the brave new world’ which ‘required not only imagination, but also a day to day continuity of advice.’

**Tracing the Pooleys**

In April 1982, the Canberra Times (27 April 1982, p. 7) – which had not reported on Pooley’s visit at the time it happened – suggested that Pooley had travelled to Perth, Adelaide, Darwin, Cairns, Townsville, Brisbane, Canberra, Sydney, Melbourne, and Hobart. There is no concrete reason to believe that the Pooleys visited these cities in the order listed here, though it is a logical route. Berrett suggests that Fred disliked long-haul travel, which makes Perth a likely start point. Evidence also points to the probability that Sydney, Melbourne and Hobart were visited in the same week, and Brisbane, Cairns, Townsville, and the Gold Coast in two days (RAIA 1981d).

A note from Hilda Pooley to Peter Sorel in the RAIA Victorian Chapter archives indicates that she (but not Fred) was in Melbourne on November 13, and a memorandum from the Information Division’s Anthea Norman to chapter presidents and other interested parties dated 24 November, thanking them for their assistance in the success of the Pooley tour, indicates it was complete by this time. The Queensland Chapter News of the RAIA in September that year suggested a timeframe spanning October 17 through to November 13, although this was later altered to accommodate Pooley’s presence in Brisbane for the Chapter Awards Night – the sole reference to his prior travels being an acknowledgement of his hosts in Cairns and Townsville, RAIA members Bob Cleland and Nigel Daniels respectively (RAIA 1981c; 1981d).

It is for certain that Pooley arrived in Brisbane on the 28th of October, and was hosted by Graham Hobbs. Alf Kamols, Chief Architect from the Department of Works, organised for Pooley to tour the restoration of the Queensland Parliament House and its Annexe, in addition to a non-specified ‘Cultural Centre’ – most likely the Queensland Cultural Centre, which opened in 1985 after many years of construction – with each project exemplifying the activity of private architects within the public sphere, a keen interest of Pooley’s (1981d).

Had Pooley had such an empathetic and perceptive guide to show him through new developments in Perth in October 1981, he might have seen (for instance) Tony Brand’s Two Rocks town centre, Ronald Ferguson’s redesigned early 20th century ‘rag trade’ building group Murray Mews in Perth (Bronze Medal 1979) or the recently completed Art Gallery of WA and its adjacent Cultural Centre, a blend of historic and new public buildings (Australian Institute of Architects WA Chapter 1980). The RAIA’s West Australian journal The Architect was happy to publish the views of Stan Mosjeld, US Visiting Fellow to WAIT’s School of Architecture and Planning, on Perth’s present state (Mosjeld 1980), a fact mentioned merely as evidence that the journal was not averse to taking advice, criticism and opinion from visitors.
The South Australian Building and Architecture journal for September 1981 contains notice of forthcoming events up to the 21 October, with no mention of Pooley. If he progressed thence to Darwin, he must surely have been shown the early development of the city of Palmerston, launched the previous year and then in its very early building stages (Northern Territory News 10 November 1981, p. 2). His voice would have no doubt lent to the debate surrounding reduced plot sizes so to facilitate housing mix – with the Northern Territory News deeming town planners to be ‘as popular as warm beer’, the relative silence on Palmerston is open to speculation (Northern Territory News 10 November 1981, p. 7).

Cairns appears to have been next on his agenda, yet there is, however, no mention of Pooley in the October or November issues of the Cairns Post. This is particularly perplexing given that it was circulated in a city in which town planning – its use and value, particularly in relation to height and density requirements at a time when property values had leapt by as much as 40% in a year (Gunaratne 1981) – was an ongoing interest, if not obsession, and fears of the kind of dehumanised modern urban environment Pooley campaigned against for decades were a frequent concern (Brock 1981). Townsville, almost certainly the next City Pooley visited, was similarly unresponsive. Only a short excerpt of Pooley’s Brisbane talk, a lone relic of his Queensland visit, was published to ‘whet’ the appetite of its professional audience (the full text being available for a small fee) (1981f). This sermon of sorts bore little relevance to Pooley’s stay; rather, he further espoused the need to ‘focus attention on that fairly large group of architects and look at future directions for public architecture’ (1981c, 1). Pooley suggested he would ‘like to look for a moment at the sort of organisation necessary to promote these qualities’; a statement that, without further clarification, reads as though he had travelled to find such an entity, rather than to construct a hawk-eyed and critical dissemination of public architecture and development of 1980s Australia. Devoid of localisation – at least in the Sunshine State – his talk may have suited virtually any spatial context experiencing bureaucratic malaise.

Pooley in Sydney and Hobart

There were only three cities where Pooley impacted on the mainstream media at all: newspapers in Sydney and Hobart reported on his visit while he was there, and Canberra did so some time after he left.

Pooley’s city-by-city peregrination featured in the ‘Wednesday Real’ section of the Sydney Morning Herald (11 November 1981, p. 21), situated between advertisements for mortgagee auctions, and a single article on the construction of Marrickville Plaza. Deeming Pooley ‘distinguished’ the paper detailed his approval of fledgling NSW Housing Commission projects, a veritable trifecta of The Rocks, Waterloo, and Woolloomooloo, at great length. The latter project, led by Sydney architect Graeme Goodsell, was described by Pooley as ‘very encouraging. It has red blood in its veins.’ Pooley’s litmus test, it seemed, rested upon his willingness to reside in that locale: ‘the answer is “yes”.’

Pooley may have had some forewarning of the controversies generated at Woolloomooloo if only through the report, prepared in the mid-1960s by two London-based firms (Tait, Wilson and Reay, and Nathaniel Lichfield) stemmed ‘from a new kind of interest shown by the City of London in redevelopment in Sydney’ (Tait et al. 1964). Goodsell recalls that ‘Previously, the Housing
Commission had pursued a project of high rise, in the urban renewal sense; my understanding was that Fred Pooley was very aware of that sort of work... in Britain, as well as here.’

Goodsell adds:

He was wheeled around to three major Housing Commission projects of the time. He looked at Woolloomooloo, the Sirius Building at the Rocks – a high rise apartment building – and the twin towers at Waterloo. The then chairman of the Housing Commission, Jack Bourke, wasn’t terribly happy with the low rise things that were being pushed in Woolloomooloo – the high rise was more to his liking (G Goodsell 2015, pers. comm., 15 October).

Goodsell notes that the Woolloomooloo project was an outcome of a confluence of the Green Bans and the Whitlam government’s interest in maintaining ‘perfectly good housing stock’; ‘the federal government under Gough Whitlam and Tom Uren realised they could chuck some money and federally owned land into the pool’, he says, adding ‘that’s how we ended up talking to Fred Pooley about something that was low-rise infill housing and reasonably low density.

“He was a very charming man, and he had a huge knowledge of public housing in Britain.”

Pooley’s Australian voyage saw him opine on the advisability of returning architectural practice to a more human scale; much of his career (particularly in his NBNC days) had focused on the needs of the ‘ordinary chap.’ His excursion to a high-density Housing Commission development in Waterloo provided the impetus to espouse such rhetoric: the divisive nature of multi-level living prompting the argument that, although at times inappropriate, ‘architecture is to do with how people react to it.’ This attention to human experience of the urban landscape emerged in opposition to rigid architectural practices, attributed to the influence of the ‘Modern Movement’ which pervaded RIBA’s upper ranks. It was Pooley who, in his first speech as RIBA President in 1973, coined the phrasing ‘community architecture’, initially calling for the public-sector to markedly increase community-responsive development (Wates & Knevitt 2013).

Typical of Pooley, the focus of his commentary leapt from relatively small-scale, architectural maladies to more pressing issues of urban growth and population. Demonstrating a common link – and a sensitivity to local circumstance not observed in Pooley’s earlier Brisbane speech – between western Sydney and the UK New Town programme’s third wave, he detailed the resolution of this common ill through the development and diversification of employment sectors. The 1968 Sydney Region Outline Plan had largely coordinated growth in the years preceding Pool ey’s visit, only to be abandoned by the Wran government in 1977, resulting in a proliferation of housing throughout Sydney’s west, commercial land uses concentrated along radial railway lines, and enthusiastic subdivision – residential and industrial – elsewhere (Australian Institute of Urban Studies 1972). Noting this imbalance, a 1972 report produced by the Australian Institute of Urban Studies further revealed large discrepancies in quality of life, in part attributed to the rapid and uneven development of these new urban spaces. With manufacturing a stalwart foundation for New Town growth (Daniels 1976), these overspill spaces – both in the UK, and Australia – suffered considerably throughout the 1970s. The erosion of this economic base for Sydney’s west led to a tumultuous era, vulnerable to myriad social, economic and political externalities, but also left in the lurch between
planning policies – it wasn’t until 1988 that another coordinating vision for the city was prepared, with planning directives evidently failing to heed Pooley’s words in good time. Unlike the New Towns of the UK, which had diversified local industry significantly, outer-western Sydney was no closer to ‘being solved.’

Despite Pooley’s commanding position in New Town discourse, The Sydney Morning Herald article made little reference to Pooley’s role in designing North Bucks New City – rather, his successes were largely ascribed to his work for the Greater London Council, and advisory role in the planning of Milton Keynes. Pooley visited an Australia which had effectively very recently abandoned a New Town program of its own, a scenario he does not appear to have commented on with reference to his own experiences: an oddity mirrored in his Brisbane address, during which he described North Bucks in extensive detail but not once acknowledging it by name, nor that it existed only on paper.

Pooley in Canberra

Pooley’s trip to Canberra was, once again, not reported upon in the local press at the time, though we know he was received by the RAIA there because it is noted in RAIA files that he presented the Association ‘with a volume about early settlers in Australia entitled UTOPIA printed in 1694.’ If this is, in fact, an early (albeit 180 years after the original) edition of Thomas More’s Utopia, the President’s description of this work as such is either wry or ludicrous; it may have been another work.

Fred Pooley’s Canberra foray is, however, most interesting because it gave rise to one of only three known publications under his name (aside from the excerpt published in the RAIA South Australian and Queensland chapter journals, he had penned a foreword to a book on shopping centres). On his return to Britain he published a page-long opinion piece on Canberra in the RIBA’s official journal; in a move which might now seem patronising by proxy, the journal published it amongst descriptions of new cities in other former British colonial possessions.

This tangible product of Pooley’s sojourn was a defence of Canberra: a short-form article, published in July 1982, and with subsequent reiterations in The Canberra Times throughout that year (Pooley 1982a; The Canberra Times 21 April 1982, p. 7). Criticisms of the city had deemed it ‘soulless’ and ‘six suburbs in search of a city’, with the latter remark attributed to a range of figures – from ‘some wit’ (Wilson 1951) to ‘urban sophisticate[s]’ (Davidson 2013) and residents (The Age 8 December 1952, p. 2) – purported to represent national consensus. Sir Robert Menzies (1955) summarised the view which marred Canberra: that ‘every penny spent on Canberra used to be grudged.’ It was during Menzies’ time as Prime Minister that the capital city transformed from a laconic and provincial township to a metropolis reflecting its national significance (Holford 1972).

Pooley recalls this process, in addition to the city itself, as an ‘outstanding example of the intelligent use of the 20th century’s more mature concepts of urban development’ (The Canberra Times 3 July 1988, p. 13). The temporal conditions were optimal for the incorporation of best-practice planning activity, necessitated by initially insufficient growth. By 1957, the population of Canberra nudged just half of the total number of residents accommodated for in the initial Griffin plan – actioned in 1925 – and the realisation of this by one John Overall led to the establishment of the National Capital Development Commission (Morison 2000). In 1965, the Commission formulated a document
entitled Future Canberra which, whilst upholding the Griffin plan, advocated the proliferation of self-sufficient new towns surrounding the metropolitan region, connected by a network of freeways and bus services. Pooley’s (1982b) assessment of Canberra in part addressed the retention of the Griffin plan, also reiterating his keen interest in the human scale:

[Canberra’s] achievement is remarkable not only because the government and advisers have been brave enough not to tamper with a brilliant composition designed 70 years ago, but also for the sensitive regard for human requirements with which they have, and continue, to carry out that plan (p. 49).

A transportation plan for Canberra was subsequently developed by Alan Voorhees, who proposed the linking of townships, new and old, with a ‘public transport spine’ (Morison 2000). This 1969 strategy came to be colloquially known as the ‘Y Plan.’ This vision prompted a rethink of the traditional neighbourhood unit model which, in conjunction with the 1970 NCDC plan Tomorrow’s Canberra, further rejected traditional grid form and density-driven development (Brown 2014). Self-contained, low-density townships were to be placed alongside vegetated parkways, extending outwards in a linear fashion from the ‘Beaux Art’ centre (Pooley 1982b), ultimately recreating Canberra as a ‘long, thin city with the countryside everywhere at hand’ (National Capital Development Commission 1970). Rebuking aforementioned views of Canberra as ‘soulless’, Pooley argued the contrary: that ‘…[c]ity planners have successfully overcome the sterility which so often blights other new cities built on virgin land’, creating ‘characterful’ towns on the periphery (NCDC 1970). Pooley’s 1982 article thereby lauded the decentralised ‘Y-Plan’ townships of Woden-Weston Creek, Belconnen, Tuggeranong, and Gungahlin (the plan for which incidentally owed something to Milton Keynes) for exemplifying:

…the most up to date planning techniques and imaginative and sensible attention to detail […] with amenities which range from children’s cycle paths giving safe access to all parts of the city, to the Sunday attraction of Belconnen’s market (p. 49).

This urban change marked ‘a “new society” where bureaucracy is to know its place as the servant, rather than the master of democracy’ (Pooley 1982b). Pooley’s complimentary assessment revealed parallels between his own work and that of the NCDC. His positive appraisals for centred commercial development – ‘Belconnen has a beautiful new shopping and office centre’ – and utilitarian housing – ‘an avoidance of the worst of excesses of architectural fashion’ – reiterated design motifs apparent in NBNC. It is worth noting, however, that the dust had long settled upon these towns, with Pooley’s visit occurring ten to fifteen years following their construction. It is therefore strange that Pooley described the year 1982 to be a ‘new high point in the continuing development of that city.’ Canberra’s National Gallery, another pet project of the NCDC, was to open 19 years after its inception (McCann & Heriot 2013), finishes and materials for the new Parliament House were being chosen, and the City deliberated over whether to build its very own casino (Ling 2013). What made this unremarkable year a ‘high point’ in Pooley’s mind is unknown – and, like many aspects of his trip to Australia, open to further inquiry.

As late as 1988, following the completion of the new Parliament House, the NCDC still proudly trumpeted Pooley’s assessment of Canberra as ‘an outstanding example of the intelligent use of the 20th century’s more mature concepts of urban development’ in its advertising, under the banner of ‘Canberra: The best postwar new town in the world’ (Canberra Times 3 July 1988, p. 13).
Melbourne and Hobart

It is difficult to be clear on the exact dates of the Pooleys’ travels in mid-November for the unusual reason that both the Hobart Mercury and the Sydney Morning Herald carried reports of his visits on the same day, Wednesday 11 November; a day which, it appears, they were in Melbourne – the date of the RAIA’s Victorian chapter’s cocktail party in their honour.

Melbourne’s three daily newspapers ignored Pooley’s visit entirely, once again an inexplicable omission given that the city itself had just launched a new ‘vision’ for its future development – surely something that it might have sought the recently retired GLC Architect’s opinion on – and also given strong debates about public housing and urban renewal which had taken place a few months prior. The relevant minister acknowledged ‘the shortage of welfare housing in Victoria’ (Kennett 1981, p.9) and the recalibration of the ‘Demolition Inspection Team’ to renovation advisors within ‘an impressive upgrading program.’ (Kennett 1981, p. 15). Yet others (including the man who would shortly become a minister charged with alleviating some of the problems he described, in the new Cain government elected in April 1982) noted a ‘lack of community, with a minimum of facilities for community development’ in public housing (McCutcheon 1981, p. 29). The question of private (‘trendification’) and public renewal remained pertinent in the minds of government officials and commentators who noted ‘Government renewal’ in state-owned areas of 19th century housing ‘where a combination of renovation and infill created the possibility of some low key renewal in conjunction with provision of some public housing of a villa/townhouse concept’ (Aron 1981, p. 6).

In Tasmania, the issue of renovation and maintenance of old housing stock, rather than demolition and renewal, was also a topic for discussion (Southern Metropolitan Housing Authority 1980, p.4-3). There was also, however, a perceived pressing need to build new housing in new Hobart suburbs such as Rokeby and capital city satellites like Gagebrook, in many instances to the innovative ‘flexi-lot’ model. This was devised by the Tasmanian Housing Department for ‘the promotion of social integration’ with the ‘minimisation of costs’ (Graham and Associates et al. 1982, p. 4).

Hobart, and Tasmania, were in a slump. The week of Pooley’s visit was, indeed, a time of tumult in Tasmanian politics; within days of Robin Gray becoming opposition leader, Premier Doug Rowe was ousted and Harry Holgate installed in his place (Mercury 12 November 1981, p. 1). He was to remain state leader a mere seven months before losing to Gray. All took place against a backdrop of the highly controversial plans to dam the Franklin which were arguably key to the election of the Hawke government 18 months later.

Housing was a core issue in Tasmania, and particularly Hobart, at the time of Pooley’s visit. The Fraser government had disappointed its Tasmanian counterparts in allocations via the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement, leaving, Minister Darrel Baldock wrote (Housing Department 1982, p.1), funds at an ‘inadequate level,’ limiting ‘innovative housing measures.’ ‘Not only is the cake reducing in size, but Tasmania’s slice is getting smaller,’ claimed the booklet Baldock’s remarks prefaced (Housing Department 1982, p. 16). Papers given at a conference hosted by the Southern Metropolitan Housing Association almost exactly a year prior to Pooley’s visit painted a bleak picture of ‘inequality in housing provision’ which, Ray Tickner told attendees, ‘reflect the social divisions of society and social inequality generally’ (SMHA 1980, p. 3-7).
Pooley did not directly address the subject of housing in Tasmania, but he was clearly at some point shown through the offices of the Department of Housing and Construction where, he told the Hobart Mercury, ‘Architects... were progressive and had to be told little’ (Mercury 11 November 1981, p. 15). Described by the paper as ‘one of Britain’s most distinguished architects and planners,’ and as an ‘innovator and a powerful force for change in public sector architecture in Britain during the past 50 years,’ Pooley praised the ‘public architects’ of the state as being ‘on the right track and the important thing is they get the end product done on time and within the cost controls...’ Cost controls were clearly an issue much on the minds of the men and women working in housing design he would have encountered in Tasmania at that time. He continued, however, to praise the locals beyond his brief: ‘The Department of Construction is lively, enthusiastic and has imagination and taste.’

It is de rigueur that visitors to an Australian city would be asked for their impressions, however brief their visit had been thus far. Pooley told the Mercury that ‘although he had not had time to inspect many Hobart buildings, he was impressed with the six-year-old Supreme Court buildings in Salamanca Place. “They have simplicity, are timeless and are weathering well.”’

The brutalist sandstone Supreme Court buildings were, at this time, a decade old. Architect Peter Partridge claimed a range of ‘design principles’ when discussing these buildings in 2011; amongst these were to allow nearby St David’s park to ‘flow through the site’; ‘randomness’ for the purposes of de-institutionalisation; and to showcase local materials and craftsmanship. Partridge had studied in the UK in the mid-1960s and practiced in Cambridge, not far from Pooley at that time. Whether the Supreme Court complex’s reputation had preceded – or even motivated – Pooley’s visit is unknown. Partridge did not meet Pooley and did not attend his talk (P Partridge 2015, pers. comm., 26 October) but it is clear the two men would have had at least one thing in common (alongside their British origins): their belief in giving buildings and places human scale.

**Conclusion**

The Pooleys had left Australia by the 24th November, at which point Anthea Norman, the RAIA’s Information Director, wrote to Chapter Presidents, Secretaries and state Information Directors ‘to thank you all for the work that was done by your Chapter to make Mr. Fred Pooley’s visit a successful one.’ She added:

> I know that both of them [sic] were impressed by the hospitality they received while in Australia and by the organisation of their itineraries in each of the Chapters.

> I am grateful for your support and contribution to this Information Division program.

A hand-written note in the RAIA Victorian Chapter’s archives addressed to ‘Peter’ (almost certainly Peter Sorel, Victorian Chapter President) adds a small element of poignancy to the enterprise. It reads:

> Dear Peter

> Thank you so much for the lovely posy, and for the thought which prompted it – a sure tonic for any flagging spirit!
I’m disappointed, not being able to keep up with Fred after all – his resilience has always annoyed me.

It was been such a pleasure meeting you. Thanks from us both for all your help, and warm wishes for the future.

Sincerely, Hilda.

There was, it has to be said, a hesitant tone to the final mention of the Pooleys in RAIA records: ‘The Executive was advised that the visit of Mr. and Mrs. Pooley was successful in terms of the attendance at his talks in most Chapters, particularly by Government Architects.’ (‘Info. Executive’ 1981). Government Architects were, surely, not the core audience reached for by the Information Division of the RAIA: as a publicity trip for government architecture and/or the housing, transport and low-rise living options he might be expected to espouse, Fred Pooley’s sojourn in Australia was unremarkable in terms of his own impact. However, he visited the country at a time, 35 years ago, when Australia itself was undergoing valuable reassessment of its own engagement with modernism and with the future uses of its own ‘legacy’ built environment. In this regard, and despite the lack of any ‘Pooleyville’ in Australia, mooted or otherwise, the 1981 visit was an intriguing one, worthy of further study.

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Locating the national in the urban
Heritage and scale in the twentieth-century Australian City

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The ways that the past impacts the Australian city in the present, sparking the historical consciousness of its residents and rulers alike, has its own social history. No doubt this history is tied to nineteenth-century Britain, the National Trusts and other voluntary organisations, and the farsighted local figures that drew attention to aspects of the Australian city. This accepted narrative is, however, inadequate for Australia today, where urban heritage has its own distinguishable twentieth-century history. This paper contends that Australian urban heritage—an iconic idea—has a complex history that demands further investigation, and that a fresh perspective might be achieved through considerations of scale.

This paper shows how the Inquiry into the National Estate—initiated by the Whitlam Government in 1973—was a national moment that spurred local communities, professional organisations, universities and governments to take heritage action. It examines submissions to the inquiry from Brisbane and the Gold Coast that were concerned about cities and the built environment. In doing so, this paper identifies the desires and motivations of the various people and organisations in having particular places entered into the national estate. It also investigates the uneven ways this inquiry dealt with these submissions as part of their deliberations. For the Australian city, the inquiry may have contributed further momentum to emergent local heritage movements, and yet certain conceptions of what might be called ‘respectable heritage’ ultimately dominated proceedings. These submissions at once shaped the future local and national boundaries of the national estate and in turn urban heritage.

Keywords: history of urban heritage; national estate; Brisbane; Gold Coast.

Australians have come only lately to a full appreciation of the significance of their vernacular buildings to the cultural environment. Nowhere is this more true than in Queensland where there is sparse appreciation among local people of the special value of their small timber houses with a character apparently unique in Australia (Walker, 1973).
Where was the place for urban heritage in Brisbane and the Gold Coast during the 1970s? How had the urban heritage consciousness of people in these cities been awakened in comparison to other Australian cities? For Reg Walker, in his role on the Committee of Inquiry into the National Estate, the heritage awareness of Queenslanders was latent. Then again, the committee had been presented with few submissions from Queensland to inform their inquiry. So Walker came to his own conclusions. What distinguished Queensland from other Australian states, he determined, was its abundance of ‘small timber houses with a character apparently unique’, of which Queenslanders only had ‘sparse appreciation’. People from Brisbane and the Gold Coast, then, seemingly lacked the sophisticated understandings of urban heritage that might be found in the Harbour City or in Marvellous Melbourne. Overtly condescending, this draft paragraph became a minor section on planning controls for vernacular rural buildings in the final report (Report of the national estate 1974: 155).

The Inquiry into the National Estate did not engage with the urban heritage milieu of Brisbane and the Gold Coast. The Queensland urban submissions to the inquiry might have been fewer and lacked the detail of other contributions, but they operated in a similar 1970s heritage discourse to the submissions from other Australian cities. With basically unsupportive municipal councils and State Government and a muted public sphere (c.f., Fitzgerald et al. 2009: 156ff, Evans 2007: 224-227, Evans et al. 2004: 39-48), stereotypes of Queensland’s cities permeated the inquiry and specifically its understandings of Brisbane and Gold Coast heritage, which the inquiry made little attempt to remedy. In contrast, by analysing the submissions, this paper argues that in the 1970s there was a nascent heritage consciousness in Queensland and especially Brisbane. Heritage discourses were also present in cities like the Gold Coast. So the broad refusal of such cities to directly engage with urban heritage reveals much about the history of Australian heritage practice and localised urban heritage cultures. The kinds of places found on the Gold Coast in the 1970s—and to a lesser extent today—are not those typically found in heritage registers or on the radar of heritage activists (c.f., Green 1982). The history of urban heritage in Brisbane too does not begin with the nocturnal demolitions, and is broader than a discussion of governance or professional practice. In order to reveal an early local urban heritage consciousness, this paper first considers the place of heritage and the national estate in the urban history of these cities. It then conducts a reading of the submissions from Queensland to contend that despite ‘urban heritage’ being a visibly contested terrain in Brisbane and the Gold Coast in the 1970s, these contests were mostly sidestepped by the inquiry and in the subsequent literature.

The urban imaginary of Brisbane and the Gold Coast is more orientated to the future than the past (Glover & Cunningham 2003, Davison 1991a: 25). Combined with factors such as ruralism, regionalism, religious conservatism, political corruption, and a lack of robust public debate, Queensland became the last Australian state to introduce heritage legislation in 1992 (Yelland 1991: 44, Fisher 1991: 66-68). This is often attributed to the free market ideology of Queensland. Yet, as historian Graeme Davison suggested in 1991, this argument is oxymoronic—for instance, regulation of agriculture in Queensland was then vigorous—and Queensland’s heritage history might rather be characterised by its underdeveloped conservation philosophy, against the backdrop of Premier Joh Bjelke-Petersen’s Governments (Davison 1991a: 25). For various reasons, therefore, mostly related to lagging professional heritage practice, the productive role that heritage might play in the Queensland city was seemingly recognised and thus legislated later than in other Australian cities.
Since the 1960s, Brisbanites had witnessed the destruction of over sixty historically significant buildings including clearances for freeways and the high-profile ‘nocturnal demolitions’ of the Bellevue Hotel, Cloudland Ballroom and the Commonwealth Bank (Fisher 1991). That same year Melbourne-based historian Sheryl Yelland surmised ‘Conservation of the cultural heritage in the “deep north” of the continent has been one long “war” with few victories and numerous “battles” lost’ (1991: 57). By the 1980s, wrote Peter Spearritt (2002: 38, 2006), ‘Brisbane had become the demolition capital of Australia’. Yet in that same volume Glen Cooke (2002: 30) argued that the 1980s—when Brisbane hosted the Commonwealth Games and Expo—also marked a shift in local urban imaginary from ‘big country town’ to ‘a “can do” city’, an urban shift towards osmopolitanism that was arguably necessary for the recognition of urban heritage.

From the late 1960s, however, Brisbanites had agitated for their urban heritage, even if their state and local governments mostly ignored their demands. At first Brisbane resident protest largely took the form of an anti-freeway movement (Howe et al. 2013: 111-116, Fitzgerald et al. 2009: 448-449, Cole 1984: 227ff). Meanwhile, residents of Indooroopilly in Brisbane’s west had unsuccessfully fought the construction of a Westfield shopping centre (Spearritt 2005, Morris 1998: 77). In the 1970s, heritage became a more explicit concern. Brisbanites, for instance, successfully campaigned to save Anzac Square (discussed below) and the Regent Theatre (Cole 1984: 246-249, Fitzgerald 1984: 441, 455). These kinds of contradictions—around what it means for a city to possess a heritage consciousness (or perhaps philosophy)—makes Queensland’s cities such an interesting case study for Australian urban heritage: including its conceptual/abstract and material/built spaces. And studying Gold Coast alongside Brisbane, as part of the 200 kilometre city, provides additional insights into this urban agglomeration’s relationship to heritage (Spearritt 2002, 2006). Whilst heritage regulatory regimes are significant, these operate alongside the urban everyday; people’s production of fleeting and lasting urban heritage space demands study too.

This paper is triggered by my broader research into a national urban heritage event, but focuses on local urban heritage in Brisbane and the Gold Coast. In other words, this paper is not a history of the National Estate and its Inquiry. Rather, after contextualising the inquiry and its archive, this paper deploys this archive to ask alternative and perhaps unexpected questions about those Queensland cities and their urban histories of heritage. Methodologically, then, this is an urban history paper, employing historical primary sources such as government records, periodicals and other publications, and engaging with the historiographical literature, and also theories of scale, space and place.

In order to understand Brisbane and the Gold Coast via the National Estate Inquiry, this paper negotiates questions that operate at once at the urban, state and national scales. Scale represents not only something measurable but also refers to the material and social realities of space and place as experienced through social relations and nested hierarchies of power (Sayre & Di Vittorio 2009, Agnew 1993, Lefebvre 1991). The national scale, particularly, is constructed through the ideology of the nation, and then (re-)produced through social practices, including at the level of the urban everyday. Scale, then, is socially constructed, relational, permeated by uneven relations of power, and eludes being fixed in time or at place. Each scale reinforces each other scale, and so this paper simultaneously suggests that notions of heritage, the National Estate, Brisbane and the Gold Coast, all intermingled. Similarly, urban history treats cities as at once socially constructed and materially existent, and, in this paper, infused by shifting notions of heritage (after all, contemporary notions of
heritage ‘value’ or ‘significance’ hardly existed then). In this way, this Queensland urban history is written from the vantage of the Inquiry into the National Estate that played out mostly in Canberra and other Australian cities, whilst also establishing foundations for future Australian 1970s urban heritage research within and across cities.

The Inquiry into the National Estate—initiated by the Whitlam Government in 1973—is already recognised as a watershed for Australian heritage. Triggered in part by the Government’s progressive urban agenda, according to Davison (1991a, 1991b, 2000) it reflected the dominant heritage concerns of the time. Planning historians Sharon Veale and Robert Freestone (2012) reaffirm this celebratory narrative. Earlier, Tony Bennett (1988: 11-13) argued that the national estate erased local difference in its pursuit of a narrative of a singular harmonious national community. Historians Paul Ashton and Jennifer Cornwall (2006: 56) also suggested the national estate lacked clarity. The background, motivations and outcomes of this Inquiry are not the focus of this paper, however (see Lesh 2015). The focus of this paper is relating the national estate to urban heritage in specific cities, which has been subject scant examination.

Amongst other things, the inquiry considered the urban national estate. As well as generating publicity around nascent urban heritage and spurring state governments to introduce historic building legislation, the inquiry also led to the establishment of the Australian Heritage Commission (AHC) and the Australian chapter of ICOMOS. Its final report was widely disseminated, published as a glossy illustrated book. The report concluded that ‘The Australian Government has inherited a National Estate which has been downgraded, disregarded and neglected’ (Report of the national estate 1974: 334).

Justice Robert Hope of the N.S.W. Supreme Court chaired the inquiry and was joined by seven other committee members. When it came to the built environment, expertise lay with Sydneysiders Walker—director of New South Wale’s National Trust and state representative on the Australian Council of National Trusts—and architect and conservationist Milo Dunphy along with Melburnian David Yencken, a merchant builder who became first chair of the AHC. From Queensland, ecologist Len Webb was selected. Poet and conservationist Judith Wright-McKinney, originally from Armidale, N.S.W., also lived in Queensland. The other appointees were Tasmanian conservationist Keith Vallance, and Adelaide architectural lecturer Judith Brine. The committee had no representative from Western Australia, and no urbanists from outside Adelaide, Melbourne and Sydney.

As part of its deliberations, the Committee invited submissions from ‘persons and bodies interested’ in the national estate via newspaper advertisements in June 1973. After advertising in national, metropolitan and regional newspapers, over 600 submissions were received by the inquiry, representing strong community interest (Yencken 1981: 5). Despite the impact of these submissions on the future trajectories of Australian heritage, only a small number of them have come under subsequent examination. These submissions not only guided the committee, but also propose an incredibly powerful archive that reveals much about 1970s Australian heritage urbanism.

Of the 600 or so submissions, around 200 related to the Australian city (the historical archive does not reconcile against the inquiry report). These urban submissions were received from local, state and federal government departments and agencies, professional groups such as national and state planning and architectural chapters, community and resident action groups (RAGs) and the National Trusts along with experts and academics ranging from architects to archaeologists, plus interested
individuals. The submissions intermingled concerns of urban amenity, liveability, social justice, sustainability and participatory politics with the national estate. That said, these concerns were—and still are—irrevocably tied to urban heritage (Madgin 2009, Davison & McConville 1991). These details on the inquiry have been provided to outline the historical place of urban heritage in Australia at this time in order to contextualise the Queensland submissions.

The remainder of this paper shifts scale from the national to the urban to analyse the submissions from Brisbane and the Gold Coast. Ten or so submissions had special relevance to Brisbane and the Gold Coast (per INE 1973). No professional urban bodies from Queensland made submissions to the inquiry. This is notable because at least one urban professional body submitted to the inquiry from every other Australian state. This represented a lack of professional engagement in and debate over the future of the Queensland city, no doubt connected to the eroding of the public sphere under Bjelke-Petersen (Head 1986, Spearritt 2006: 60). Particularly since a decade earlier, professionals groups had been ‘conspicuously noisy’ in response to the Brisbane Town Plan (Cole 1984: 208). Alternatively, local and state governments, the National Trust, an action group and various individuals made submissions on the two major Queensland cities.

For the Queensland State Government, the national estate only related to the natural environment. From the office of Bjelke-Peterson, Acting Premier Gordon Chalk suggested to the Office of the Prime Minister that the Federal Government and the Committee of Inquiry might merely concern themselves with studies of the Queensland coastline and the Moreton Region near Brisbane ‘where urbanisation is placing increasing pressure on areas which should be protected and preserved for conservation and recreation’ (INE Correspondence 1973: August). The Queensland Government submission made just a single mention of urban heritage. The State Electricity Commission doubted ‘whether power stations now returned for service are of general historic interest [except perhaps] machinery [as] technological museum exhibitions’ (INE 1973/341). The Federal Government had previously identified Queensland as an ‘extreme’ example of a state ‘making very limited gestures of support to the local National Trust bodies while attempting to extricate themselves from any direct involvement in preservation or conservation on their own account’ (DURD 1973). Little cooperation was expected and then realised from Queensland. In these ways, the national estate was delineated from (urban) heritage and related almost exclusively to sustainability and the environment in a way that provided few assurances of lasting urban place protections.

From the state to the local scale, the submission from the Gold Coast City Council suggested that its municipality had no urban heritage either. Queensland’s south coast had only become the Gold Coast in 1933, the landscape tamed by a number of Melbourne entrepreneurs (Davidson & Spearritt 2000: ch. 5, Fitzgerald 1984: 457ff, Jones 1986, McRobbie 1982). The sorts of buildings that might be identified as heritage in Brisbane or in Australia’s other cities were not found on the Gold Coast. In the European tradition, the emphasis of urban heritage preservation at this time was still grand nineteenth-century buildings or monuments such as war memorials (Davison 1991a). Although RAGs in other Australian city had begun their campaigns for preserving neighbourhoods and streetscapes, their concerns were not primarily focused on heritage, even if their efforts would later expand Australian conceptions of urban heritage to incorporate vernacular places (Howe et al. 2013).

The submission from the Gold Coast City Council advanced that ‘It is of paramount importance that the Gold Coast should protect the asset which draws the Australian and Overseas Tourist trade, - the
natural amenity of the coastline and the river and creek systems’ (INE 1973/190). This submission conflated heritage with the natural environment, thereby tying environmental conservationism to the tourist trade. No built heritage was identified in the submission. Understandings of urban heritage in the early 1970s, then, were incompatible with the kinds of places found on the Gold Coast. Not until more time had passed and heritage attitudes and practices had shifted would built places like those found on the Gold Coast become subject to heritage preservation. By 1999 Torbreck, a prototypical residential tower completed in 1960 in Brisbane, could become heritage listed. On the Gold Coast, in contrast, similarly prototypical apartment towers like the Chateau, or the now demolished Iluka tower and Pink Poodle Motel—whose neon sign is state heritage listed—were never identified as heritage, or at least as of heritage suited to statutory protection. The only major exception being the Kinkabool, the Gold Coast’s first apartment tower, listed in 2009 (McRobbie 1982: 140, Jones 1986 ch. 4). By definition urban heritage existed on the Gold Coast; however, its discursive and in turn statutory boundaries were drawn from as early as the 1970s to ensure that it would be exploitable and not stifle tourism or future development, never entering the national estate.

Travelling northwards, the City of Brisbane made no submission to the inquiry, in contrast to tens of local government areas across Australia. On behalf of the Lord Mayors of Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide, Perth and Hobart, the Capital Cities’ Secretariat endorsed the preservation of ‘national heritage’ in a letter to the inquiry (INE 1973/130). The Brisbane Labor Lord Mayor Clem Jones made no appearance in inquiry proceedings. Committed to ‘modernising’ Brisbane, Jones and the Council had no interest in locating urban heritage via the national estate (Fitzgerald et al. 2009: 146ff, Fitzgerald 1984: 440ff, Cole 1984: 286ff).

The responsibility for advancing urban heritage in Brisbane, therefore, largely rested with concerned individual residents. In a submission, environmental expert from Wooloowin, Brisbane W.G.S. Huxley suggested green belts, a mandatory building height limit of eight stories, and a reduction in freeway and car park building to prevent Brisbane becoming ‘a dead heart, like Sydney’ (INE 1973/130: 2). From New Farm there was an ‘interested citizen’: the urbane R.C. Campbell wrote an engaging six-page submission on the Australian city and its prospects (INE 1973/151). Neither Huxley nor Campbell explicitly mentioned heritage. In contrast, David James Sinclair identified Brisbane Botanical Gardens, Bellevue Hotel, The Queensland Club, The Mansions, and Anzac Square as places to be ‘preserved for all time as objects of historical interest now’ (INE 1973/213). He did not explain why those places were of importance, but nevertheless added:

In the foreseeable future, every square food of the inner city will be “re-developed” and there will be nothing left of Brisbane’s “ancient” buildings. These are the signposts in History in their way, and without signposts we do not know where we have been, where we are, or where we are going.

This was the only submission from Brisbane that substantiated a reason for preserving urban heritage. Understood in relation to the European monumental tradition, Sinclair advanced a personal rendering of Brisbane heritage and related it to specific places in a way that was otherwise largely absent from the other submissions. In comparison, the single architectural submission from Queensland by Michael Leo of the Department of Architecture at the University of Queensland in no way engaged with cities (INE 1973/490). Certainly the notion of a national estate was in flux and its perceived relationship with cities, heritage and history varied between submissions.
Two other Brisbane submissions had the potential to make a contribution to the national estate though were largely disregarded. The only political party to make a submission was the Communist Party of Australia Queensland Branch, based in Fortitude Valley. This submission called for a ‘national strategy to preserve the assets of the National Estate [which required] consideration of the causes of the damage’ (underline in original, INE 1973/728). In the party’s view, private enterprise, whose interests conflicted with those of the wider community, was to blame for the national estate’s poor state. Despite reading as a political polemic, this submission was perhaps the most theoretically adventurous meditation made to the inquiry.

The only urban submission to the inquiry from a private venture came from enthusiast Stanley Hancock, who attempted to situate his not-for-profit educative historic outdoor museum called ‘The Earlystreet Village’ within the national estate (INE 1973/82). Located in Norman Park, four kilometres east of the Brisbane CBD, this ‘theme park’ presented an assemblage of timber houses refurbished by Hancock. Whilst this place would become state heritage listed in 1992 and shut due to commercial unviability in 1998 (Lennon 2000, para.4.4), in 1973 this venture was disregarded by the inquiry. Although not identified by name, as part of the cultural property section, the report stated, ‘Re-creations of historic villages can have great appeal but are more often mere parodies of the National Estate’ (Report of the national estate 1974: 195, Lowenthal 1985: 301) It is unclear whether this sentiment was also directed at other ‘historic theme parks’ like Victoria’s Sovereign Hill, that had opened in 1969, or whether it was reserved for this Queensland entity. The issues highlighted by the Communist Party, which foreshadowed the 1980s notion of ‘the Heritage Industry’, were not engaged with by the inquiry (Evans 1991, Hewison 1987). These two submissions were said to have questionable competence and relevance (to paraphrase the loose assessment criteria that was applied to the ‘The Earlystreet Village’ for a subsequent national estate grant).

The battle over ANZAC Square in part played out amidst the inquiry. Three submissions claimed this civic memorial space in central Brisbane as part of the national estate. Sinclair and the National Trust placed ANZAC Square in their heritage lists. The strongest claim for this place came from the ANZAC Square Preservation Society, who were fighting attempts to privatise the square for a commercial development by Brisbane City Council, which had already authorised a canopy of towers surrounding the square. The Society’s submission paralleled those received from various RAGs and anti-freeway groups in other Australian cities. The Society submission on ANZAC Square detailed how the memorial had been conceived in the 1920s and paid for by subscription on land bequeathed by the Commonwealth. In their view, the people of Brisbane had to decide the future of this site. The Society criticised the council’s ‘effort[s] to stifle mounting public opposition’ to the proposed privatisation, and legitimised their claim with reference to the National Trust classification (INE 1973/182). A follow-up letter identified how towers that cast shadows over the square must be disallowed, and that the proposed building designs were not in harmony with the style of the memorial (INE 1973/223). In sympathy with Brisbanites, who were fearful of losing this major civic space in a political environment in which dissent was being stifled, the final report shared a full-page photograph of the square. According to the caption, it was the ‘now -doomed Anzac Square’ (Report of the national estate 1974: 250). In the end, however, having received this national exposure— which perhaps added to the reluctance of the State Government to intervene to bring to an end the Council’s inaction—this report of ANZAC Square’s demise turned out to be greatly exaggerated, and the Square reopened in the lead up to the 1982 Commonwealth Games (Cole 1984: 249).
Queensland’s most influential urban submission came from its National Trust. The Queensland Trust was established in 1963 by an Act of Parliament and had a more socially diverse membership than Trusts in other states (Davison 1991a: 19, Sheaffe 2013). Similar to its counterparts, the National Trust of Queensland submission was self-congratulatory: ‘In the year subsequent to 1971 the Trust has burgeoned into an effective conservation organisation’ (INE 1973/171). It was also prescriptive as to how it might lead heritage preservation efforts for the built environment: more classifications, better legislation and education, further acquisitions of property, more staff and so forth. These efforts were predicated on increased funding for the Trust. Making the submission relevant to the national scale of the inquiry, the Trust called on the Australian Government to involve itself in these efforts, particularly through model legislation, coordination and preserving property it owned. A list of approximately 120 classified places, mostly buildings located in Brisbane, was then forwarded. A follow-up letter by honorary secretary P.J. Forrest was more pointed. It declared that there were still ‘hundreds of other buildings or objects [in Queensland] worthy of classification’, but lamented that listed buildings ‘are frequently threatened with demolition’ (INE 1973/176). No further detail on these places was provided, nor historical synopsis, nor the Trust criteria used to assess their heritage significance. Most problematically, how these places explicitly related to the national estate was hardly canvassed.

The National Trust submissions operated in a different register than the other submissions. In a report titled ‘Assistance to the National Trusts and Other Appropriate Conservation Groups for Recurring Expenditure’, committee members Walker and Yencken argued ‘voluntary citizen bodies are carrying the burden of a major part of the total national effort of conserving the National Estate’ (INE 1973/452). Most of the Trust submissions were made up of registers of places. Any place that was identified by a Trust, including by the Queensland Trust, was taken for granted by the inquiry as belonging in the national estate. Yet the submissions from Queensland lacked the detail found in the Trust submissions from other states (per INE 1973). The quality of the submission reflected how well established each Trust was, the resources available to it, and what heritage meant to the Trust. In the Queensland case, heritage was mostly conceived in terms of aesthetics and age, and to a lesser extent conjured urban amenity. The quality of a Trust submission did not, however, impact how it was received by the inquiry. Their concerns and recommendations took precedence, their registers taken as unquestionable heritage lists, unconditionally admitted into the inquiry, and often noted in the final report. With the gravitas of a national inquiry, Yencken and particularly Walker further legitimised the National Trust movement. This was especially beneficial for Queensland and Western Australia, whose inchoate Trusts each benefited from a uniform state grant of $20,000 in 1973-74 (Report of the national estate 1974: appendix F). For Brisbane, the inquiry also recommended the Trust receive funding to restore the Old Windmill in Wickham Park (INE 1973/565).

For the Australian city, the inquiry may have contributed further momentum to emergent local heritage movements, and yet certain conceptions of what might be called ‘respectable heritage’ dominated proceedings. The inquiry treated its submissions unevenly; dependent on the source of the submission and irrespective of the content itself. It also did not seek to remedy absences such as the failure of Queensland’s experts or professionals to engage with the inquiry. Ultimately, the submissions from Queensland’s National Trust were privileged because of the special position held by the Trust in the other Australia states. Yet this was perhaps less problematic in practice since there was hardly systematic engagement with urban heritage by government, professional or community organisations. In the end, the inquiry attempted to nurture the urban heritage
consciousness of Queenslanders in a top-down fashion. From Brisbane and the Gold Coast, simultaneously, the future boundaries of urban heritage were at once being drawn through presences and absences: particularly the emphasis on (eco-) tourism at the expense of urban place, even whilst concerned people continued to agitate for place heritage safeguards. Australia’s leading heritage protagonists—including Melbourne’s Yencken and Sydney’s Walker—were also shaping Brisbane’s and the Gold Coast’s future heritage landscape from afar, treating it as derivative to other Australian cities. Investigating across scales such as the national and the local, to embrace a multi-scale approach, therefore reveals the complexities of Brisbane’s and the Gold Coast’s history of urban heritage, hitherto unrecognised in the historiography. The Inquiry momentarily revealed a genuine everyday concern for urban heritage in 1970s Brisbane and foreshadowed the peculiar place that heritage would later hold on the Gold Coast.

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Opening the heart of a (post) colonial city
Histories, icons, and spatial structure in the city of Hamilton, Aotearoa New Zealand

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Planning is a cultural activity, with the way we represent the spatial structure of cities reflecting our worldview. Within Aotearoa New Zealand, planning traditions and approaches practiced by indigenous Māori have been marginalized by colonial planning practices based in Western epistemology. However, Māori are promoting their planning traditions through strategic planning documents.

Through the Treaty settlement process, Māori tribes are becoming major landowners in urban areas. Land returned as redress for grievances under the Treaty of Waitangi is developed for the benefit of the tribe. This research investigates tensions between the development of tribal land and local government growth strategies, by comparing the different icons, spatial structures, and development patterns visible in Māori and Pākehā planning documents. The research is based on critical discourse analysis of strategic planning documents, and interviews.

Focusing on the Hamilton district/Waikato-Tainui tribal area of New Zealand, this article considers the metaphor of the ‘City Heart’ employed by Hamilton City Council to reinforce the importance of the Central Business District; and the representation of the tribally-owned ‘The Base’ development as an icon of ‘economic sovereignty’. Spatial concepts such as compact development emphasise the primacy of the central city. However, strategic planning which concentrates development around historical, colonial centres may ignore the possibility of other spatial patterns, such as indigenous centres of economic, political, social, and cultural activity. To reconcile these complexities, planners need to work within a ‘dual planning framework’ which recognizes both Māori and Pākehā planning traditions and spatial patterns. Planners must be aware of the historical development of their city, the importance of Treaty settlements, and work towards social justice.

Keywords: bicultural; metaphor; urban development; planning
Pākehā planning and Māori planning

Planning is a cultural activity and, within settler-colonial countries such as Aotearoa New Zealand and Australia, planning is seen as an activity that originates within colonial culture (Porter, 2010). Acknowledging the colonial origins of ‘Pākehā’ planning also requires recognizing the existence of indigenous ‘Māori’ planning. For the last twenty years, Hirini Matunga, Professor of Indigenous Planning, has argued that Aotearoa New Zealand has “dual planning traditions” enshrined in Te Tiriti o Waitangi (the Treaty of Waitangi), the country’s founding document signed in 1840. Since colonisation, however, Maori planning has been practiced without recognition by Pākehā institutions such as local government “…through a process of deliberate colonial exclusion. As a discipline it did not disappear, but evolved outside the dominant tradition, which to this day has continued to disempower it” (Matunga, 2000, p36). Within both Pākehā and Māori planning traditions, the “…creation and use of symbolic representations”, including icons and metaphors, is critical for communicating planning ideas, and influences how the spatial structure of the city or region is understood (Fischler, 1995, p15; Agnew, 1993).

The implications of dual planning traditions, and different concepts of spatial structure, are becoming increasingly visible as Aotearoa New Zealand begins to address its colonial history. Over the last twenty years, many iwi and hapū have negotiated agreements with the Crown, which acknowledge and provide redress for breaches of Te Tiriti o Waitangi. Te Tiriti guaranteed to Māori “te tino rangatiratanga”, or in the English version of the treaty, “the full exclusive and undisturbed possession of their Lands and Estates Forests Fisheries and other properties which they may collectively or individually possess so long as it is their wish and desire to retain the same in their possession” (Orange, 2012); however, this guarantee was not upheld – land and resources were confiscated from Māori, and livelihoods destroyed. Under the agreements, known as ‘Treaty settlements’, iwi and hapū use funds to purchase land parcels from a range of properties identified as surplus to Crown needs (Stone, 2012). Land identified as ‘commercial redress’ is considered as an asset to assist with rebuilding the economic base of the iwi or hapū. Treaty settlements provide a symbolic ‘new beginning’ for relationships between colonial government and indigenous Māori, as well as physical redress for grievances (Wheen and Hayward, 2012). Through Treaty settlements, iwi and hapū are regaining their status as major landowners in Aotearoa New Zealand cities.

This article argues that land returned to Māori as ‘commercial redress’ through Treaty settlement is being incorporated into Māori concepts of spatial structure, creating new icons of ‘economic sovereignty’ within an existing spatial network of mountains and rivers, meeting places, and settlements. This evolving spatial structure is evident in planning documents which promote Māori planning traditions as a complement and contrast to local government ‘Pākehā’ planning. Exploring planning histories of the city of Hamilton, also known as Kirikiriroa, in the Waikato region of Aotearoa New Zealand, I focus on two icons which illustrate differences between these two cultural planning traditions. The ‘City Heart’ metaphor used by Hamilton City Council to describe the Central Business District as an icon of ‘city vitality’ is compared with discourse around development at ‘The Base’, a large format retail and mall developed on land returned under Treaty settlement to the tribe Waikato-Tainui, and proposed as an icon of ‘economic sovereignty’. Comparing these two icons, within the context of the different spatial structures articulated within Māori and Pākehā strategic planning documents, illustrates why conflict has arisen between Waikato-Tainui and Hamilton City Council over the development of Treaty settlement land outside the Central Business District.
Considering the social justice context for the return of land to Waikato-Tainui, I argue that there is a need for bicultural planning practice which brings together both approaches, reconciling compact and concentrated development patterns with spatial structures which do not necessarily centre on the Central Business District of Hamilton city.

This research is based on critical discourse analysis of strategic planning documents published by Hamilton City Council and Waikato-Tainui, as well as evidence presented at a hearing of the High Court of New Zealand. Discourse analysis is complemented by data from interviews with case study participants who have created or used these planning documents, as well as interviews with key informants.

Colonial and indigenous origins of Hamilton city

To give context to the ‘City Heart’ metaphor, and to understand the link between social justice and development at The Base, it is important to explore the histories of Hamilton city. American geographer Laura Pulido has written that to understand contemporary spatial patterns of justice and injustice we must examine “…the historical development of urban space”, accepting that “…these processes are inherently racialized” (2000, p.25). Discussing the origins of colonial settlements, such as Hamilton, Australian planning academic Libby Porter notes that:

‘[t]ownship building had a significance beyond the immediate occupation of spaces... Towns were a military strategy in the wars with Indigenous peoples’ (2010, p72).

The city of Hamilton was established in 1864 by the 4th Waikato militia as a military town around redoubts on both sides of the Waikato River. The Waikato militia formed part of the colonial forces which invaded Waikato in 1863-4 to suppress the Kingitanga, a movement which opposed land sales and supported Māori to “keep Māori land in Māori hands” (Mahuta, 2008, p175). The invasion of the Waikato was ‘…one of the major campaigns of the New Zealand Wars and involved over 12,000 British & Colonial forces against Māori forces unlikely to have numbered more than 2000 at any one time’ (Hamilton City Council, 2014a). In August 2014, Hamilton City Council celebrated 150 years since the settlement of Hamilton. The Council website recorded that:

‘This was the anniversary of the landing of the first British settlers in Hamilton/Kirikiriroa and the establishment of the first militia settlement... [T]his date is recognised as the birth of the city of Hamilton as we know it today’ (Hamilton City Council, 2014a)

Māori settlements existed on the site where Hamilton now stands, including the “…abandoned Māori village of Kirikiriroa, on the west bank. Remains of other villages on both banks confirm this stretch of river had been well-occupied” (Swarbrick, 2015, p7). The significance of these settlements to the decision to site the future city is unclear. However, landscape architect Garth Falconer, who has recently written a history of urban design across ‘kāinga, towns and cities’ in Aotearoa New Zealand, records that while “…some surveyors would interview local Māori and interpret the landscape, on the whole they were in a hurry and little or no heed was taken of pre-existing Māori spatial patterns...” (2015, p43). Matunga sees this marginalisation as intentional, stating that the aim of the colonists “…was to remove any material evidence/reminder and memory of Indigenous communities, their places, sites, resources and villages, and replace it with a new colonial order,
ultimately creating a ‘new’ materiality and memory of/for settler communities” (2013, p9). In the case of Hamilton, the establishment of militia settlements was certainly an act of aggression. Towns were “a key mechanism of colonization...that began by stamping grid plans wherever it could” (Falconer, 2015, p13).

The development of the ‘City Heart’ as an icon

The town centre is a key component of a grid plan, which reflects the categorization of uses and the hierarchy of spaces common in Western understandings of urban spatial structure (Foucault and Miskowiec, 1986). The importance of the town centre as an icon of civic vitality is reflected in strategic planning documents produced by local government in the Waikato region. In the late 2000s, two planning exercises were undertaken to establish a development pattern for Hamilton city. ‘Hamilton Urban Growth Strategy’ was published by Hamilton City Council in 2010. The strategy characterises the Central Business District of Hamilton as the ‘Hamilton City Heart’, and identifies approaches for urban growth which include ‘regeneration and residential development in the City Heart, transport hubs, suburban centres and areas of high public transport amenity’ (Hamilton City Council, 2010, p8). The ‘City Heart’ term is used in the context of economic development, and also urban design. The second exercise, ‘Future Proof’, sets out a strategy for the development of part of the Waikato region encompassing Hamilton City, Waikato District, and parts of Waipa District. Community engagement resulted in support for a ‘Compact Settlement’ scenario, comprising an increased number of households in the urban area, and some increased housing density; combined with a ‘Concentrated Growth’ scenario, comprising significant housing intensification especially in Hamilton City (Future Proof Joint Committee, 2009). The ‘Future Proof’ strategy also emphasised the primacy of the Central Business District, using the language of ‘City Heart’ coined in the ‘Hamilton Urban Growth Strategy’.

Within these strategic planning documents, the metaphor of the ‘City Heart’ has been employed to prioritise development in the Central Business District of Hamilton City. The Central Business District is seen as both the retail heart of Hamilton, and also the social/political/cultural heart of the region. Hamilton’s Central Business District has historically been home to outlets for major shopping chains, and the CentrePlace mall. The nine-storey headquarters for Hamilton City Council, the second tallest building in the city, stands at the centre of the District, forming one edge of the square known as Garden Place. There are a number of central government offices nearby. Victoria Street, named after Queen Victoria whose representative William Hobson signed Te Tiriti o Waitangi, is the main street which runs through the Central Business District, parallel to the Waikato River. Victoria Street is also home to the Waikato Museum, the civic library, and the casino. Within the latest Hamilton City District Plan, the Central Business District sits at the apex of a hierarchy of commercial centres (Hamilton City Council, 2014b).

The use of the metaphor ‘City Heart’ conveys information about local government understandings of the spatial structure of Hamilton city. Within Western epistemology, it is not a new metaphor to compare the city to a bodily system (for example, see Sennett, 1994; Grosz, 1995). The metaphor of ‘city as body’ reflects the complex and interconnected systems within the city (Sennett, 1994; Grosz, 1995), and likening the Central Business District to a ‘heart’ implies a critical focus of activity, supporting the vitality of the city as the pumping of the heart supplies blood to support the vitality
of the body. The emphasis on economic development and retail activity reflects an understanding of the city as “revolv[ing] around commerce” (Grosz, 1995) and as a labour market (Bertaud, 2004). Considering the heart as the seat of the emotions in Western epistemology, the metaphor ‘City Heart’ also suggests the emotional connection residents may feel to their civic spaces as an expression or symbol of their city’s identity. Within the ‘Hamilton Urban Growth Strategy’ and ‘Future Proof’, the ‘City Heart’ metaphor emphasises the iconic role of the Central Business District to sustain and support the social and economic functioning of Hamilton city (Future Proof Joint Committee, 2009; Hamilton City Council, 2010).

‘Raupatu’ and the return of land through Treaty settlement

The colonial history of Hamilton city, and the emphasis on activity in the ‘City Heart’, contrasts with the history and development activities of Waikato-Tainui in the same region. Following the invasion of Waikato, and the establishment of the militia settlement which became Hamilton, 1.2 million acres of land were confiscated by the Crown from Waikato-Tainui. Termed ‘raupatu’, the ‘conquest of land’ (Mahuta, 2008), this confiscation “…has had a crippling impact on the welfare, economy and development of Waikato” (Deed of Settlement 1995, p4). The term ‘raupatu’ also “…indicated that a struggle for return must occur, even if it took generations” (McCan, 2001 p328). Following many years of discussion, Waikato-Tainui agreed a Treaty settlement with the Crown, legislated through the Waikato Raupatu Claims Settlement Act in 1995.

During negotiation of the settlement, Waikato-Tainui representatives held to two principles - I riro whenua atu, me hoki whenua mai: As land was taken, land must be returned - and - Ko te moni hei utu mo te hara: The money is the acknowledgement by the Crown of the crime. In order to provide redress, the Crown agreed to return “as much land as is possible that the Crown has in its possession to Waikato” (Deed of Settlement 1995). An interviewee from Waikato-Tainui recalls: “We wanted everything. Everything. It could be a railway siding, it could be a forest... It was just a philosophy of land-for-land.... we took everything that was on offer. We didn’t reject anything” (Interviewee – Waikato-Tainui, 2014). Eventually, Waikato-Tainui accepted 1800 properties across the Waikato and Auckland regions, including land formerly owned by Coalcorp, Railcorp, and Housing New Zealand, among others (Solomon, 1995; Interviewee – Waikato-Tainui, 2014). These lands were returned by the Crown “…to atone for these acknowledged injustices and... to begin the process of healing and to enter a new age of co-operation with the Kingitanga and Waikato” (Deed of Settlement 1995, p.7).

The Treaty settlement has allowed Waikato-Tainui to begin to rebuild their tribal wealth. The total value of the land returned was approximately $100 million, however, as with all Treaty settlements, this redress is estimated to comprise only a fraction of the value of the land that was confiscated (Interviewee – Waikato-Tainui, 2015). Properties returned included a significant piece of land at Te Rapa, situated six kilometres north of the Hamilton Central Business District. The land at Te Rapa has been described as “the jewel in the crown of the settlement” (Waikato Tainui Te Kauhanganui Inc v Hamilton City Council, 2010). Since 2004, the land has been developed into ‘The Base’ retail centre, the largest shopping centre in New Zealand, and Te Awa shopping mall. ‘The Base’ refers to the previous use of the site as a military base by the Crown, and ‘Te Awa’ (‘the river’) refers to Waikato river which runs through Hamilton City and which gives Waikato-Tainui their name (The Base, 2015).
Understanding The Base as an icon of economic sovereignty

Statements by Waikato-Tainui indicate that developing The Base is part of realising the Treaty settlement reached with the Crown in 1995. The vision for The Base held by Waikato-Tainui is clearly linked to the concept of ‘economic sovereignty’ visible in the tribe’s strategic plan, ‘Whakatupuranga Waikato-Tainui 2050’ (Waikato-Tainui Te Kauhanganui, 2007; Interviewee – Waikato-Tainui, 2014). Waikato-Tainui leader Koro Wetere emphasises the contribution of income from The Base to the tribe’s economic development and wellbeing, stating that The Base

‘...is a springboard of opportunity that will enable us to develop a strong economic base that is capable of providing growth, financial independence and social self-reliance. Waikato-Tainui will continue to own the land in perpetuity and through the development of the site, will provide a future income stream for the tribe’ (2009).

Land owned by Waikato-Tainui is developed by the tribe’s ‘intergenerational investor’, Tainui Group Holdings. An interviewee from Waikato-Tainui highlighted the limited effect that the assets transferred at the time of settlement can have on the wellbeing of 60,000 tribal members, recovering from 140 years of loss. It is clear that tribal assets need to be multiplied, in order “...to be meaningful to tribal members”, both present and future (Interviewee – Waikato-Tainui, 2015). Developments by Tainui Group Holdings provides dividends which the tribe distributes to marae and through educational grants. Development at The Base is also intended to deliver social benefits to Waikato-Tainui people, including employment, training, and management opportunities (Interviewee – Waikato-Tainui, 2014).

The theme of sovereignty and economic development is reflected in the spatial structure articulated by Waikato-Tainui in their Environmental Management Plan ‘Tai Tumu Tai Pari Tai Ao’, published in 2013. The vision presented in the plan is a Maimai Aroha (roughly translated as a ‘song of longing’) composed by Kingi Tawhiao, the leader of the Kingitanga at the time of the Waikato invasion and raupatu. The Maimai Aroha traverses the Waikato region celebrating the fertility of the land and naming important places such as the mountains of Pirongia, Maungatautari, Maungakawa, and Taupiri, as well as the town of Ngāruawāhia, chosen by the first Māori king, King Potatau Te Wherowhero as his headquarters in 1858. The Plan also provides a map of the Waikato-Tainui rohe (Waikato-Tainui Te Kauhanganui, 2013, p3). Sixty-eight marae are spread across the rohe from Umupuia in the north to Te Tokanga-a-Noho in the south. All marae are represented with the same graphic; none are smaller or larger. The map shows no cities, towns or roads – the outline of the landmass and the shape of the Waikato river running from Lake Taupo to the coast are the only orienting features. Through this representation, the Plan emphasises the diversity and independence of Waikato-Tainui hapu, each of whom wishes to develop self-sufficient marae to support their social and economic well-being (Waikato-Tainui Te Kauhanganui, 2007). As an asset critical to recovering the economic independence of the tribe, land returned under Treaty settlement, such as The Base, appears to be becoming an important location in the Waikato-Tainui spatial structure, and a focus for development. ‘Tai Tumu Tai Pari Tai Ao’ sets out the tribe’s aspirations for the development of their land, including land returned under Treaty settlement. Although Waikato-Tainui owns land within the Central Business District, major pieces of land returned under Treaty settlement, such as The Base, are on the outskirts of the existing Hamilton urban area. The Plan
emphasises that economic development on Treaty settlement land is part of a bigger picture of social and cultural justice:

‘Ultimately the commercial benefit of any Waikato-Tainui development remains within the rohe and for the benefit of Waikato-Tainui tribal members and the wider community. The link between the economic and commercial success of Waikato-Tainui and their cultural and social success cannot be overstated’ (Waikato-Tainui Te Kauhanganui, 2013, p219)

The location of land returned under Treaty settlement, the spatial structure of the network of Waikato-Tainui marae and the identification of other political/social/cultural ‘hearts’ such as Ngāruawāhia creates a distributed spatial structure that centres on sites significant to Waikato-Tainui, both before and after Treaty settlement. As on-going development at The Base suggests, to realise the benefits of Treaty settlements Waikato-Tainui may need to pursue a development pattern that differs from the pattern promoted in local government documents.

**The Heart versus The Base**

However, the peripheral location of The Base development has already led to conflict with Hamilton City Council. Over the last ten years, coinciding with the development of The Base at Te Rapa, the vitality of the Central Business District has declined. Hamilton City Council became increasingly concerned that ‘out of centre’ development was undermining the “sustainable and efficient operation” of the Central Business District (“Waikato Tainui Te Kauhanganui Inc v Hamilton City Council,” 2010), and the efforts of the council to retain the Central Business District as the primary retail centre for the city (Interviewee – Hamilton City Council 2015). Although The Base has been an economic success for Waikato-Tainui, further development at Te Rapa was not seen to be aligned with the development pattern set by the Hamilton Urban Growth and Future Proof strategies to create a compact and concentrated city (Early et al., 2015).

In 2010, Hamilton City Council notified a variation to the Hamilton City District Plan, limiting further retail development at The Base. The variation was appealed to the High Court by Waikato-Tainui. During the High Court hearing, the ‘City Heart’ metaphor was evoked in evidence given by Robert Simcock, the Mayor of Hamilton City, who emphasised the investment of Hamilton City Council in the Central Business District noting that the Council “...has recently committed very significant public resources to CBD enhancement projects” including funding for the upgrade of Garden Place “...the central public space in the heart of the CBD” (2010). A 2015 report illustrates the depth of feeling about the conflict, with interviewees describing the planning and location of The Base “...as ‘disastrously bad’ and ‘quite destructive’; it ‘maimed’ the CBD shops” (Early et al., 2015, p79). However, delivering his decision to quash the variation, Judge Allan objected to Hamilton City Council’s lawyer presenting the issue as “...a choice between competing interests: Tainui’s ownership interest versus the public interest in protecting the CBD” (Waikato Tainui Te Kauhanganui Inc v Hamilton City Council, 2010, para 74). The Judge instead promoted improved consultation between Waikato-Tainui and Hamilton City Council, “...a process by which parties with different interests can discuss in good faith their concerns and suggestions for proposed plans” (Waikato Tainui Te Kauhanganui Inc v Hamilton City Council, 2010, para 74).
Through association with the decline of the Central Business District, The Base, Tainui Group Holdings and Waikato-Tainui have been blamed for the poor health of the ‘City Heart’ (Interview with Key Informant, 2014). However, discourse which frames development at The Base in opposition to development of the Central Business District ignores the history of colonial invasion in Waikato, the opportunity to redress historical injustice through development of land returned under Treaty settlement, and the status of The Base as an icon of economic sovereignty for Waikato-Tainui.

**Conclusion – Opening the City Heart**

Planning is a cultural activity, set within a historical context. The way we represent growth and development in the city reflects our own traditions and epistemology.

Hamilton is a colonial city, with its origins in raupatu, conquest, and confiscation. Waikato-Tainui is an increasingly powerful urban landowner. In this context, the icons and metaphors planners use to represent the spatial structure of our cities do not simply communicate planning ideas, but influence the direction of policy and investment, and perhaps our ability to address issues of social justice. This research argues that the emphasis placed by Hamilton City Council, through the ‘Hamilton Urban Growth Strategy’ and ‘Future Proof’, on the development of a vibrant City Heart in the colonial centre of the city has contributed to conflict with Waikato-Tainui. Dual planning approaches are clear - Waikato-Tainui represent development at The Base as an iconic expression of ‘economic sovereignty’ linked to the social and cultural wellbeing of their tribal members; but the same development is criticized by Hamilton City Council as undermining the vitality of the ‘City Heart’ of the wider Hamilton community.

Reconciling these dual planning traditions requires practicing ‘in the presence of history’. To support the realisation of Treaty settlements, planners working within Pākehā planning traditions need to recognise the possibilities and implications of Māori planning traditions and approaches, such as the spatial structure and potential development pattern offered in the Waikato-Tainui Environmental Management Plan. It is difficult to contain the diverse interests of urban communities within a single model for urban growth. It is particularly difficult to do so when the history of the city includes the dispossession of indigenous people, a century of urban growth, and then the return of land to indigenous owners. However, it is a challenge we must understand. Hirini Matunga concludes that:

‘...understanding the archaeology of the city and country, ‘accepting’ its Indigenous and colonial history, and facilitating a more nuanced reading of its multi-layered materiality and memory through architecture, planning, urban design, and environmental management, is arguably the greatest challenge for spatial planners and urban designers today’ (2013, p.9).

By remembering the many histories of our cities, recognising the significance of both Māori and Pākehā urban icons, and carefully considering the drivers behind different planning approaches, we can open the colonial City Heart to indigenous concepts of vitality, spatiality, and development for economic sovereignty.
Glossary (adapted from Moorfield, 2010)

Hapū - Kinship group, subtribe, consisting of a number of whānau sharing descent from a common ancestor. A number of related hapū usually share adjacent territories forming a looser tribal federation (iwi).

Iwi - Extended kinship group, tribe. Often refers to a large group of people descended from a common ancestor and associated with a distinct territory.

Kāinga – Village, settlement

Kingitanga – A movement which developed in the 1850s, culminating in the anointing of Pōtatau Te Wherowhero as King. Established to stop the loss of land to the colonists, to maintain law and order, and to promote traditional values and culture. Also known as ‘King Movement’

Māori – Indigenous New Zealander

Marae - Community base for a whānau, hapū or iwi

Maunga - Mountain

Pākehā – New Zealander of European descent

Raupatu – Conquest, confiscation.

Rohe – Territory

Urupā – Burial ground

Whānau - Extended family, family group

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The prince, the pageant and the pioneers
A commemorative space for Wellington’s first British colonists

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In May 1920, the Prince of Wales attended a history pageant on Petone Beach. The highlight of the performance was a re-enactment of the arrival of New Zealand Company settlers at the same place 80 years earlier. For the occasion, a 6,000 seat amphitheatre and model Maori village were constructed at the intersection of Buick Street and The Esplanade. The arena opened directly onto the beach where a rudimentary jetty reached 100 feet into the harbour. None of the structures were permanent, but the pageant left an enduring imprint by fixing the co-ordinates of what was putatively the nation’s birthplace. When they laid out their venue, the pageant’s organisers referred to the local street pattern rather than any accurate record of the historic landfall. Petone’s orthogonal plan post-dated the settlers’ arrival by several decades, but it provided convenient axes for a commemorative space. The performance was designed to give these lines symbolic value and, significantly, the Prince of Wales was made to traverse their full extent. In doing so, he defined an emblematic threshold between land and sea, and he inscribed a symbolic pathway from the New Zealand Company’s fleet to the notional site of its first settlement. The pageant’s wider setting was equally significant. A close context of tidy bungalows, private gardens and efficiently planned factories suggested that the pioneers’ most important legacy was a proletarian garden suburb. So, the pageant gave both geometry and meaning to the future memorial. The two orthogonal axes defined a symbolic origin, and the surrounding suburban fabric promoted a version of progress which underpinned New Zealand’s national identity.

Keywords: commemoration; New Zealand; pioneer; royal visit.

Introduction

When the Prince of Wales toured New Zealand in 1920, his receptions were used to style New Zealand as a prosperous and progressive state. This paper examines a single episode during the
Prince’s visit to Wellington, showing how rapid social and economic development was linked to ethnicity through an invented sacred space and the imagined figure of the pioneer. During an elaborate reconstruction of the dominion’s founding moments, Pakeha New Zealanders were shown to have inherited the enterprising spirit of the first British settlers. According to this trope, prosperity and growth were affirmations of British character. However, the pageant also drew attention to difference. The unique pace and direction of New Zealand’s development were attributed to exaggerated ethnic traits which set New Zealanders apart from metropolitan Britons.

Fig.1: History pageant on Petone Beach for the Prince of Wales’ visit, 7 May 1920 [Source: Hutt City Libraries. Petone - Celebrations 642. H.R.H. the Prince of Wales at Petone Beach etc.].

“The Coming of the Settler”

On his second day in New Zealand’s capital, the Prince of Wales attended a history pageant on Petone’s foreshore. The beach was the landing place for the first New Zealand Company settlers, and the pageant’s highlight was a re-enactment of the pioneers’ arrival in January 1840. Instigated by the Petone Borough Council, the performance was the centrepiece of a larger “carnival” or “gala”. This event was designed to attract visitors and thus capture a share of the economic activity generated by the royal tour (Post 4 February). While it served local business interests, the pageant also resonated with a pervasive theme in royal visit discourse. The performance sought to create an idealised image of the early settlers, casting them as heroic figures in a narrative about nation building and the spread of British culture.

Wellington’s Early Settlers’ Association took charge of the pageant’s content and staging (Dominion 12 March). In the association’s selective account of New Zealand’s foundation, the first generation of European colonists transformed a “savage land” into a “nation” and set the new country on a course
for prosperity (Dominion 8 May). The “sturdy” settlers faced privation, hard work and
disappointment but their “courage” and strength of character enabled them to persevere and
ultimately triumph over these challenges (Dominion: 7 May, 9; 8 May; Post 5 May).

In an article entitled “The Coming of the Settler. An Historic Pageant.”, author “G. L.” romanticises
the New Zealand Company’s activities and inflates the significance of their first settlement: “It was a
great and heroic purpose to animate a people, who proved, probably beyond their expectations, the
builders of a nation destined to take in due course a proud and influential place with the great
nations of the earth” (Dominion 7 May, 9). With his extravagant praise for the Petone settlers, “G.
L.” gave credence to a persistent claim about the distinctive temperament of New Zealanders. By
exceeding expectations, the early colonists showed that innate “British” attributes had not just
survived but flourished in the young colony. Putatively, this evolution had occurred because Britons
were “animated” or reinvigorated by the challenges of breaking in land and founding a new country.

Advent of formalised commemoration

As the events of 1840 faded from living memory, it became more difficult to measure the pace and
direction of change without formalised rituals or markers. The country’s development could no
longer be encompassed by a single lifetime, and it was necessary to find other ways to embody the
increasing span of the dominion’s history. Accordingly, the Early Settlers Association saw the
pageant as an opportunity to educate the public and, at the same time, raise funds for a permanent
pioneer memorial on Petone Beach (Dominion 25 February; Post 4 February). This idea received
wide support. The New Zealand Times suggested that the country’s school children were more
familiar with the story of the Mayflower than the history of colonisation in New Zealand (“New
Zealand Times”). Praising Americans for keeping “green” the memory of its “early pilgrims”, the
Times predicted that the festivities at Petone would help to correct this anomaly. In other words, the
purpose of the pageant was not just to “convey to the young Prince some of our earliest traditions”
(Post 5 May) but also to “acquaint citizens with a piece of early history which might not otherwise
become widely known” (“New Zealand Times”).

So, the Petone pageant signalled a change in commemorative practices brought about by dwindling
numbers of pioneers. First-hand accounts from “old colonists” were superseded by dramatizations
and an attempt to anoint Petone Beach as the birthplace of the nation. The Souvenir Programme
emphasised that events would take place on historic ground: “The Scene of the Actual Landing of
our Pioneer Settlers on January 22nd 1840.” Later, the souvenir declared proudly: “HERE WAS
SHAPED THE COURSE TO A GREAT DESTINY” (Souvenir Programme, 1,7). The pageant gained further
authority from the involvement of 27 elderly settlers, all of whom had arrived in New Zealand before
1850. These surviving “pioneer settlers” signed an address to the Prince of Wales (Post 4 May). This
was presented during the pageant’s final scene, when “all the different parties in the pageant [were]
assembled and in the presence of those pioneers of the forties left to us this day” (Souvenir
Programme, 5).

All the signatories to the address were in their 80s, and the eldest was 93 (Post 4 May). This fact sent
a clear message that future commemorations would no longer possess a direct human link to the
earliest days of the colony. As the New Zealand Times observed: “The pioneers have gradually but
surely dropped out of the arena. Their places have been taken by the captains of industry, until to-
day the name of ‘pioneer’ is becoming a memory” (“New Zealand Times”). With this statement, the Times created an image of New Zealand’s original British settlers passing the baton of progress to new generation of leaders tasked with creating economic growth.

“The foundation of a Great Nation”

These nationalist themes help to explain why Petone’s pageant received generous support from the Government (Internal Affairs, 2). The historical theme held particular appeal for the Minister for Internal Affairs, Sir Francis Bell, in part because he had family connections with the Wakefields and the New Zealand Company venture (Dominion 25 February). Bell refused to let Petone’s reception escalate into a full-scale civic welcome. However, he favoured the pageant over many similar proposals (Dominion 25 February), adding the event to an already crowded tour programme (Bell, 2). The Government later granted £160 towards the pageant’s costs. This was a modest sum in relation to total public expenditure on the Prince’s reception. However, as a “local” event, the pageant was unique in receiving direct Government funding (Internal Affairs, 2).

As if to justify the state’s involvement, organisers attempted to portray the pageant as a story of nation-building which would capture the imagination of all New Zealanders. The performance was billed as the “most ambitious” gathering in the Prince’s Wellington itinerary (Dominion 8 May) and as the “chief attraction” of his second day in the capital (Post 23 April, 7). The Prince was welcomed to Petone by Sir Francis Bell and Mr J. E. Jenkinson, president of the Early Settlers Association (Post 8 May). Government officials were conspicuous on the dais where the Prince’s hosts included the Prime Minister and members of Cabinet as well as the mayors of Petone and Lower Hutt (Dominion 8 May). Significantly, the Early Settlers Association broadened the scope of the performance by including a series of vignettes in the manner of history pageants then popular in Britain. These re-enactments ranged from “The Coming of the Maori” to Captain Cook raising the Union Jack and the arrival of the first Wesleyan missionaries. The Wellington pioneers’ landing was presented as the culminating event when: “Our fathers and mothers who, braving dangers by sea and by land, laid well and truly the foundation of A GREAT NATION” (Souvenir Programme, 3,5,7).
Configuring a ceremomial space

The pageant was staged in a purpose-built “arena” at the intersection of Buick Street and The Esplanade, these streets being closed for the purpose (Observer 15 May). A temporary amphitheatre was constructed here as a commercial venture (see Fig.2). Local contractor, Mr R. Tremain paid £50 to the Petone Borough Council for the exclusive right to accommodate spectators at the site (Post 5 May). Seats in the stand sold for between three shillings and ten shillings (Observer 15 May). According to some accounts the “immense stadium” could accommodate 9,000 or 10,000 people. However, its capacity was probably closer to 6,000 (Dominion 8 May; Post: 16 April; 24 April).

The stand formed “three sides of a square” which abutted The Esplanade’s sea wall (see Fig.3) (Dominion 8 May). In combination, these elements defined a performance space which was strongly centred yet open to the beach (Dominion 5 May). Officials watched from a dais at the eastern end of the enclosure (Post 5 May). Old colonists occupied a similar platform at the western end (Post 1 May). So, the two groups addressed one another along an east-west axis which denoted the final threshold between land and water.

The venue’s north-south axis defined a notional pathway from the harbour to the site of the first settlement. Like the sea wall, this datum already existed at the site but was reinforced by the ephemera of the pageant. The axis followed the centreline of Buick Street but received emphasis from the bilateral symmetry of the temporary stand. Its linear trajectory organised two elaborate
pieces of scenery which served as focal points in the performance. At the path’s southern extremity, a 100 foot “landing-stage” projected into the water (Dominion 8 May). This had a “primitive character” reminiscent of the makeshift structure built to receive the settlers in 1840 (Post 30 April). The second piece of scenery was a “little Maori village” or pa. This occupied the centre of the arena “opposite the point where the first settlers actually landed”. The village was described as “a group of raupo [reed] huts within a palisade” (Dominion 8 May; Post 21 April). Each hut was decorated with “elaborate carvings” borrowed from the Dominion Museum (Post 5 May). The gate into this “old-time pah” and the “front” or seaward corners of the palisade were also marked by “fearsome-looking carved Maori posts” (Post: 21 April; 30 April).

The north-south axis carried beyond the venue in both directions. To the south, this datum extended into the harbour. The Prince arrived at Petone on the government steamer Janie Seddon. As the boat approached, a “great flotilla” comprising 34 yachts and 32 motor-boats drew up in two lines so as to create a cordon on the water (see Fig.1). Beyond this “picturesque guard of honour”, the training ship H.M.N.Z.S. Amokura lay at anchor, posing as the New Zealand Company’s vessel Aurora. Nearby, a Maori war canoe – also borrowed from the museum – waited to intercept the Prince’s ship (Dominion: 25 March; 30 April; Post: 23 April, 7; 26 April; 8 May). To the north, the main ceremonial axis continued along Buick Street as far as Jackson Street, Petone’s main commercial thoroughfare. Both streets were strung with bunting, and Buick Street was spanned by two purpose-built arches. The first arch led into Buick Street from the arena, and the second helped to articulate the intersection with Jackson Street. The Gear Meat Company sponsored a third arch near its shop in Jackson Street. This had been built for the recent peace celebrations. However, the company modified its decorations for the Prince’s visit, removing the word “Peace” and substituting “Welcome” (Dominion 7 May, 8; Post 6 May).
Inscribing a symbolic path between sea and land

The pageant’s script ensured that both axes were animated by the performance. Actors made their entrance by boat and trudged up the beach towards the pa which served as a ready-made domicile for Maori and European alike (Dominion 25 March; Post: 26 April; 8 May). The village provided “coigns of vantage” from which groups of “Natives” “issue[d] forth” to challenge and welcome successive boatloads of adventurers, missionaries and pioneers. Somewhat incongruously, the pa also played host to Colonel Wakefield – who had entered the compound dressed as Captain Cook – and the other members of the New Zealand Company’s survey party. As the first of the Aurora’s passengers approached the landing stage, Wakefield and his associates strode out to greet the latest arrivals (Post: 5 May; 8 May). Meanwhile, Maori gathered on the beach to chant a welcome to the newcomers (Souvenir Programme, 5). At this point, the pageant programme instructed: “All fraternise and then enter the pa” (Dominion 25 March). This was followed by a “Grand Finale” during which a children’s choir sang Rule Britannia (Souvenir Programme, 7). All the actors emerged from the pa and lined up along the sea wall, thereby closing the “fourth” side of the arena and giving dramatic emphasis to the margin between land and sea (Post 5 May).

The Prince of Wales was the only participant to fully traverse both site axes. Sir Francis Bell placed great importance on the guest of honour travelling to Petone by boat and landing “as the original settlers did” (Bell, 2). In a sense, the Prince’s arrival was itself a piece of theatre which required the royal visitor to re-enact the historic moment of landfall on Petone Beach. Approaching from the water, the Prince was the first to inscribe the southern arm of the primary north-south axis. During the pageant itself, the first Maori, the earliest British explorers, the missionaries and the pioneering settlers all followed in the Prince’s footsteps. By the end of the performance, the symbolic path between sea and land had become a well-trodden route.

Later, when the pageant had ostensibly concluded, the Prince walked the length of the site’s transverse axis. He passed along the sea wall from east to west, meeting first the performers and then the dominion’s real-life pioneers (Souvenir Programme, 7; Post 5 May). During his final moments at the venue, the Prince inspected the pa and emerged from the stadium into Buick Street where school children formed a guard of honour. The Prince entered his car and motored the short distance along Buick and Jackson streets to Petone Railway Station. Here, he boarded a train and continued his journey to the military hospital at Trentham (Bell, 2; Hislop; Souvenir Programme, 7; Dominion 8 May; Post 5 May).

Failed theatrical performance

Despite careful choreography, the pageant failed as a piece of theatre. The re-enactment of the settlers’ arrival was coherent enough, but the performance could not subsume New Zealand’s other foundation myths. The great migration from Hawaiki; Cook’s declaration of British sovereignty; the arrival of Christianity: by conflating these episodes with the Petone narrative, the show confused its audience and aroused the parochialism of critics in other parts of the dominion. Even the Prince of Wales appeared puzzled by the range of items on the programme (Post 8 May). An Auckland newspaper ridiculed the whole occasion describing it as resembling “Mrs. Jarley’s Wax-works” and asking: “is it possible that the Early Settlers are serious?” (Observer 25 April).
On the day, few onlookers were able to appreciate the elaborate history lesson conceived by the pageant’s organisers. As many as 15,000 people tried to witness the event, even though admission was restricted to ticket-holders and invited guests. Would-be spectators pushed their way into the venue, occupying an area set aside for school children, returned soldiers and veterans. Finding their view of the proceedings obstructed, many of the paying audience abandoned their seats and joined the crush in the centre of the stadium (Dominion 8 May; Post: 5 May; 8 May). Crowds engulfed the performance space, and the beach itself became “black with people standing right down to the water’s edge” (Post 8 May; Observer 15 May).

As a result, actors were confined to a narrow pathway between the jetty and the Maori village. Instead of giving thanks “in a picturesque manner” and performing a “dance of joy”, the first Maori to step ashore “marched in single file” towards the pa. Captain Cook and his party were forced to arrive “in style” at the landing-stage rather than wade ashore on the beach. Samuel Marsden’s missionaries also “filed” across the sand towards the Maori village (Post: 26 April; 8 May). Congestion meant that various artful “tableaux” promised in the souvenir programme could not be executed. Instead, the “scenes from old New Zealand” became “almost buried”, and costumed performers merged incongruously with the throng of spectators (Dominion 8 May). The crowd “pressed uncomfortably” around the official dais, and the Prince lost sight of the old colonists on the opposite side of the stadium. As one observer described it, the surviving pioneers were “squeezed out of the picture” (Post 8 May).

Fig.4: Partial plan of Petone and Lower Hutt with new residential and industrial subdivisions highlighted in orange, c.1928 [Source: Hutt City Libraries. 8269. Part of Petone & Lower Hutt etc.].
“Modern industries, and comfortable homes”

In spite of these setbacks, the pageant succeeded in fixing the site of a future memorial (Fig.5). Prior to this event, there was no visible record of the first settlers’ landfall other than the beach itself. Despite claims that Wellington’s pioneers had arrived “on this very spot” (Dominion 20 March; Post 8 May), the pageant’s organisers had no reliable markers to indicate where the Aurora’s passengers stepped ashore. Such a space needed to be created and, although the pageant’s footprint was ephemeral, it gave a recognisable spatial signature to Wellington’s founding moment. The co-ordinates were chosen expediently and owed little to historic fact. The stadium was centrally located on Petone Beach and offered a commanding view of the harbour entrance. The elaborate staging took its cues from an orthogonal street layout which post-dated the settlers’ arrival by several decades. Anointed by royal patronage and legitimised by the “verisimilitude” of the re-enactment, the intersection of Buick Street and the Esplanade became a plausible location for the anticipated monument.

The pageant’s suburban setting conferred meaning as well as structure. The performance took place on Wellington’s rapidly expanding urban periphery (see Fig.4). A matrix of low-density housing and well-planned factories suggested that the old colonists’ most valuable legacy was not the city’s distant centre – just visible across the harbour – but the wide streets, tidy bungalows, productive gardens of an emerging proletarian garden suburb. Here, co-operative building ventures and subsidised loans allowed working class families to purchase their own dwellings. According to the organisers’ rhetoric, New Zealand’s rapid progress was nowhere more evident than on Petone Beach where the first settlers’ landing place was surrounded by “thriving modern industries, and comfortable homes”. The pageant drew attention to this juxtaposition. As the Evening Post reported: “The intention has been...to contrast the conditions of the empire-founding days of...Queen Victoria, with the greater comfort and luxury of to-day” (“New Zealand Times”; Post 5 May).

Accordingly, prosperity and progress were dominant motifs in the pageant’s final scene. Before he left the stadium, the Prince was presented with “three handsome rugs” which had been manufactured by the Wellington Woollen Company at their local factory. Two of the rugs bore the royal arms. These were intended for the King and Queen as a memento of their visit to Petone’s woollen mills nineteen years earlier. The third item was a travelling rug, and this was embellished with the Prince of Wales’ Feathers (Fraser; Marley; Dominion 8 May; Post 8 May). The Prince also received a letter from the chairman of the company’s board of directors. This spelled out the symbolic significance of the gifts and their relationship to Petone’s historic beach:

Your Royal Highness has just taken part in a demonstration representing the landing of Early Settlers in this Country and we hope this presentation will demonstrate to you the development of our industries and the advancement we have made under the British flag, and that you may realize, that New Zealand excels in peace and industry as well as in war (Marley).

Later, British journalist Everard Cotes relayed a similar message in a royal travelogue entitled Down Under with the Prince:
The occasion of the pageant was taken with happy appropriateness to present the Prince with samples of the finished product of the great industry with which the descendants of the early settlers have endowed New Zealand. The articles selected were rugs of beautiful softness and delightful warmth, made of wool grown in the interior, and carded, spun, dyed, and woven in mills close to the beach where the original missionaries landed. “A field which the Lord hath blessed” in every sense of the term (Cotes, 71).

To secure its place in the iconography of the royal visit, the Wellington Woollen Company placed a full-page advertisement in the commercially produced Welcome Souvenir. This recalled the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall and York’s visit to the Petone Woollen Mills in 1901. The promotion also boasted: “The Prince of Wales will be pleased to know that close to the spot on which he will be received in Petone, where the pioneers of Wellington Province landed 70 [sic] years ago, there is a woollen mill making goods the superior of which he will not see at Home” (Welcome Souvenir, 4). The company’s claim linked the twin themes of pioneers and progress, connecting these ideas with the notion that New Zealand had begun to outperform metropolitan Britain in certain endeavours.

The pioneers were credited with establishing the speed and trajectory of the colony’s development. So, references to heroic first landings were a frequent adjunct to claims that New Zealand had advanced further than the Motherland. During the pageant on Petone Beach, the proximity of modern industries and tidy workers’ bungalows helped to conflate the pioneer story with New Zealand’s self-styled reputation as a prosperous and progressive state. In other words, Petone’s pageant was an elaborate affirmation of national characteristics which seemed to explain the dominion’s rapid advance.

Conclusion

Despite its failure as dramatic art, the pageant demonstrated the versatility of the pioneer image. The performance represented both the persistence of British culture and the advent of a distinctive colonial character based on exaggerated ethnic traits. By some measures, New Zealand’s early colonists were more British than Britons “at Home” because certain ethnic traits had been heightened by the colonial experience. When they left Britain, the first settlers were already atypical; either because the New Zealand Company selected the best “stock”, or because weaker and less enterprising individuals elected to stay behind. When the pioneers arrived in their new home, whatever innate talents they possessed were honed by the unprecedented demands of settlement. For some observers, the challenges of founding the colony provided a corrective to the docile habits of metropolitan Britons. In other words, the harsh conditions of colonial life strengthened aspects of British character which had become enfeebled among the population “at Home”.

So, the first New Zealand Company settlers were depicted as the carriers of Anglo-Saxon virtues and as a breed apart. During the performance on Petone Beach, these twin identities contributed to a broader narrative which defined all Britons as progressive but recognised the unique pace and direction of New Zealand’s development. In this foundation myth, evidence of progress connoted either British patrimony or the colonists’ more enterprising spirit. By celebrating the early settlers’ fortitude and “grit”, the pageant endowed contemporary New Zealanders with the same superior
talents. In this way, the pioneer legend joined New Zealanders to metropolitan Britons but also recognised the dominion’s unique destiny.

Fig.5: Wellington Provincial Centennial Memorial, Petone Esplanade, constructed in 1939 on the site of the history pageant. [Source: Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand. Wellington Provincial Centennial Memorial. Eileen Deste Collection. Ref.no.1-2 004310 F.]

Abbreviations

ATL Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, Ephemera Collection
ANZ Archives New Zealand, Wellington
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The Iconography of Patriotism
George Washington and Abraham Lincoln in Union Square

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An original component of the 1811 grid plan for New York City, Union Square has acquired an association as a place in which the ideals of American republicanism and democracy are both signified and enacted. The square is occupied by a central lawn, a series of statues, a small building to the north, and an open plaza set aside as a place for public meetings. Using the concept of “urban semiology” described by Roland Barthes, this paper is concerned with two things: the ways in which the signifying function of the square has been attributed variously to the statues and to the open space of the plaza; and the ways in which the signifying elements were first created, then altered and appropriated by different urban actors at different times over the past two centuries. Exploring the question of agency, of the mechanisms through which signification is achieved, the focus will be on the ways in which the statues and the open space of the plaza have served as symbols, icons, and indexes of political ideas. Concluding with the early Cold War period, when the symbolic expression of global politics across all forms of culture from media, to the arts, to architecture and city planning, was at its bluntest and least nuanced, the paper will discuss the nineteenth and early twentieth century history of the square in order to understand how and why the use and meaning of Union Square continues to be so contentious.

Keywords:

Located on Broadway between 14th and 17th Streets, Union Square in New York City includes both a major subway interchange and a landscaped park. Recently renovated by landscape architects Michael Van Valkenburgh and Associates, it plays host to a popular farmers’ market, and to formal and informal public gatherings on the southern end, seen here. (Fig. 1) Situated between social history and the history of urban design, this paper investigates the square as both a real public space and as the symbol of competing ideas about the operation of democracy in the United States. Employing Roland Barthes’ concept of “urban semiology,” it emphasizes the fluidity of signification and the misalignment between functional purpose and semantic meaning in the design and redesign of Union Square from its founding in the early-nineteenth century to the 1950s.
Three built elements within the square have been chosen to illustrate the production of urban icons: statues of Presidents Washington and Lincoln, and the paved rectangular area to the north, known as “the plaza.” Employing Charles Sanders Peirce’s categorization of three different forms of sign, the statues and the plaza are considered “symbols, icons, and indexes” of the concepts of republicanism and democracy. In keeping with Barthes’ belief that urban signification is not fixed, this analysis recognizes the numerous actors engaged in the struggle to control the use and define the significance of Union Square, including not only city authorities and influential private citizens’ organizations, but also labour unions and members of political parties, each representing distinct classes and perspectives. This semiotic reading supports Henri Lefebvre’s argument that, “space is permeated with social relations; it is not only supported by social relations but it is also producing and produced by social relations.” (Lefebvre 14).

Created as part of the plan for the expansion of New York City drawn up in 1811, and “improved” or landscaped in the 1830s, Union Square gained its enduring association as a symbol of national political values during the Civil War. (Fig. 2) This was the moment that the square’s functional and semiotic roles began to diverge. On April 20th 1861 Union Square was the site of a giant public meeting following the attack on Fort Sumter in South Carolina by Confederate troops nine days earlier, the attack that began the Civil War. The central focus of the rally was the statue of George Washington located just outside the square, at its southeastern corner. Newspaper reports estimated the crowd at between 100,000 to 250,000 people, and placed great emphasis on its inclusiveness. “It was a gathering of all classes of our citizens,” reported the New York Post, “old and young, merchants and mechanics, professional men and labourers, who gathered to express their determination to uphold the union and the Constitution.” (New York Post 1861). A carefully choreographed act of urban theater, well-publicized in national newspapers, this gathering was designed to communicate a message of unification and stability in a deeply divided and unstable city.

In 1861 the statue of Washington was a relatively new monument. Founded in 1811, “Union Place” as it was labelled in the commissioner’s plan, held no special meaning when it was first developed. (Ballon). (Fig. 3) While other squares such as Tompkins Square Park and Washington Square were deliberately set aside as tokens of the Commissioner’s intent to provide public parks modeled on older urban squares such as those in London, Union Place was created out of necessity. An uneven trapezoid in shape, it was an expedient solution to the problem of several roads coming together forming an overly complex traffic intersection. For many years it was nothing more than an uneven ground where cattle grazed. In the early 1830s entrepreneurial local land owners succesfully petitioned the State Legislature to have Union Square, as it was renamed, “improved” or landscaped. By 1832, its odd shape made regular and the ground flattened, it was planted and surrounded by an iron fence.

Union Square gained its first symbolic element ten years later when an ornamental fountain was installed in the center, commemorating the opening of the Croton Aqueduct which bought fresh water to the city from upstate. (Gandy 19-76). (Fig. 4) Frequently described as an “ornament to the city,” Union Square became the center of a wealthy residential area, surrounded by fashionable houses and the churches of the urban elite. (Belden 33). While the area to the south was commercial and congested, Union Square was genteel and leafy. It signified as a marker of social position: to live in the vicinity and to promenade there on warm afternoons was to belong to the “upper ten
thousand,” the elite of New York society, whose members were characterized not by their noble birth but by their possession of money, taste and good manners. (Bristed). In 1856, that association with elitism began to change when the statue of Washington astride his horse was erected on the southeastern corner of the square. (Fig. 5) Considered in terms of urban semiology, the statue of Washington gave Union Square a new meaning, one quite distinct from its original function as an attractive amenity intended to spur real estate development. Created by sculptor Henry Kirke Brown, this monument was originally proposed in 1833 as a part of a wave of civic memorials coinciding with the centennial of Washington’s birth. Like most public statuary of this period, these memorials were not state-controlled projects but the work of private citizens associations. At the time the Union Square statue was commissioned, the square had no special significance in Washington’s biography, rather it was a convenient open location, one frequented by the affluent New Yorkers from whom the organizing committee hoped to extract financial contributions.

Employing Charles Sanders Peirce’s categorizations of signs into three different types - symbol/icon/index - we may say that the statue of Washington was an icon because it took the form of a physical likeness intended to venerate its subject (the etymology of “icon” is from the Greek eikōn or, “likeness, image”). As seen in this 1903 engraving, Washington sits astride his horse with his head bare, his hat under his left arm, and his sword sheathed. The statue evoked imperial precedent, depicting Washington as a heroic emancipator (the sculpture is said to be modeled on the classical statue of Emperor Marcus Aurelius on the Palatine Hill in Rome).

But as with other statues of Washington, this icon was also symbolic. As art historian Kirk Savage has noted, soon after his death Washington became a mythical figure embodying the virtues of the archetypical republican: he was pious, temperate, and industrious. (Savage 225-242). In a short period of time his name and likeness became symbols of republicanism itself, in other words he was a conventionally agreed upon signifier of that political ideal. In this way any statue of Washington signalled broadly the republican belief that the best form of government was self-government, or democracy.

As we have seen, this statue assumed national importance when it was employed to drum up support for the Union cause during the American Civil War. (Fig. 6) During these years Union Square exchanged its identity as a proto-suburban space on the edge of a growing city for a position at the center of the political world. This statue lent the square enormous national significance when it became the locus of a series of huge rallies designed to give visible expression to support for the Union army at a time when many New Yorkers were highly ambivalent about the war with the south. From this point onwards the Washington statue became a magnet for all kinds of political meetings. Though they took place not in the square itself but in a formless space in the street adjacent to it, these meetings gave a new character to Union Square, that of a popular site for political rallies. In 1864 the real estate developer Samuel Ruggles described Union Square as a “spacious national opening,” “a theater adequate to the utterance of the national voice.” (Ruggles 11).

The stamping of national political significance on Union Square was confirmed after the war when the Union League Club commissioned a statue of President Abraham Lincoln as a companion piece to the statue of Washington. (Fig. 7) Erected in 1870, and again sculpted by Henry Kirke Brown, this statue was placed on a traffic island in the southwestern corner, mirroring Washington to the southeast. Like the statue of Washington, this one was also both iconic and symbolic. Rejecting the
classical theme of his earlier statue, Brown chose to depict Lincoln as a contemporary figure standing on the ground wearing ordinary clothes and holding a copy of the Emancipation Proclamation. In this way the republican ideal of equality forged through war by Washington, now expanded to include the abolition of slavery, were shown to have been confirmed by the Federal government through the 13th, 14th and 15th constitutional amendments.

In a short period of time the disjunction between the functional uses for which Union Square was designed (quiet strolls under shady trees), and those encouraged by its patriotic associations (mass gatherings of thousands of people), came into conflict, prompting a major redesign. (Fig. 8) In 1872 the New York City Parks Department commissioned landscape architects Frederick Law Olmstead and Calvert Vaux to draw up a new plan for the square, one that responded to a pressing problem: during public meetings huge crowds gathered in the street at the base of the statue of Washington, blocking traffic and creating a safety hazard. (Minutes 2). Recognizing the need to formalize the habitual use of Union Square for public meetings, Olmsted and Vaux created a purpose-built meeting space at the northern end of the park, know as “the plaza.” A kind of third space, between the park and the street proper, it was designed to give public utility to the association between Union Square and democracy. Modeled on the nostalgic ideal of the colonial New England town green, the intent was to provide a space for orderly public meetings. (Olmsted 204).

The completion of the plaza fundamentally altered the temporal orientation of Union Square’s signifying structures: while the statues commemorated the military and political triumphs of the past, the plaza was designed to facilitate democracy as an active and ongoing process. Olmsted and Vaux’s vision was enormously successful: the plaza at Union Square soon became the site for large celebrations and political demonstrations, including vibrant election rallies during campaign season. In a short period of time it was appropriated by organized labor groups who marched north from the tenement district of the Lower East Side to hold strike meetings. The square cemented its association with specifically working class gatherings when it hosted the first Labour Day parade in 1882. (Grossman). (Fig. 9) Labour Day parades represented a change from the unified civic rites and celebrations of the first half of the century, when white male members of every section of society marched together. (Wilentz; Ryan; Keller). By the second half of the nineteenth century the middle class and wealthy elite had largely given up the practice of public parading and public demonstrations were now segregated by class. At first tolerated, if not encouraged by city authorities (who were largely Democrats aligned with the union cause), these gatherings became contentious during the 1890s, when May Day eclipsed the more benign Labour Day as the high point in the working class calendar. (Foner, Haverty-Stack). Speakers at May Day meetings preached not participation in the democratic process but the overthrow of the American political system. (Fig. 10) Soon conservative newspapers were characterizing May Day rallies as a dangerous threat to the American way of life. The political action of mass protest against perceived injustice, and efforts to correct it were characterized as the irrational behaviour of the “mob.” (Schapp and Tiews 13). Despite Olmsted and Vaux’s intent that the plaza serve as a dedicated place for public meetings, these events were considered illegitimate. This is a classic example of Lefebvre’s contention that, “space is produced out of a struggle between designers, planners, engineers, or other powerful actors who seek to create a space of order and control, and users of the space who necessarily perceive space differently and thus act in ways not necessarily anticipated by their designers.” (Lefebvre in Mitchell and Staeheli 119).
Turning back to the question of urban semiology, it is interesting to note that, in Peirces’ terms, the plaza functioned not only as a symbol of the power of masses in a democratic system, but also as an index. Occurring at the time when photojournalism was being established, we can read in the images of huge crowds gathered in Union Square around the turn-of-the-twentieth-century the measure of working class power in New York City at that time. (Fig. 11) At regular intervals every year, the plaza was filled with thousands of union members accompanied by marching bands, waving banners bearing labour slogans and flags commemorating the unity of the labour movement. These public meetings demonstrated to the city and to the country the power of the unions as a united political force. The organizers of these meetings used these events to present their political platforms, and to urge their supporters to vote for them in all sorts of elections, from mayoral, to state, to federal ballots. (Shapiro). The large number of people present in photographs of these meetings acted as an indexical sign of the power of the organized labour movement at this time.

Within fifty years the positive associations of Union Square had become negative, at least in the mainstream press. As a symbolic space it was seen now to represent not American democracy but dangerous and un-American political ideas. The crowds that gathered at the plaza were now viewed as a destabilizing force, and the square itself was characterized as a center of sedition, a place where the overthrow of the government was openly encouraged. In the first decade of the twentieth century the Parks Department became increasingly convinced that things must change, and the construction of several subway lines underneath the square during the 1920s provided an opportunity for a fundamental rebranding. Triumphantly opened in April 1932 to coincide with the square’s centenary, a major renovation decisively re-weighted the power of the three signifying elements within Union Square. The entire surface of the park was raised up to allow for a series of subway platforms to be built underneath. On top, the statues of Washington and Lincoln were relocated; previously positioned on the outer edges of the square, they were brought into the park proper, sited along the central north-south axis.

With the statues made the new focus, the power of the plaza as a public gathering place was eroded by a series of incremental changes involving the restriction of access by tighter permitting criteria, and the re-introduction of traffic. In 1942 parking meters were installed, and by 1949 the space had become a dumping ground for impounded vehicles. (New York Times 1942). (Fig. 12) Despite these efforts, the association between Union Square and radicalism remained strong. Now organized by the Communist Party of the United States, May Day parades continued to attract tens of thousands of participants throughout the 1930s. At other times of the year the park itself hosted radical soapbox speakers, the most popular spot being at the base of Lincoln’s statue. Afraid that this radical image would deter shoppers, local business groups lobbied the city to ban rallies in Union Square, largely without success. In the 1940s the square was still being described as “America’s open-air center of radical propaganda,” and a “Mecca of Stalinists.” (Work Projects Administration 259; New Leader 1948).

In the 1950s, during the early years of the Cold War, the only solution for those opposed to Communist influence on this important public space was to appropriate the square’s established imagery and rituals to new ends. These efforts began with elaborate ceremonies celebrating Lincoln’s Birthday, February 12th, during which Boy Scout groups were encouraged to lay wreaths at the foot of the Lincoln statue, and patriotic speeches, including recitations of the Gettysburg Address, were given by members of the “National Republican Club.” (Fig. 13) They continued with
similar ceremonies celebrating Flag Day, on June 14th. In 1953 a local business association, the Fourteenth Street Association, announced a, “monopoly of Union Square by loyal American citizens thus making the historic site unavailable for the rabble-rousing elements at times most coveted by those elements.” (“Battle for Union Square,” *New York Times* 1953). These events culminated in the announcement of plans for a “Loyalty Fete”, to be held on May 1st 1954.

It was no accident that Loyalty Fete was held on 1st of May; the event was unambiguously designed to repress if not obliterate the tradition of May Day gatherings. The conflict between the Loyalty Fete and May Day was, “a struggle over who would get to decide how to use and define the character of the city’s public space.” (Haverty-Stacke 205). It was played out via the appropriation of the physical components of the square, and the reinterpretation of the meanings they had acquired since the mid-nineteenth century. Two of these elements were figurative -- statues of George Washington and Abraham Lincoln --, and the other was spatial, the plaza on the north side of the square. An expansion of the Loyalty Day parades that had been held in the city by the Veterans of Foreign Wars since the late 1940s, the Loyalty Fete was part of a well-publicized campaign to, “reclaim Union Square for Americans.” (“Flag Day,” *New York Times* 1953). This goal was supported by city authorities: while the Fourteen Street Association received a permit to occupy the square from 10am to 6pm, the traditional May Day gathering was restricted to 90 minutes between 6.30 and 8pm. The fete included concerts and games for children, as well as appearances by entertainment and sports celebrities, and an “Americanization” ceremony during which immigrants would receive their citizenship. To mark the day, the street sign at 17th Street was replaced with one reading, “Union Square, U.S.A.” A Loyalty Fete was held annually in Union Square from 1954 until the mid-1960s.

The Loyalty Fete campaign had both political and economic imperatives. Union Square had been a center for budget department stores since the early twentieth century, such as S. Klein’s on the east side, shown here. In the context of postwar urban decentralization, inner city businesses such as those lining the square were losing customers to newly developed suburban shopping malls. An early version of the Business Improvement District, the Fourteenth Street Association cleaned up inner city streets and staged spectacular events such as holiday fairs in order to lure shoppers back downtown. In the case of the Loyalty Fete, they attempted to persuade suburban New Yorkers that Union Square, long regarded a locus of radical politics, was actually an all-American town square. The conflation of patriotism and consumerism that made the Loyalty Fete a success depended on the vigorous wielding of nationalistic symbols: the Stars and Stripes, marched ranks of veterans, and the authority of citizenship itself.

The invention of the Loyalty Fete to topple May Day exemplifies the class and political divisions apparent in competing visions of the future of Union Square in the mid-twentieth century. At the heart of this conflict was the claiming of the various physical elements in the square -- the statues of Washington and Lincoln and the plaza itself -- by particular groups and causes, from the business-centric Fourteenth Street Association, to the unions, to the Communist Party. In renaming Union Square, “Union Square U.S.A,” the Fourteenth Street Association reclaimed the symbolic association with patriotism the square had long held, but in a passive sense. The group returned to an earlier vision in which the statues were iconic symbols of political ideals already settled and established, and undermined the indexical value of the plaza as a place in which democracy was continuously performed in the present. Olmsted and Vaux’s plaza was a rare moment in which the functional
design and the symbolic association of Union Square were aligned. The attempt to repress that functional and symbolic use in the 1950s is testament to its strength. In common with other efforts to repress Union Square’s radical reputation, this approach created a tension between the square as a place of passive signification or one of direct political action, tensions that continue to be felt into the present day.

Throughout its long life, Union Square acquired an association as a place in which the ideals of American republicanism and democracy are both signified and enacted. This paper has been concerned with two things: the ways in which the signifying function of the square was first created, then altered and appropriated by different urban actors at different times; and the role played in that process by three design elements, the statues of two presidents and the open plaza space designed by Olmsted and Vaux. Using Roland Barthes’ concept of urban semiology and Charles Sanders Peirce’s categorization of different forms of sign, the statues and the plaza may be analyzed as symbols, icons, and indexes of the concepts of republicanism and democracy. Drawing on Henri Lefebvre’s concept of urban space as a mirror of social relations, including the belief that access to space is limited in order to limit the economic and political rights of certain groups, attention has been drawn to the various “actors” responsible for shaping both the physical space of the square and its abstract meanings. Any investigation into urban semiology must recognize that the city is not only a text subject to endless readings but also a text that is continually being rewritten by numerous authors. The fluidity of the meanings, and the numerous agents involved, make Union Square a pertinent example of the ways in which urban design contributes to the signifying process, and of the argument that true public space will always be subject to conflicting desires about its proper form and use.

Illustrations
(Fig. 1) Panorama of Union Square c.1910. New York Public Library

(Fig. 2) Sumter Rally in Union Square, 20 April 1861. Harper’s Weekly. New York Public Library
(Fig. 3) “Union Place” in the 1811 map of New York

(Fig. 4) Union Square, New York, c.1845. Municipal Art Society of New York
(Fig. 5) Statue of Washington by Henry K. Brown, Union Square New York, 1856. George R. Hall, Engraver (1903). New York Public Library

(Fig. 6) “Great Sumter Meeting in Union Square, New York, April 11, 1863,” Harper’s Weekly (25 April 1863)
(Fig. 7) Henry K Brown’s statue of Abraham Lincoln, Union Square, New York, c.1904. Mechanical Engineering Image Collection

(Fig. 8) Detail of Ward 18, New York City, 1879. Olmsted and Vaux’s “plaza” is seen at the north end of Union Square
(Fig. 9) Labour Day Parade, Union Square, 1882. *Frank Leslie’s Illustrated Newspaper* (September 16 1882)

(Fig. 10) Socialists meeting in Union Square, New York, 1908
(Fig. 11) May Day Crowd in Union Square, 1913. Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division

(Fig. 12) “Proposed New Parking Area in Union Square,” New York Times, 1942
(Fig. 13) Lincoln’s Birthday Celebration, 13 February 1945. New York Times

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“The Home of the Borough”
The use and value of Port Melbourne Football Ground in the 21st century

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“The revolution is in full swing.” So wrote commenter “Matt” in October 2013 underneath an online report that the State Liberal government was considering proposals to alter the form and use of the Port Melbourne Football Ground. “Matt’s” point was primarily that Port Melbourne was changing irrevocably, and that both adult residents and their children had interests less clearly focused firstly, on localism (Port Melbourne football team is an old VFL, rather than nationally-focused AFL, team) and on Australian Rules football itself. “Matt” was of the opinion that soccer was becoming more popular in the area. For him, sad as it was, “Port” locals could not be “stuck in some 1950s time warp dream world”.

This paper uses personal reminiscences, social media and local history to examine the changing conception of what it might mean to “belong” to the increasingly gentrified suburb of Port Melbourne in the second decade of the 20th century. In doing so it examines the putative legends of Port Melbourne football and, specifically, the Port Melbourne football ground itself. How might an ardently pro-development planning minister tackle the public relations quandary of adding urban housing and infrastructure for 80 000 residents to a well-known and well-loved inner-city environment? The paper examines Port Melbourne’s past, present and future through the lens of this icon of local sporting and social infrastructure: the ground’s, the players’, and the supporters’ legends.

Keywords: football, gentrification, community, social media, belonging
“A fight on your hands”

I was born in South Melbourne and grew up in Port Melbourne the AFL ripped the heart out of South Melbourne Community when they sent the Swans to Sydney and now you want to take the only Football Club we have left and turn it into a recreation playground well it won’t happen the Port Melbourne football club and Port Melbourne Colts football Club are like Shrines to the Port Melbourne and South Melbourne Communities, Games or Battles have fought on there won and lost, the Clubs are just not Club's they carry a lot History our Fathers have played there and our Grand fathers have played there and also our Great Grand Fathers or have been members and buy rights both grounds should be protected by Historical Society because the Club's and grounds are Historical to the Community it is the only local Football Club the Port Melbourne Community has left and they wont take lying down, so try to think of another location and also its the Clubs give all children and teenagers some physical exercise. ( PLUS EXPECT A FIGHT ON YOUR HANDS) because we aren’t losing another Club (“Wayne”, 2013).

The changing nature of Australian suburban loyalties and culture is a phenomenon often commented on and rarely seriously investigated, perhaps in part because of the difficulty in tracking or quantifying such changes. The demise of inner-city working class culture is typified as a by-product of gentrification. The fact that such culture is often aligned to related networks such as kinship and religious adherence, which have undergone so much alteration that they are no longer seen as a cornerstone of working class (or most Australians’) lives, also impacts on the way such loyalties are seen. This is to say: the common understanding of Australian inner city life before the demise of manufacturing and the rise of middle-class appropriation of the inner city in the 1970s and 80s, can typically be ascribed to such a large range of social changes as to appear a foregone conclusion.

One particular aspect of inner-city life which may provide insight into local “belonging” is that of football (or other sporting) support. In Melbourne, football patronage and, to a lesser extent, participation is a rite of passage for many and to hold out against at least token allegiance to a team is cause for comment. AFL aficionados will point to the game’s embrace of gender diversity in its long-held openness to female spectators and in more recent years females in administration and conduct of the game (all, that is, aside from players although there is a small but robust women’s football league). The game’s openness to racial diversity is still a thorny question, particularly given racial abuse incidents at AFL games in 2015 which spread to broader media debate. In these and other respects, however, it is true that football reflects and impacts on society at a host of levels, many of which objectively seem to have nothing to do with the actual game or even its players.

Football is also one of the sporting institutions with local affiliations that have long served communities as a rallying point. Many organized sports – including tennis, cricket and lawn bowls – became a locus of belonging for local suburban living and allegiances, and have provided a site for the reinvention of local attachment to community and ideas about its character. In time, these locally grounded affiliations have also become a potent focus on loss, change and the drawbacks (or benefits) of gentrification (Lewi and Nichols, 2010). Here we concur with the view that a sense of community can be in part defined by a sense of membership in terms of feelings of having a “right to belong” (Talen, 1999, p. 1370) and that participation in or affiliation with collective groups and
networks in a local community is one agreed dimension of community sustainability. (Dempsey et al. 2009)

“Belonging” has been developed in the last twenty years as a key concept in the context of urban, cultural and social theory to further elaborate on places and their attachment. (Leach, 2002; Butler, 1990; Probyn, 1996; Bell, 1990). Following Probyn, for example, we adopt the term “belonging” loosely here rather than say “identity”, as she suggests that it captures “more accurately the desire for some sort of attachment be it to other people, places, or modes of being and the ways in which individuals and groups are caught within wanting to belong in a process that is fueled by yearning rather than the positing of identity as a stable state” (Probyn, 1996, p. 19).

Therefore alongside existing scholarly inquiries into urban belonging through the lenses of, say, gender and ethnicity, football in Australia and its spectatorship is regarded in this paper as a potent ritualized activity and performance typically grounded in particular local areas. The history of the Port Melbourne Football Club – often known as “the Borough” – and the recent controversy over its ground, is one such indicator of local belonging and its ensuing nostalgia. This story has been researched through local oral histories, newspapers and recent social media, in particular Facebook and other place-specific online sites, which become a valuable tool in helping to reimagine a group of people’s attachment to particular places, things and rituals (Fortier, 1999, p. 42).

North Port Oval has been used as a cricket and football ground since 1874. Initially an ad hoc space, by 1927 the erection of the Norman Goss Pavilion saw it entrenched as the chief venue for both these sports in the area. It has ebbed and flowed in importance since. When North Port was threatened with transformation to an all-purpose sports ground as part of the Fishermans Bend redevelopment project launched in 2012 by the newly elected Baillieu government, Port Melbourne traditionalists were inspired into heated discussion and dialogue. That Port Melbourne itself has become largely gentrified (including a substantial area to a putatively new urbanist template) adds depth to the passionate honour of ‘tradition’ in inner-city Melbourne.

**Frequent melees and tea in china cups**

Indicative of such passions, in 1949 an incident took place at North Port oval which some described as “one of the worst in Association football history.” It began in the final quarter of a game between Port Melbourne and Oakleigh; rover Nick Bloom “was awarded a free kick near the Port Melbourne supporters’ grandstand boundary.” Three Oakleigh players objected, and “punches were swung”:

[A] spectator knocked unconscious was felled by a “hay-maker” from an Oakleigh player...

Police had to separate players and spectators, and escort the spectators from the ground before the game could continue.

...A man jumped the arena fence and ran to an Oakleigh player as if to strike him. The Oakleigh player wheeled around and felled him, knocking him out.

About 40 spectators then jumped the fence, and joined in the fight. They ran at players and more punches were thrown. (“Players and Spectators”)
Similar reports were made during this era, and confusion over veracity of reportage was also rife ("Incidents"). The reputation for violence at games is a part of the PMFC's heritage as it is understood in Melbourne. But it is only one part of a historically entrenched institution that brings both positive and negative connotations and territorialities (Al Hamoud and Tassinary, 2004).

The team’s nickname dates from its time as Sandridge Borough (1860-1884) and then Port Melbourne Borough until 1893 when it was designated a Town. Reasons for retention of the arcane ‘Borough’ designation are obscure and it seems unlikely even that it is related to a historical disappointment: the decision made in 1896 to form a Victorian Football League from six clubs which broke away from the VFA but which left Port Melbourne somewhat on the outer (“After the Ball”; Keenan, 2001). The club was strong in the 1890s and remained fairly consistently so, remaining one of the more successful VFA teams throughout the 20th century (“Weak VFA Clubs”). It became something of a renegade organisation in the 1930s, when police were not tolerated at Port Melbourne games after the police shooting of a striking dock worker.

There were threats in mid-century to the ground’s “exclusive” use. Two of these came in the early 1950s, just before the introduction of television brought a major change to the way Australians experienced spectator sport and may have derived from new sporting ventures jostling for position in viewing habits. One is a 1953 proposal to install lighting to allow for night baseball games (at North Port Oval at a cost of up to £6000) – in Adelaide, it was said, the game could attract audiences of up to 12 000 (Night baseball). Another – apparently far more contentious – was an offer of £3000 (presumably, per year) by the “soccer authorities” to appropriate the oval for soccer games, apparently at a time when “the Football Association [was] losing ground both in its spectator appeal and its playing standard” and its use of former VFL players were likened to supping on “the crumbs which fall from the rich man’s table” (“Soccer Unlikely”). However lucrative this might have been, abandonment of the local VFA team by any Port Melbourne councilor was seen as political suicide.

By the mid-1990s, as the VFL and its various teams underwent significant recalibration to face the 21st century (most VFL teams, for instance, became “feeder” clubs for AFL teams) Port Melbourne notoriously retained its reputation for on-ground violence yet also reputedly continued to serve tea at its kiosk in china cups.

Big city plans

In February 2011, Planning Minister in the new Baillieu government, Matthew Guy, announced as one of the government’s first major projects the rezoning and “urban renewal” of Fishermans Bend. Guy’s vision for the area effectively remade the area between the CBD and Port Melbourne in its entirety – including old former residential but latterly largely industrial areas such as Montague – as high-rise apartment housing. New suburb names were applied and street patterns sketchily rolled out. Guy has been criticised frequently since that time for what has recently been described as a “preference for ad hoc, laissez faire development” and most specifically for failing to institute any “mechanism to capture any of the hundreds of millions of dollars in immediate uplift in land value in the area” (Millar et al). It was later revealed that Guy had received, but ignored, a report on toxic groundwater in the area (Lucas, 2015).
From both planning and political perspectives, this project was hamfisted; a report commissioned by the successor government to the Baillieu/Napthine administration has been harshly critical of Guy’s handling of Fishermans Bend (Millar et al 2015). Yet Guy’s actions at Fishermans Bend are symptomatic of a legacy of big-picture residential projects slated for Port Melbourne, and arguably more in number than any other part of Melbourne.

One of the best-known historical residential projects in the area was the reclamation of a “sandy, windswept expanse of crown land” (Harris, 119) in Port Melbourne’s north-west to create the first tranche of what was to become known as Garden City. The “State Bank Houses” produced in the 1920s have come to be some of Port Melbourne’s most valuable real estate. They came with a promise of further major developments to enhance the grandeur of the area’s major roads and also to reduce congestion for the port (Fisherman’s Bend: extensive development plan, 1924). There was to be a tunnel under the Yarra linking North Port and Williamstown (Fishermen’s Bend: Plan for Model Suburb, 1924).

The major infrastructure was not forthcoming, but the area developed further as a sought-after residential district: “Port Melbourne,” the city declared in its centenary celebrations in 1939, “is a complete local community” (COPM 1939: 33). It grew substantially when the Housing Commission of Victoria built its first large-scale greenfield development to the original Garden City’s north. The Commission envisaged football and cricket grounds, tennis and netball, in Fisherman’s Bend at this time.

Known as a primarily working class area – the Housing Commission added more stock in the 1970s, this time in the form of low-rise clustered units – the City nevertheless began to strive towards a greater social mix within its boundaries. With a peculiar lack of interest in recognising “migrants” as “people” it noted in 1974, for instance, that the “people of Port Melbourne form a closely knit group and are very loyal to their area. The migrants also form strong groups and do not like having to leave Port Melbourne either.” (npn)

A contemporaneous Loder and Bayly report professed a desire for “An increase in the Housing Stock, New Houses Designed and priced for Higher Status, White Collar Families or Couples” – requirement that “a sufficient middle-class population is established for it to develop some self identification and consequently some degree of local and internal cohesion and inter-action” (Loder and Bayly 1974 p. 10). This paper was inferentially critical of a major proposal from this period by the architect-developer Meldrum, for a Sandridge Mega-City across 900 acres housing 54000 people (p. 12).

While the Meldrum proposal did not eventuate it set a course for a range of iterations of proposed large-scale housing projects. Perhaps the most peculiar of these was music industry magnate Glenn Wheatley’s Seaport Village, based on San Diego’s shopping and residential precinct and including a 5,000 seat entertainment centre, eight hectare shopping village, and a 500 room hotel (Millar 1987). Mirvac’s winning proposal was architect Robert Peck’s design; similarly to Melbourne’s Southbank, it was initiated under the Cain/Kirner government of 1982-92 but developed by the succeeding Kennett government (1992-99). Sandridge aka Bayside was a $250 million development of 850 houses and apartments, eight “Southbank-style” restaurants and “a marina and the proposed immigration museum” (Gallagher, 1995). The “immigration museum” is perhaps the most intriguing proposal here, promoting a narrative of Port Melbourne avoiding local community in favour of the
area’s importance to the national story as the first disembarkation point for millions of migrants to Australia.

The Sandridge project collapsed in 1993, and the elite canal development gave way to the less ambitious, though still contentious, Beacon Cove – a “new urbanist” brownfield development inserted alongside the Housing Commission and “State Bank House” estates of the 1920s-70s and 19th century Port Melbourne. One casualty of Beacon Cove was the “Dutch modernist” Missions to Seamen building from 1937, which had been used as a community arts space, but which was demolished in the late 1990s despite determined protest from the Bayside Development Action Group (Porter 1994).

Saving the Borough

Within this context of urban redevelopment proposals and gentrification, what role has the local football team played in retaining a character for Port Melbourne? Clearly there are no hard and fast rules for the establishment of a successful nexus between sporting team and local identity; and the Port Melbourne reputation for violence is not something often valorized by football, or local, historians.

The ground’s location is perhaps itself part of the story. It is not “in” Port Melbourne per se (though it was within the boundaries of the old City of Port Melbourne). Rather, it is near North Port station, closer to the suburbs of Montague and South Melbourne than to bayside Port Melbourne. Montague changed radically throughout the 20th century from dense residential to largely manufacturing and other industrial use; what might once have been a relatively central location for many became a 20-30 minute walk for most Port supporters. The ground was therefore untouched by the changes in, and green- or brownfield residential additions to, Port Melbourne itself, while remaining a frequent part of many Port Melbourne lives, as seen below.

The present authors have written elsewhere on the use of social media in cultivating a version of a preserved and remembered Port Melbourne amongst its putative working class members, many of them no longer living in the suburb (Nichols and Lewi, 2015). Port Melbourne Football Club’s status as a VFL, not AFL club, has perhaps marked it as even more important in the local sense (confusingly, the “A-list” teams in Australian Rules were “VFL” clubs until 1989).

Port Melbournites would traditionally support Port Melbourne in the VFA, and South Melbourne in the old VFL. It may well be that the move, in 1982, to force South Melbourne to become “Sydney” impacted on Port Melbournites’ determination to retain possession of their team and ground. Andrews writes that the relocation, and renaming of South Melbourne:

> demonstrated a total disregard for the traditional local roots and cultural significance of the club. Indeed, the move proved so unpopular with certain sections of the South Melbourne “community” that they became embroiled in an ultimately doomed three-and-a-half month court battle to keep the club in Victoria (Andrews, 114).

There are, perhaps unsurprisingly, a range of Facebook pages and groups dedicated to the Port Melbourne Football Club in various ways. These are illuminating in considering the importance of the physical setting of the club and its memories (Gregory, 2015).
One of these, “Save the Home of the Borough – North Port Oval Port Melbourne” began in October 2013 in direct response to the Fishermans Bend Urban Renewal Project: “Page 57 shows North Port Oval as a [sic] open space” the first post declared. The second was a link to a Herald Sun article announcing that Port Melbourne Football Club (and its spokesmen, general manager Barry Kidd and president Peter Bromley) “fears it could be wiped off the map” under the renewal plan:

The Bend’s draft vision shows North Port Oval marked as public open space and one of several “new or expanded parks... “If this proposal was to materialize it is likely to lead to the end of the Port Melbourne Football Club” Mr. Kidd said. He said if the oval’s perimeter fence was removed, the club would lose at least $250, 000 a year in ticket sales (McCauley 2013).

In addition to fears for the club’s finances, both Kidd and Bromley opined that were the club’s ground to be made accessible to schoolchildren, it would undoubtedly become “unplayable”. These kinds of debates between particular clubs’ claims to amenities and sporting grounds, versus the push towards opening up ovals and parks to more universal access and use, in particular for children, have been played out all over Australia in the 20th century as recorded in local newspapers and club minutes (Lewi, 2010 p. 167)

Andrews (1998, 112) writes of the “football communities”... based upon specific inner-city locales... which produced a strong sense of identity that was sharpened against the identities of rival suburbs and clubs. The Facebook page urged all supporters to have their say in feedback forums and to help “Keep Port at Port”. On the page, over two years of postings, we find an encapsulation of a remarkable range of ways history can be used in arguing for preservation of a space.

There remained a modicum of engagement amongst supporters until the page’s moderators sparked interest by asking “What are your most Memorable Moments at North Port Oval?” Many responses were directly related to the physicality of the ground, and the position at which contributors were placed; comments ranged from “Standing on the hill at the Willi rd [Williamstown Road] end with family watching Freddy slot through goals” to “The old grandstand behind the goals watching the games with Mrs Charles” and “Selling one and two cent lollies from the stall under the historical scoreboard in the days of Freddy Cook, Arms Anderson, Biff Dermott, etc, etc”.

A similar wave of memories was provoked in September 2014 with an image – seemingly a still from a videotape – of the well-loved, but now gone, “donut van” on the prominent “Port Melbourne Football Ground” page. Responses included:

I recall getting donuts on the way out... and we had a smile cause Port had won. My primary school days footy memories going to South on a Sat with my Nan thinking we will probably lose then off to Port on a Sunday with Margie knowing we would win... Shy girl on Saturdays then very confident girl on a Sunday.

It is notable that children’s early experience of football as both spectators and competitors are frequently cited in discussion of the value of North Port in the 21st century. There are numerous photographs of young (pre-teen) fans on the Port Melbourne Football Club site (the following quotes are from this site and attributed only to online “pen-names”). “Jane”, arguing in favour of retention of the ground on the Herald Sun’s report of its imperilment suggests that many children have their
“first kick of the cherry” on the ground; a peculiar, yet engaging, turn of phrase. Her further point was clear: “It is one of our oldest and finest football clubs and continues to serve us all very well. Leave it alone.” In the same brief thread, another correspondent suggests that Aussie Rules’ time at Port Melbourne has passed. Provocatively, he uses the term “football” to denote that which most Australians would still call “soccer”:

Thems the breaks, times are changing, the oval should be turned into football pitches to reflect what is really going on in Melbourne. Football is growing like never before, especially with kids & Aussie Rules is in decline. The stats back this up & this sort of explains the old guard media & their vicious attacks on football. But the people are speaking & councils must do what the will of the people is, not be stuck in some 1950’s time warp nostalgic dream world. The revolution is in full swing.

This correspondent is, unsurprisingly perhaps, in the minority. Most of those engaged in the debate were conservative in their approach. Another “Save the Home of the Borough” correspondent provided a lifetime’s worth of reminiscences, summing up not only affection for the team and players but also a life in Port Melbourne now largely gone:

I have so many after 40 years;— seeing us unfurl 7 flags, commiserating after 6 gf losses, my mum cooking burra burgers, all the volunteer jobs, bashing the nails out of tin on the fence, the great old players, our exciting young kids, banter with opposition supporters, abusing umpires, advising opposition players how to kick for goal, making friends with players and their families, friendships with other burra supporters, the great wins, the close loses, the games we were robbed in, winning finals, the rivalries, and now sharing it all with my fiancé, and some government department thinks they can take that all away - good luck trying - GO BURRA!

Indeed, a modicum of the old testiness rears up amongst the respondents. One, for instance, recalls “The many punch ons in the crowd and on the ground.” The importance of Port Melbourne in the national evolution of Australian Rules football is also emphasized; a short list published on the page under the title “Some firsts for the Borough – truly VFA’s most innovative club.” Here it is claimed that Port Melbourne players pioneered the wearing of numbers on guernseys (in 1905) and that the ground was the first to use a time clock (in 1896). “These are some of the most important innovations in the world,” a commenter suggests. Another adds that the North Port oval is important to the game generally, and not just to Port Melbourne itself. “It should not matter which VFL team you support,” writes one contributor, “this iconic ground needs to be kept open and viable. In an era [sic] that doesn't have a lot of its history preserved - this must be kept to preserve the history of the game in a heartland of it.”

Port Melbourne’s association with working class pride is identifiable as a key element in this discussion. This is well contrasted with another “Port” team – Fremantle Dockers, created as the “second” West Australian AFL team – who, Ray Jones writes, fabricated and inserted a working class history for itself into the fabric of gentrifying Fremantle. For Jones, this is starkly illustrated by the “near socialist realism” of the team’s logo (Jones 275); he claims that “the club has worked hard and relatively successfully to create the appearance of an apparently long-standing relationship between the team and the town” (276).
Another writer sums up much of the angst of old Port Melbournites in the face of gentrification:

I, like many would of loved to of bought in port but the new port has pushed prices so high that blue collar workers have to look 20 + k away with the new folk not having as much appreciation of the area as the people were born and bred there. This is evident at the footy. How many of the new folk buy a membership, attend games or even watch the team on tv? Hardly any and its that kind of lack of community support from the new people that the traditional port people think is just not good enough. If these new folk cant respect the people who have been in the area for years ... then they will ruin the feel of the area. I’m not saying that port should only be for people who have been in the area for years, if new people want to come in then by all means do so however they need to respect the people who have been there long before them... and perhaps blend in with the community instead of trying to change it.

Conclusion

The controversy over North Port Oval – a storm in a china tea cup, as it transpires – is one more example of the political charge attendant on Sports Clubs, their facilities and grounds. They have long been seen as markers of differentiation and belonging in a suburban context often characterized for its ubiquity. The allegiances and attachments they inspire are often not made manifest until these ordinary facilities and grounds are threatened or gone. This loss has been magnified in Australia with the change away from local football leagues, towards a fabricated national code, and most recently a shift (real or imagined) away from the AFL all together towards the international code of soccer.

Sporting history resonates therefore with histories of places that were once locally distinctive - in the case of Port Melbourne’s working class port and manufacturing economy – towards a gentrified and globalised community. Recreation moves, therefore, to gastro-pub lunches on café tables by the bay, instead of tea in china cups – or spectator fights for that matter – at the ground. These tensions and shared memories are being recorded, arguably more than ever before through social media platforms. Facebook and other local nostalgia sites therefore provide a potent resource in understanding attachments to local places that “matter” to local people, both in terms of potentially lost histories and in the face of urban redevelopment and regeneration. Potentially they can represent a (perhaps ad hoc) cataloguing of evidence of significance when arguing for the physical preservation of such sites of belonging and social sustainability (Dempsey et al, 2009).

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Rooms for the Memory
The 30-year iconic legacy of *Dogs in Space*

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2016 marks the 30th anniversary of Richard Lowenstein’s acclaimed *Dogs in Space*, a fictionalized cinematic memoir of nominal bohemians in the Melbourne suburb of Richmond. Set 6-8 years before the film’s release, Lowenstein utilised genuine participants in the events/milieu depicted, as well as key locations, notably the house central to the film’s story.

Icons abound in this film and its subsequent career: an ‘icon’ of Australian music and culture in Michael Hutchence; the ‘Dogs in Space house’ (in Berry Street, Richmond) has become a shrine for fans of the film; and the film itself features numerous ‘icons’ of inner-city Melbourne’s built environment, including the Pelaco factory and venues such as St Kilda’s Seaview Ballroom.

Questions raised in examination of this important film relate to its legacy in the 21st century – including creative men and women whose profiles were both enhanced and distorted by their involvement in its production – and the way in which it is both remembered and understood in the present day. What does *Dogs in Space* tell us about Melbourne forty years ago (when it is set), thirty years ago (when it was released) and now? How do impressions of the film tally or conflict between those who ‘lived it’ and those who were either born later, or are not Melbournites, and subsequently come to see it? Using original interview and fieldwork material, this paper reflects on a remarkable document of both the 1970s and the 1980s, seen through a 2016 lens.

Keywords:

**Introduction**

‘As we were living through it it was film worthy material. An exciting period in music, fashion and the arts’ – Richard Lowenstein, 1986
In 1977 a teenager from Mt Waverley, Sam Sejavka, quit St Kevins College half way through his final year and moved into a flat in St Kilda. Sejavka was determined to be a writer, or an actor, or a performer, and his subsequent relocations between various share houses and apartments around Melbourne (and a brief period in Sydney) were part of a long period of diffident restlessness. In 1979, he began to write songs for, and sing in, the band which through various permutations became the Ears. The Ears made two singles for the Missing Link label in 1980 and ‘81. At the time of the release of the first of these singles, ‘Leap for Lunch’, Sejavka was living in a large share house in Berry Street, Richmond with a number of diverse young men including a film student, Richard Lowenstein, who made a video for the single in the house. The following year – the last year of The Ears’ existence in its original iteration – Sejavka’s girlfriend, Christine Harding, died of a heroin overdose. The group later reconstituted themselves as Beargarden and signed to a major label, but – career highlights such as the supporting Culture Club on tour aside – were never able to ascend to commercial success. Sejavka became a playwright and actor; Lowenstein became a film director. Less than five years after the demise of the Ears, Lowenstein began work on a film to star the ascendant pop star Michael Hutchence in the role of ‘Sam’ in a production loosely based on Lowenstein’s experiences observing the Melbourne punk/new wave music scene of the late 1970s and early 80s.

The film, *Dogs in Space*, caused controversy when it opened in 1986 and has never sat comfortably in any genre either within Australian films of that era or since, or globally: it holds an ‘ambiguous place’ (Speed, 2009, 161). It is ostensibly a ‘music film’ (though never, of course, a musical), arguably a film dealing with ‘youth’ subjects, most particularly drugs; a piece of historical filmmaking exploring and even in certain respects exposing a subculture (but in no real sense a documentary – indeed, director Richard Lowenstein made a documentary, *We’re Living on Dog Food*, in 2006 which explains how much of *Dogs in Space* is/was fiction); and in some respects a comedy, the film adheres to none of the above.

Certainly, it satisfied few at the time of its release, and Lowenstein was blamed as much as praised in the mid-1980s for basing a film so concertedly on his friends’ lives from less than a decade before, and yet distorting their personal narratives for the sake of a story. This was perhaps particularly galling for some of those involved considering that the film was commonly supposed to have no, or little, story altogether.

This paper discusses the film’s scope and value, as well as the particular way it recast or reshaped an era. Herein we also hope to show the various ways the film has been understood and represented, often in ways which do not do it justice as a multilayered text. Ultimately, we strive to assess the value and ‘use’ of the film in 2016, when it has achieved a cult status to disparate groups in both Australia and elsewhere. The film is both an icon itself (Facebook groups dedicated to both the film and its ‘star’, Michael Hutchence, demonstrate the importance it has held for many since its release) and concerns itself with a place and time which has also become iconic – that is, more than merely the subject of sentimentality). Through these means, the house in which the film was made has become an icon – as well as, for many, a place of pilgrimage.

The house
In October 2015, Heritage Victoria declared that a residence at 18 Berry Street, Richmond was ‘of historical significance to the state of Victoria’ (Fig. 1). This was, in part, for its structural uniqueness: it is one of the few extant timber terraces from the late 19th century. It was also marked out by its association with its commissioning ‘builder’, Henry Frencham, a goldfields pioneer born in Ireland and arriving in the tiny hamlet of Melbourne at the age of 24 in 1840. Frencham claimed to have discovered the Bendigo gold field in an attempt to prevent an exodus from Melbourne to the NSW gold rush (Death, 1897). He died in the house – itself known as Berry during his lifetime – in 1897, at the age of 82.

Additionally:

The Residence at 18 Berry Street Richmond is of social significance as the primary location for the filming of the Australian film Dogs in Space. Dogs in Space portrayed the sex, drugs and rock 'n' roll subculture of the late 1970s, one of the first Australian films to do so with a degree of mainstream success. It starred, among others, singer Michael Hutchence, and was an important cultural reference point for young people in the 1980s. The house is still readily recognised by many who have seen the film.

At least one other newsworthy death took place at 18 Berry Street: on 13 January 1911 a 29-year-old unemployed rubber worker with a history of mental illness, Edward John McIntosh, hanged himself from a beam in an upstairs room of the house, a loaded pistol in his pocket (Young Man’s Suicide).
Yet for many the house is associated with the death of a fictional character, based on a death that
did not really happen there: that of Anna, the character played by Saskia Post in Dogs in Space. Of
course, the death itself was fiction. But on one of the soundtrack commentaries to the film’s 2006
reissue, director Lowenstein explains that ‘No-one died at that house’; Christine Harding, the woman
Anna’s character was based on, died in St Kilda (on 20 March, 1981 – a date worth noting as it was
some years after the period in which Dogs in Space is ostensibly set) (http://sailsofoblivion.blogspot.com.au).

The Berry Street house, as will be discussed below, is notoriously the ‘same place’ at which the
events depicted in the film took place. In fact, it was only one of many. The reason that so much care
was taken to use the Berry Street house in the film was surely its cinematic qualities; Lowenstein
was keen to find a ‘double storey house at head of a T-junction’; his location scouts found three
appropriate houses in Melbourne but none at which a street faced directly into the house. The
importance of this is underpinned in the shot which opens the film.

Tim McLaughlan, who has a minor role in the film and who lived in the ‘real’ household (the
character of ‘Tim’ is played by Nique Needles) remarks of the house that:

It was one of those classic two story late Victorian jobs where you had a corridor on the
ground floor going straight through the centre and you had bedroom, bedroom, lounge
room, kitchen, bathroom and then upstairs you had two beautifully big bedrooms
overlooking a balcony. Then you had a little small pokey bedroom, which was originally
mine, and then you had another large bedroom which was Richard’s, in those days.
There were lots of bedrooms and lots of flexibility in the bedrooms and there was lots of
flexibility in the beds.

One is reminded of classic architectural layouts in classic films – Hulot’s house in Mon Oncle, for
instance (and his sister’s), or the garden view in Rear Window This is particularly so in scenes in
which the entire layout or set is shown in intricate detail. The Berry Street house clearly lent itself to
such an approach. Lowenstein himself said at the time of filming that:

I think the area’s quite important to the feel of the film and definitely the house ... the
script was written for that house so if we hadn’t have had the house it would’ve been a
fairly major rewrite for a lot of the scenes ... All the choreography in the script was
designed for that house. All the ways you can go through the house because the rooms
are largely interconnecting.

The house in film language and Dogs’ status as a documentary

There are at least two aspects in which Dogs in Space avoids conventional film language, and
through which some central elements of it have been (perhaps deliberately for Lowenstein as
director) misunderstood. The first relates to 18 Berry Street, and the lack of conventional
‘establishing’ shots so that, for instance a scene in which the unnamed girl (played by Deanna Bond)
who often serves as the film’s audience’s proxy, has her hair dyed by Anna and her friends, is
actually in another house – indeed, there is a clarification made on the commentary tracks of the
DVD that in the ‘real’ scenario of the film there was a ‘boy’s house’ (Berry Street) and a ‘girl’s house’.
The first of the two featured extended party scenes is in yet another house (the second is in Berry Street). That is, there are at least three houses depicted in the film, but even the most observant viewer could be forgiven for believing that all the action takes place at 18 Berry Street. This perception is underscored, not diminished, by the fact that the house itself is large and its interior varied: as Charles Meo and Tim McLaughlin observe in their commentary, ‘There was a bit of social stratification... the upstairs rooms were much nicer than the downstairs ones.’ This difference is made clear in an impressive tracking shot introducing Chris Heyward’s unnamed character during which he ascends the house’s central stairwell and addresses the occupants of one room on the first floor. Ollie Olsen, the music director of Dogs in Space who performs in one scene, recalls on the film’s second commentary track that his band Whirlywird and another featured prominently, the Primitive Calculators ‘were actually living next door to each other we had these two shopfronts in north Fitzroy so we had this kind of constant interaction between the two households’ (Olsen, 2008).

The second (deliberate?) deviation from conventional cinema tropes – perhaps less important – is the time frame covered by the film. There is one subscript at the beginning of the action explaining that we are in Melbourne, 1978. How time plays out thereafter is unclear; as mentioned above, the real events on which the film is based extend at least to 1981. Once again, the viewer may understand the action to take place over two years or two weeks; there are very few signposts and even ‘Luchio’, who occupies one of the front bedrooms in the house and appears to be constantly studying for exams, may be doing so over a period of weeks or years. This is important largely because so many of the film’s elements are so temporal: the ‘little bands’, for instance, were intended to play two or three shows, and the punk scene itself was open to question and continual renewal and re-creation almost as soon as it began.

There is another, related issue which matters more in regards to Dogs in Space’s status as, if not a documentary, then as a social document. Producer Glenys Rowe proclaims, in a piece of contemporary footage included in the We’re Living on Dog Food film, that when she read Lowenstein’s original script she ‘felt like I was reading a documentary’ because it was ‘extraordinarily true to life.’ Similarly Mick Lewis, guitarist for the Ears, suggests in The Making of Dogs in Space that ‘I thought it was a documentary’. Yet these are, of course, not mutually inclusive.

There is a distinct possibility that the anarchy of the late 1970s at 18 Berry St was revived for many during filming in 1985. Lowenstein certainly encouraged the idea of barely controlled productivity in The Making of, claiming:

we don’t tend to work in a general conventional manner, where the director tells everyone what to do, we tend to work more with a pool of ideas. Everyone is able to suggest shots or directions. I do like to keep a flow of ideas and a lot of things we’ve done in this film and the other films have come from ideas that come out of a communal feeling of everyone pooling their ideas on set.

In this regard there may well be a second, more subtle reiteration of the original events in the film, via a particular rejection of the auteur theory on Lowenstein’s part. Additionally mention must be made of spontaneity and the absurdity and inspirational capacity for reactions and interactions between cast members comprised of people who were ‘there’ the first time around – and people playing the people who were ‘there’. Perhaps it is not so much activity in front of the camera that
Rowe is talking about when she explains in The Making of... that the film was ‘out of control and I was meant to keep it under control’.

It is not, perhaps, wise to embark on comparisons between the events on which a film is based and the way they are portrayed on screen: these are two very different things and the strong similarities between place and character in Dogs in Space fudge the distinction, as does the time between reality and film version – between five to eight years. In Charles Meo and Tim McLaughlin’s commentary track to Dogs in Space, it is declared that ‘Berry Street is actually a compression of several different places but it’s the coolest one of the lot.’ There were, in fact, at least three Dogs in Space houses – that is, places where Sam Sejavka and his bandmates in the Ears lived during the late 1970s and early 1980s. Sejavka claims, in his contribution to We’re Living on Dog Food that ‘We were living in a house in Wattletree Road [85 Wattletree Road, Armadale] and we wrote “dogs in space” on every piece of furniture’. Sejavka’s diary, which he published online in 2009, includes a long list of houses and flats he lived in between his late teens and early 20s, largely in Armadale or Richmond (three each) but also in St Kilda and Milton St, Elwood. The woman depicted in the film as ‘Anna’, Christine, was unknown to Sejavka at the time he lived at Berry Street.

The music, the music industry and the community

Perhaps part of the reason Dogs in Space resonates for a new generation of fans is the temporal transportability of the many scenes of decadence and mayhem. As Tony Moore’s Dancing with Empty Pocke ts demonstrates, there are commonalities in decade after decade of Australian bohemianism – and bohemianism around the world (Moore 2012).

In a mid-1980s interview included in We’re Living on Dog Food, Richard Lowenstein says:

The late 70s in Australia and all around the world [was] similar to the 60s and the hippies and the beat era and it was a time of quite remarkable fashion music and art changes in the music and art field and it seemed to come with it a period of excitement and vitality.

To be a punk (or a fellow traveller) in Australia in the second half of the 1970s was to be a member of a club with rare interests and values, and even gaining access to the music was difficult. We’re Living on Dog Food begins with various interviewees listing records and bands they knew and loved from mid-late 70s; the Primitive Calculators declare the music ‘formless and undirectional’ and Philip Brophy states that ‘nothing was validated’ and imagery was more important than music; Rowland S Howard suggests of the music one loved that ‘it was like hidden treasure.’ Clinton Walker, for his part, declares the punks of the time ‘snivelling simpering dillettantes’.

These are perceptions, and all have their validity. However, the truth is less dramatic. ‘Rock music wasn’t crap before punk,’ writes Mark Perry, of the band Alternative TV and editor/publisher of the British fanzine Sniffin’ Glue:

but I’d always had this feeling that there was a gap between us, the fans, and them, the bands, that you couldn’t cross. It was like a special club that had the Beatles and the Stones as founders and the only way to become a member was to sit for years alone in your bedroom learning how to play guitar (Perry 2000, 11).
One of the remarkable things about punk rock was the way in which it refracted aspirations of musicians young and old. For James Freud, fresh from the eastern Melbourne suburb of Laburnum, it was a way for his band Teenage Radio Stars to get noticed and find a way into the industry – although ironically the ‘Teenage Radio Stars’ which did achieve hit single status was an almost entirely different band, with Freud the only constant. To use and abandon a ‘punk’ image was itself ‘punk’ behavior. For others the stage and the scene were merely a moment for a theatrical art project, such as the Little Bands movement designed entirely to perform a limited number of songs for a limited number of performances.

The grim humour of Lowenstein’s *Dogs in Space* punks is, firstly, that while there is no overt discussion of ambition, Lowenstein clearly intends us to understand that the band at the heart of the film has no grand ideals or desire for social change, but that at least some of them hope to materially gain from music. This is referenced superficially in the household’s obsession with the pop show *Countdown* (although, as Peter Wilmoth’s book *Glad All Over* demonstrates, this was not unique or unusual) but more directly in the film’s final scene, in which it is made plain that the group’s otherwise unfocussed, cowardly and selfish singer Sam has built a successful career from his ostensibly humble beginnings – and the tragedy of the death of his girlfriend Anna.

Similarly, the film explores (covertly: there are no ‘dole cheque’ discussions) what Stuart Grant describes in *We’re Living on Dog Food* as the financial underpinning of the entire society depicted: ‘What made that scene possible was the legacy of the Whitlam government... they made the dole liveable’

**The politics**

As mentioned above, political commitment in *Dogs in Space* is a subject either for ridicule or, at the very least, objective observation. There are a range of minor characters – few of them genuinely ‘of’ the core cast – who express (or parrot) the rhetoric of political activism. At the time of filming, Lowenstein claimed that the film was about ‘a group of people in the house and visiting the house – trying to capture all the different subgroups and subcultures that were round in the late like the dying out of the hippie era, the death of student politics, and the growth of the punk era.’

Gary Foley’s minor character Barry is in *Dogs in Space* largely as a humorous figure. Like Chris Heyward, who dominates only one scene, Foley was already a known actor, having taken the ‘central Aboriginal role’ (Malone, 1987, 73) in *Backroads* and a film which slightly predates *Dogs in Space* but which might be considered its Sydney counterpart, *Going Down*. Peter Malone’s assessment of the film in his *In Black and White in Colour* suggests that the characters in *Dogs in Space* are presented as idealistic yet often merely mouthing slogans for social current issues. They are on the edge of the drug culture. Rock and roll music is important. So are sexual relationships.’ He continues:

One of the issues is land rights for Aborigines. One young man remarks that he had a friend who had an Aboriginal girlfriend. “She was very nice.” We see Gary Foley portray a character who wanders in and out of the house with bottles of alcohol, with girls. We hear him arguing about the status of Aborigines, that women and blacks are both on the
bottom rung. He uses aggressive and blunt language to make his points. The whole film offers a mid-'80s interpretation of 1978 attitudes. (Malone, 1987, 79)

Malone’s assessment obfuscates a fine joke in the film, possibly inappropriate at an academic conference, in which Barry at turns joins Erica, an orange jumpsuit-wearing lesbian, in berating an unidentified partygoer on behalf of women’s rights and then threatens the same man with a broken bottle in the service of Aboriginal rights. Lowenstein adds, however, in one of the DVD commentary tracks that Barry had a larger presence in the original film; there was a deleted scene in which he ‘chases his girlfriend through the loungeroom with a knife and she huddles under the kitchen table with blood on her... they did have their own storyline and it was much more upfront.’

Other references to political activity are clearly played for comedic effect, perhaps best considered in the context of Lowenstein’s earlier work: his mother Wendy (1927–2006) was an oral and folk music historian whose activism was reinforced by her practice and his previous films Evictions and Strikebound were heavily influenced by her approach. In Dogs in Space characters mouth default platitudes which, while not incomprehensible to them or others, are hardly evidence of original thought. This is particularly so in the scene that shows the student activist Barbara visit the Berry Street house to ask that the group play a ‘Rock Against Unemployment’ benefit (‘it eats into the living tissue of the working classes like a tumour,’ she says). Her stream of rote-learnt rhetoric signifies her both as a bore and a shill (this is the sum total of her character, although as an attractive young woman and a keen dope smoker she has been accepted to some degree by the household as she later appears in a party scene) but most important, as a figure of fun. Lowenstein claims, in the first of the three commentaries to Dogs in Space, that ‘The young socialist league tried to get the Ears to play a benefit they couldn’t understand that a benefit meant they wouldn’t get paid.’ Other individuals – chiefly, the ‘hippies’ – are similarly shallow in their self-characterisation. However, as is ultimately made plain, the anti-social and/or ‘social drop-out’ attitudes of the majority of the household is in essence a chimera to mask hedonism, laziness or a generally supine attitude.

While Dogs in Space is a very different take on history (per se) to Wendy Lowenstein’s (which, while not po-faced, was partisan) with a much lighter approach to political struggle, notably one of the pub scenes in Dogs in Space features, Lowenstein later said, ‘an actor playing an oral historian... there was a guy who used to record the bands for posterity... for the future. Because we knew these bands weren’t going to be round for very long.’

Icons memorialized: Dogs in Space as a Michael Hutchence ‘vehicle’

Although this paper has, in many ways, problematized Dogs in Space as a document of a time and place, its reputation as a vehicle for the pop star Michael Hutchence (1960–1997) has been more damaging to its perceived value than any other feature. Hutchence’s role in the film, it seems, satisfies neither his fans nor his detractors; many denigrate his performance, yet those who consider him to be the film’s star can hardly be pleased with his limited screen presence; he is really only one of a large ensemble. As Lowenstein has often made clear, however, it is only Hutchence’s spontaneous agreement to star in the film which made its production possible (and indeed its initial premise was extemporized in the course of a pitching meeting to a prospective producer at which Hutchence happened to be present). Hutchence himself declared the film ‘a work of love’ (1986).
‘Michael was a better Sam than Sam was’, McLaughlin and Meo agree in their commentary, adding that ‘Sam was never a very good Sam.’ Sejavka, essentially, agrees: ‘I think he did a fantastic job of playing me’. Hutchence had one more acting role after this one, but concentrated primarily on music in the final decade of his life. One prominent product of the Dogs in Space era was the studio band Max Q, which featured Hutchence and Olsen as well as a number of other Melbourne underground music luminaries, temporarily given mainstream prominence for the duration of the album’s promotion. Max Q and the Dogs in Space soundtrack share a similar role in bringing a certain ethos to prominence in the mid-to-late 1980s at a time when there was little interest in non-commercial music or (to use an easy shorthand) ‘bohemia’.

Conclusion

Lowenstein says in The Making Of… that he believed 18 Berry St was ‘quite a good model for a microcosm for all the different groups that were around in that era.’ In the making of the film, he has captured a potent and creative time; its current cultural relevance is testament to the universality of the story. A larger part of this lies also in the diversity of the household and the cohorts it embraces. In this regard, it is a cultural microcosm but also perhaps a microcosm of the ‘bohemian’ inner city prior to gentrification on the large scale seen some decades later (and already creeping into Melbourne’s inner city, though more commonly in the mid-1980s in the inner north rather than the inner east).

Dogs in Space will undoubtedly continue to gain followers over time, as a rich and multifaceted text. At the heart of Dogs in Space is the house: in certain regards, another character or at very least a facilitator of action and interaction throughout the film. 18 Berry Street was, in the late 1970s/early 1980s a house ‘down on its luck’, a once luxurious structure that only had market value at this time as a overpopulated student ‘dive’; within five years it had been completely renovated and remade, to the degree that the film’s producers were compelled to ‘de-gentrify’ it, temporarily restoring its former shambolic nature, for the sake of the film. That the events depicted in the film itself gild the house’s heritage value is an intriguing extra element; that the role of the house as a central element of the film was amplified for its spatial placement and its physical appearance and malleability as a ‘set’ make it all the more remarkable. The degree to which it can be regarded as a document, or even a ‘true’ account, is open to continued debate, but nonetheless it remains an extraordinary text and a remarkable experience and critique.

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Cities embrace and express cultural, social and ideological agendas that are central to urban experience. Cities are structured to orchestrate particular relationships between people and place, creating routines of movement, spectacle and memory. Throughout history, settlements have been formed around individual iconic buildings that codify meaning, which is either deliberately constructed or construed by the observer. The contemporary city has increasingly represented a paradox between two positions. On the one hand, urban environments are being reordered to support the social life of cities, and on the other, they are driven by the need to engage with the global economy, corporatisation and international tourism. Brett Steel argues that this has led to a condition of ‘hypervisuality’, which has created a shift from ‘place making to promotion and place marketing.’

Museums have become a key part of this processes, with contemporary museum architecture frequently traded as a symbol of cultural capital in the global ‘iconomy’, an image economy in which symbolic exchanges between people, things, ideas, interest groups, and cultures take predominantly visual form. However, museums are also involved in the development of broader cultural narratives that convey and interpret meaning, and they also create spaces of social engagement. This paper considers how three leading international museums have provided alternative ways to understand the iconic role of museums as civic buildings. It examines how the British Museum, the Museum of Scotland and the Jewish Museum Berlin each question the role of iconic architecture in creating cultural meaning as part of the conceived, perceived and lived civic experience.

Keywords: Museums; Cities; Urban; Civic; Experience
Introduction

Cities provide the dominant backdrop for contemporary life, with more than half the population of the world now living in urban areas. Cities embrace and express cultural, social and ideological agendas, which influence the conception and perception of, and lived, urban experience. (Lefebvre 1991) The term ‘civic’ refers to the notion of belonging to the city, and this implies a sense of connectedness. Throughout history, civic aspirations have underpinned the architecture of the city in various ways, with buildings acting as icons or signifiers of shifting values and priorities. In the contemporary city, the civic and symbolic agenda of buildings oscillates between underpinning place-identity and harnessing place-marketing, where buildings become “places in the global assembly line...connected far more to timeless celebrity than to historical geography,” rather than to their immediate physical and cultural context. (Schwarzer 2005, 22-33) One of the central challenges of contemporary cities is to provide a sense of meaning that extends beyond the hyper-visuality of the global image economy that is fuelled by new iconic architecture, in order to highlight the importance of belonging to the city, which is central to the ideal of the civic. This paper examines these ideas through the exploration of three contemporary museum projects that offer ways of understanding the agency of architecture to establish physical, visual and conceptual connections to urban and cultural contexts.

Icons, urban ornaments and spaces of engagement

The contemporary city presents a paradox between the reciprocal relationships between buildings as icons, or ‘urban ornaments’, and as spatial elements in the urban network of the city, a condition that has characterised the design of settlements throughout history. Ancient Greek and Roman settlements are noted for their civic aspirations, particularly the relationship between the rituals and practices of everyday life, and the physical setting in which these activities were enacted. Settlements orchestrated particular relationships between people and place, establishing a routine of movement, spectacle and memory that was central to life.

As medieval settlements were formalized into more permanent ceremonial environments, ‘vistas, eye-catching foci and architectural ensembles’ created landmarks that aided orientation and formed symbolic markers that embodied meaning. (Hall 1997, 19) During the Renaissance, symmetry, scale and strong geometry were employed, with radial street systems allowing more effective control of the town and facilitating movement and communication across the settlements. (Bacon 1967, 203) Movement and visuality became increasingly important to the development of Baroque cities, like Pope Sixtus V’s Rome, where axial vistas and specifically positioned buildings aided spatial legibility and defined urban character.

By the nineteenth century symbolic meaning became central to cities; in fact Mark Crinson suggests that in Victorian Britain “to build was to create meaning.” (Crinson 1996, 9) Architecture became ‘phonetic’; codifying meaning through deliberately constructed associative references. However, rapid urban expansion began to dramatically alter the way cities were conceived and experienced. Functional requirements, particularly the need to provide housing, services, transport and technology, vied with imperial and nationalistic agendas to construct identity through urban form. By the mid twentieth century urban development became increasingly driven by functional demands
of zoning, movement and transportation, which tended to subsume conceptual aspirations of the city as an armature for civic life.

Over the last 50 years, the contemporary city has represented a paradox between two positions. On the one hand cities are being reordered to provide positive urban environments that support the social life of cities, with an increasing interest in the design of cities as interconnected systems that support ideals of liveability, sustainability and productivity. On the other, cities are affected by the need to engage with the global economy, corporatisation and international tourism. Brett Steele contests this has led to a condition of ‘hypervisuality’, which creates two parallel conditions: ‘serial space’ and ‘brand space’. (2007, 108) ‘Serial space’ is produced by the homogenising effect of global franchises that dominate contemporary cities, and this contrasts with ‘brand space’ in which iconic buildings are conceived as 'unique wonders in a world of ever-similar spatial backdrops'. (2007, 108) Steele suggests this represents the shift from ‘place making to promotion and place marketing’, which significantly impacts on the experience and meaning of cities. (2007, 106) Terry Smith observes that visual images have come to saturate the way we communicate, “not simply at the level of stereotypes but at the deepest levels of psyche and society.” (2006, 2-5) Image and style have become a form of currency: buildings are traded as symbols of cultural capital in the global ‘iconomy’, an image economy in which symbolic exchanges between people, things, ideas, interest groups, and cultures take predominantly visual form.

As twentieth century cities are being reconceptualised as ‘places for people’, foregrounding social interaction, connectivity and sustainability, Crinson’s observation of the nineteenth century’s architectural aspiration - to build is to create meaning – continues today. (Crinson 1996, 9) Buildings not only establish functional relationships between places, addressing practical concerns of movement, communication and accommodating residents, commerce and industry, but they also have the capacity to convey urban aspirations and civic values. However, in contrast to the agendas of 18th and 19th century cities that reinforced relationships between inhabitants and the church or ruling powers, the drivers of contemporary cities are more diverse. In the contemporary city, ‘place-making’ and ‘place marketing’ exert competing influences. (Steele 2007, 106) Terry Smith contests that place marketing focuses on creating connections to the ‘visual esperanto of international communication’, whereas place making calls for more specific localised expressions of site-specificity. (Smith 2006, 48) Creating connections to context, in a physical, visual and conceptual sense becomes key to developing a sense of civic connection.

Cliff Hague and Paul Jenkins suggest that ‘place-identity’ is central to place-making, and contest that the ‘creation and reproduction of identities’ is ‘socially rooted and culturally defined’. They suggest that “place identity is best understood as relational...identities are defined in relation to each other,” and that “the nature of place identity is inevitably reflected in engagement with place by those who have a stake in it.” (Hague and Jenkins 1996, 218-221) This highlights the importance of context, and the agency of architecture to create dynamic relationships between individual buildings and the physical and cultural landscape of the city, constructing narratives of experience and meaning that are central to urban life.

This paper proposes that prioritizing the visual, and focusing on the ‘imageability’, or the symbolic and iconic characteristics of architecture, erodes ones understanding of how buildings are encountered: what buildings look like becomes more important than how they operate, both
functionally and experientially. (Dovey 1999,45) That is not to say that the notion of spectacle is not important in both buildings and cities, but the relationship of building to the context - both physically and culturally - fundamentally affects its conception, perception and lived experience.

**Museums as iconic symbols and agents of civic experience**

Museums are ideal vehicles for the exploration of these ideas, as they are inherently linked to context - both physically and culturally. Museums are sites of active engagement that are influenced by overlapping, and sometimes competing sets of functional and symbolic agendas. Historically, museums were key elements in the development of the modern city; they provided symbols of cultural capital and spaces of socialization for the burgeoning modern metropolis. The museum was conceptualised as a ‘temple of culture’, and this symbolic association was reinforced by the formal and spatial order of the museum’s architecture. Externally the museum’s paradigmatic neo-classical architecture asserted the museum’s symbolic role as a signifier of cultural capital, drawing formal references to classical temples. Internally an enfilade of spaces created a routine of ‘organised walking’ that reinforced the formality of experience, underpinning authoritative museological narratives, and supporting a tacit agenda to ‘civilise the masses’ of the burgeoning city. (Bennett 1995)

Throughout the twentieth century, museums were under increasing pressure to counteract the perception of their status as elite institutions, and to engage with the economic, cultural and social life of the city. As a consequence, museums developed a more diverse agenda, both educationally and socially, accommodating new visitor facilities and new types and scales of exhibitions in an endeavour to compete with the other forms of metropolitan entertainment. The museum programme was expanded to encourage visitors’ active engagement, and institutions responded to this new, popularist role by providing more open and informal settings that integrated spatially and functionally with the city.

By the late twentieth century museums had become central to the urban renewal of many cities, providing catalytic sites of contemporary tourist pilgrimage, and creating new places for socialization and entertainment. Museum architecture was harnessed as part of an agenda of ‘civic branding’ frequently embracing iconic architectural forms. For example, museums like Frank Gehry’s Guggenheim in Bilbao and Santiago Calatrava’s Milwaukee Art Museum were specifically designed to create a visual spectacle, “to catch the eye, and to dwell in the mind as a fantastic form.” (Smith 2006, 39) Smith contests this promotes a form of ‘architourism’, an ‘architecture of destination’ as cities strive to compete in a world of global tourism, and museums become a commodity, an icon to be exchanged as a symbol in the “visual esperanto of international communication.” (Smith 2006, 48) Mitchell Schwarzer observes that this has resulted in many museums becoming “places in the global assembly line...connected far more to timeless celebrity than to historical geography.” (Schwarzer 2005, 25-33)

However, many new museums projects also endeavour to create connections to site, both the physical location in which a building is situated and also broader visual, cultural, conceptual and temporal contexts. Three recent museum projects, the British Museum in London, the Museum of Scotland in Edinburgh and the Jewish Museum Berlin, demonstrate how specific relationships between the museum and the city can be orchestrated to foster physical, visual and conceptual
experience. These projects all involve a major physical extension or reorganisation of an existing institution. They each respond to the programmatic shifts required by contemporary museums to not only fulfil the traditional roles of education and research, but also to provide places for entertainment and leisure, promoting the active engagement of the visitor with the institution. These projects demonstrate the shifting relationship between the museum and the city, particularly the agency of the new architectural interventions in the formation and communication of meaning through experience. Each questions the iconic role of the museum in the city, by engaging in the broader context of the city in various ways.

The British Museum, the Museum of Scotland and the Jewish Museum Berlin each present contrasting architectural approaches, but they all share a common agenda of constructing relationships between the building and its site – the museum and the city. All three projects create memorable iconic images that heighten the visuality of the museum in different ways, and contribute to both the ‘brand-space’ of the contemporary city and help to construct the ‘museum space’, the ‘psychological space’ that is encountered long before visitors actually arrive at the building. (Fleming 2005, 54-5) ...

The architecture of these museums engages with the broader cultural landscape of the museum, exploring the museological and urban history and drawing on this context to generate ideas for the new interventions. Each is located in European capital cities, and these settings provide contrasting contexts; physical built form and topography, as well as historical and socio-political contexts. As social history museums, these institutions each present a particular agenda to interpret specific objects and knowledge, but this discussion focuses on the architecture as an armature that orchestrates experience and conveys meaning, rather than engaging explicitly with the museum content. However, the architecture embraces the broader agenda of social history by engaging with both the physical and cultural context of the museums, creating connections with the city that prioritise active engagement - both physically and intellectually – and promoting movement, memory and meaning.

**Case study 1: The British Museum, London**

In the British Museum in London, Foster + Partners’ created a new urban space that extends the historical pattern of urban squares, parks and gardens that typified London’s early development, and continues London’s contemporary interest in reinvigorating the pedestrian experience of the city. The Great Court provides an iconic urban space within London that allows new paths of movement through the surrounding neighbourhood of Bloomsbury, and it also assists in reordering the museum sequence, re-establishing a sense of visual spectacle by physically and programmatically opening up the central gathering and circulation space. New visitor facilities, which can be used independently of the museum, assist in subverting the perception of the museum as an elite institution, allowing the Great Court to become an urban destination that can be experienced independently of the museum proper.
The Great Court reinstates the courtyard proposed by the original architect, Robert Smirke, which was subsumed by the museum library. The new court restores a sense of order and formality that was central to Smirke’s original plan, promoting the idea of a central gathering space at the heart of the museum that is both practical and memorable. The architectural detailing of this space reinforces the monumental scale of the museum, reinstating a sense of grandeur that had been eroded by piecemeal alternations over the last two hundred years. The Great Court allows the interior of the museum and neighbouring galleries to be flooded with natural light, and it highlights the social agenda of museums, by creating an orientation space with cafes, bookshops and seating at
the heart of the museum. Opening up the centre of the building allows new circulation patterns through both the museum and the city, offering alternate modes of physical and conceptual interaction, intertwining traditional and contemporary agendas of spectacle and surveillance.

Foster + Partners’ interpretation of the museum as a site of movement extends traditional museological narratives, and it also engages with enduring urban aspirations of movement and spectacle that have been central to London’s development, from ideas of John Nash and William Lethaby to Richard Rogers and other contemporary projects. As one of London’s key millennium projects it is ‘future orientated’, combining historical references with Foster’s desire to create a “fresh means of experiencing the city.” (Foster, Sudjic, de Grey 2001, 11) The architecture engages with both the historical pattern of parks and squares, and Nash’s aspirations to clarify movement and amplify visual spectacle, which was progressively undermined as the city succumbed to pragmatic rather than civic demands. The Great Court celebrates the museum’s role as a new node in the pedestrian network of central London, connecting it other contemporary projects that reinforce urban patterns of street and square, while also retrieving and extending historical patterns. The project also engages with the contemporary interest in prioritising pedestrian movement and improving the quality of individual urban spaces to promote a more coherent understanding of the idea of civic connectedness, highlighting the ways that buildings belong to the city.

In conceptualising the Great Court as an extension of the historical urban pattern of civic spaces, the relationship between the museum and the city is inverted. The museum interior is conceptually and actually transformed into an urban space, formalising a place of gathering within city that heightens the sense of urban spectacle and prioritises the museum as a space of occupation, rather than merely an iconic symbol, or urban ornament. Establishing an urban plaza in the centre of the museum creates a new internal ‘forecourt’ at the centre of the museum, altering the movement sequence through both the museum and the city. The museum’s transformation from an urban ornament to a urban space, literally and metaphorically mirrors the transformation of the museum from a ‘temple’ to a ‘forum.’ (Melhuish 1997, 22-25)

Case study 2: The Museum of Scotland, Edinburgh

Benson + Forsyth’s architectural agenda for the Museum of Scotland in Edinburgh reiterates and reflects the visual ideologies that have recurred throughout the development of Edinburgh’s urban environment. Historically, the unique topography and geography of Edinburgh has been capitalized on in the development of the city, and the Museum of Scotland extends this preoccupation by providing an armature that orchestrates the physical and visual sequence within the building and the vistas beyond. This extends the picturesque traditions of Edinburgh and orchestrates connections between the museum interior and the spaces of the city. Benson + Forsyth address the explicitly nationalist agenda that underpinned the museum’s brief, communicating ideas about Scotland by engaging with the cultural landscape of Edinburgh, particularly the city’s historical visual traditions. Arranging the museum around key exhibits and using two top-lit voids to create visual connections across the internal spaces highlights the nineteenth century museum tradition of a system of ‘organised walking’. (Bennett 1995, 6) However, rather than reinforcing linear progressivist narratives, the architecture highlights the dynamic potential of orchestrating the relationship between objects and movement that was central
to the modern museums. (Norrie 2002) Visual connections through and beyond the building also
highlight the relationship between the museum interior and the surrounding landscape in a manner
that recalls the ideals and experience of an earlier Edinburgh museum, Patrick Geddes’ Outlook
Tower. The visitors’ gaze is drawn to locations beyond the museum, through orchestrated vistas
that establish the association of the city as an object within the museum. This transforms the
museum from a symbolic monument to an ‘instrument’ of active engagement. (Martin Pawley in
Allan 1998, 128.)

Image 2: Museum of Scotland entrance, and plan showing sequence and views within and beyond the building
on the entry level to the museum. (Norrie, 2014.)

The Museum of Scotland’s engagement with the visuality of the city acknowledges that Edinburgh’s
development has been shaped by a series of visual agendas that range from pragmatic (outlook and
surveillance) to ideological (picturesque associative and symbolic ideals). Within this highly visualised
environment, Benson + Forsyth understand the importance of both visual connection (outlook) and
visual association in creating meaning and memory, and this interest in visuality underpins the
museum’s architecture. The building is orchestrated to reinforce movement and spectacle and
highlight visual connections to particular elements within the city, which reinforces the urban
tradition of the city as a terrain of landmarks. It also addresses twentieth century concerns of how
to ‘build new’ in an historical context, by eliciting associative relationships. The role of the museum
as a symbolic urban ornament is also implicit in the design of the building exterior, which draws on
both vernacular and architectural building traditions to elicit associations with the historical context
of Scotland, and architectural culture more generally.
Case study 3: The Jewish Museum Berlin

In contrast to the examples of London and Edinburgh, the city offers an alternative condition for the Jewish Museum in Berlin. Although the city was successively shaped by a series of grand urban gestures, the structure of both the built and cultural environment was significantly altered by events that culminated in World War II and the post-war partitioning of the city. The grand boulevards of the 18th and 19th centuries that inscribed a strong geometrical form onto the relatively flat topography of the city were eroded by the effects of allied bombing in the final years of WWII,
leading to the perception of the city as a tabula rasa - an empty slate. However, Libeskind reconceptualises the city as a site of memory and meaning by foregrounding alternative narratives of rupture, absence and integration as a foundation for the form generation of the architecture.

Drawing on Post Modern techniques of form finding, Libeskind engages with the intangible physical context through a process of projective ‘site thinking’ that highlights conceptual relationships between the museum and the city. The conceptual narrative underpins the formal order and spatial structure, and through this process the architecture is liberated from conventional spatial practices. Libeskind creates a ‘trace’ of an ‘invisible and irrationally connected star’ which becomes the generator of the plan form, producing ‘anti-classical’ architecture that eschews reference to museological typologies or traditions. (Stead 1999, 321-8) Both the overall building form and the irregular diagonal incisions reference ‘something beyond the building’, as it ‘bends, dilates, diverges only under the singular authority of the zigzag line from which it is extruded.’ (LW 1995, 122) The ‘trace’ that underpins form generation is not utilised to reinscribe historical form, but to articulate a conceptual relationship of absence that implicitly integrates memory and meaning into the urban landscape.

Although the architecture is iconic, in so much as it is unique, connections between the museum and the city are neither triumphal nor visible. However, the architectural ideas are underpinned by a desire to seek legibility for the historical cultural condition of the city, particularly an aspiration that the history of the Jewish people should be understood as integral to the city. Although the project was not intended to be a Holocaust memorial, it embeds the memory of this event within the museum through the use of spaces that are deliberately spatially destabilising and also visually spectacular and memorable.

Image 4: Diagram of the ‘invisible and irrational star’ created by connecting the addresses of cultural leaders, Jews and Gentiles, from either site of the Berlin wall, which becomes the foundational diagram for the process of form find. (Norrie, 2014.)
The Jewish Museum Berlin has become a key cultural marker in the new terrain of ‘Jewish Berlin’ that has been overlaid on the contemporary city, as the first in a ‘trioka’ of projects that reinstate the visibility of Jewish culture in the city. Although the building does not primarily engage with the existing physical context, it acknowledges the existing urban condition, readjusting the awkward alignment created by the clash between the nineteenth and twentieth century planning traditions. (Heise and Holstein 1990, 162-3) Libeskind’s abstract conceptual ideas extract a new order, which assists in the ‘construction of mental and physical space’ that aims to imbue the museum with meaning, producing a unique and iconic building that is available to be deployed in the city’s various new ‘brand-spaces’. (Jojola et al 2000, 26)

![Image 5: Exterior of the Jewish Museum Berlin; diagram of basement plan showing paths to 3 key void spaces; the Holocaust Tower, the Garden of Exile and the Memory Void. (Norrie, 2014)](image)

**Conclusion**

All three projects construct particular relationships between the museum and the city, critiquing and reworking traditional narratives – museological, architectural and urban. Parallel themes of movement, spectacle and memory are highlighted, reinforcing the idea that museums and cities are not just about functional relationships, but are also sites of meaning and experience that create itineraries of movement, spectacle and memory.
In each of these projects there is an explicit questioning of the museum type, in other ways besides the deliberately ironic and polemical post-modern approaches. Rather than drawing on historical motifs of form, the architectural approach of the case study museums create buildings that are ‘future-oriented’ in their relationship to site and context. (Libeskind 2000, 29) These projects highlight the way spatial and cultural meanings are conceived, perceived and experienced. Each present constructed terrains of engagement that influence both museological and urban narratives. These ideas extend beyond the immediate curatorial, educational and commercial concerns to refocus attention of the museum’s civic role as a site of experience and meaning in the contemporary city.

The new architecture of the British Museum, the Museum of Scotland and the Jewish Museum Berlin evokes a site-specific response to the museological and architectural programme, and to the urban context. Each project was makes connections to the city’s history and contemporary condition, highlighting the physical, visual and conceptual relationship of the contemporary museum to its urban settings, both past and present. The architectural approaches employed in each project offer ways of questioning or problematizing institutional and urban narratives. (Isenstadt 2005, 178) They highlight the potential agency of architecture to create an ‘unfolding dialogue’ that allows ‘the city (to) flow through the project’, both physically and conceptually. (Allen 2001, 119) Although each project is iconic, in varying ways, the ‘imageability’ of the architecture is less important that the physical, visual and conceptual relationships to the urban and cultural context that are generated.

This discussion highlights ways of understanding how the physical structure of space and the visual associations that it creates, through movement, views and vistas and also through the use of conceptual associations embedded in building form, can highlight the idea of ‘belonging to the city’ that is key to civic engagement. It focuses on buildings as elements of the connected terrain of engagement of the city, rather than iconic objects that belong to the “visual esperanto of international communication.” (Smith 2006, 48) This approach does not erode the role of the icon, rather it presents a series of questions about the nature of meaning and experience, highlighting the cause and effect of underlying conceptual ideas that influence urban form and affect urban and architectural narratives.

Projects discussed offer ways of understanding the agency of architecture to make connections between individual buildings and their site, or context, particularly within urban environments. By interacting physically, visually and/or conceptually with their urban context, museums (and other urban institutions or entities) need not be at odds with, such places’ role in the iconomy, creating sites that engage with both global and local concerns of identity, to convey urban aspirations and civic values.

While the cultural expectation that museums will embody meaning makes these projects ideal exemplars for exploring this idea, the value of this discussion lies in the potential application of these ideas to other building types and sites. The case studies all exist within particular kinds of sites: dense European cities in which the core of the old city is physically compact and remains the enduring location of premier civic and cultural institutions. These cities are steeped in history, providing a rich palimpsest of past events that is layered into both the physical environment and the cultural landscape. However, the more expanded contemporary city provides a contrast to this condition. This opens the question of the applicability of these ideas in different spatial, temporal
and cultural conditions in which the key buildings and institutions are not well-funded museums and cultural centres, but more prosaic, yet essentially equally community based institutions like schools, and perhaps even shopping centres.

The application to these ideas to other building types offers ways to consider how the future development of the city, particularly its civic and institutional buildings, can promote civic engagement, and contribute to a directed urban narrative. Positioning the conception of the architecture of individual buildings within a broader understanding of cities highlights the conditions that foreground the contemporary urban condition. It shifts the focus beyond the individual building to highlight the importance of the enduring relationship between buildings and cities, both physically and culturally, which underpins civic ideals of belonging to the city.

References


Gold Coast Transport
From cream cans and campers to city centres and commuters

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The Gold Coast, as a tourist destination, was made possible because of the advent of the motor car and the railways. This chapter traces the move from a series of largely inaccessible small beachside villages to a major tourist city through the development of transport infrastructure; from water—based to land—based transport in the area’s earliest development, including coastal shipping, the early use of the beaches as roads for tourism, the establishment of the South Coast Railway to transport dairy and other rural produce to the hinterland towns and the Brisbane markets, and the extension of the railway system to link Brisbane holidaymakers to the early beach resorts at Southport, Burleigh Heads and Coolangatta—Tweed Heads. The chapter shows the long—term influence of the mid—twentieth century orientation towards car use in the developer—led establishment of a dispersed, car—dependent, pattern of suburbs and centres.

Keywords: transport planning, transit oriented development

For full text see:

Architecture and national identity in an era of globalisation
The rise and fall of the Sydney Exhibition Centre, Darling Harbour

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The Sydney Exhibition Centre by Philip Cox was conceived as an iconic building and recognised by the Sulman Award for its innovative steel technology, logical response to function and distinctive roofscape. It was one of a number of buildings constructed at Darling Harbour for Australia’s Bicentenary in 1988, intended to showcase the best in Australian architecture and symbolise Sydney’s cultural identity. Darling Harbour’s redevelopment from a disused shipping yard is an example of an urban environment constructed around the creation and representation of iconic forms, to be enjoyed by locals and tourists alike. This paper examines the iconic status of the Sydney Exhibition Centre through a brief review of the literature published at the time of its design. Using the framework established by Robert Adam in The Globalisation of Modern Architecture (2012), it interrogates the interrelationships between iconicity, identity politics and the complexity of the global condition that provide the context for the building’s demolition in 2014. Also considered is the role played by the Transnational Capitalist Class, which has been defined by Leslie Sklair (2005, 2006) and identified as crucial to the lifecycle of iconic architecture. The circumstances of the Sydney Exhibition Centre’s demise demonstrate the fragility of iconicity and the fluidity of symbolic expression, and provide insights into the remaking of built environments and heritage values.

Keywords: globalisation; architecture; national identity; Sydney Exhibition Centre.

Introduction

This paper examines the 1988 rise and 2014 fall of the Sydney Exhibition Centre, considered to be one of the iconic buildings of Australia’s Bicentenary. Using the framework established by Robert Adam in The Globalisation of Modern Architecture (2012.) and a brief review of the literature published at the time of the building’s design and demolition, the paper interrogates the interrelationships between iconicity, identity politics and the complexity of the global condition. Also considered is the role played by the Transnational Capitalist Class, which has been defined by Leslie Sklair and identified as crucial to the lifecycle of iconic architecture. (2005; 2006.)
Australia’s Bicentenary and the Sydney Exhibition Centre

The impending 1988 Bicentenary of the European settlement of Australia focussed attention on Australia’s past, its national identity and its growth as a multicultural society. Sydney had become a major destination for foreign investment and the headquarters of major foreign banks, multi-national corporations and high-tech companies. The urban redevelopment of Sydney’s Darling Harbour, a disused shipping precinct of derelict storage facilities and railway lines linking the port, was part of a suite of federally funded architectural and urban projects initiated to mark the event. It was to provide the platform for the global spectacle of the Bicentenary celebrations that would consolidate Sydney’s claim to global status. It presented a new opportunity for Sydney to boost its cultural identity and encouraged Sydneysiders to seek ways to reconcile their local identity with national unity, cultural diversity and increasing globalisation.

Figure 1: Clockwise from top left are the National Maritime Museum, Sydney Aquarium and Sydney Exhibition Centre at Darling Harbour designed by Architect Philip Cox.

A series of heroic harbour side buildings were commissioned to showcase the best in Australian architecture. Architect Philip Cox designed three buildings, including the National Maritime Museum, with its “glorious feeling of billowing sails,” the wave-shaped Sydney Aquarium, and the Sydney Exhibition Centre, with its high-tech “white steel” vocabulary of masts and cables suspending the roof to create a column-free exhibition space. (Hawley 1988, Harrison, 2008.) (Figure 1) The other two buildings were the semi-circular, concrete Sydney Convention Centre designed by John Andrews and the Harbourside Festival Marketplace designed by Robert Perry Architecture Oceania with an international team that integrated public art, architecture and commercial development. (Figure 2)
At the time, it was predicted that Andrews’s Classicism would complement the Romanticism of Cox’s architectural reading of the ethos of the harbour. (Farrelly 1989.)

Figure 2: Sydney Convention Centre designed by Architect John Andrews (left) and Harbourside Festival Marketplace designed by Robert Perry Architecture Oceania (right).

Cox had already developed a reputation for his “unselfconsciously Australian” architectural approach and demonstrated a pragmatism that sought architectural innovation in response to specific project challenges. He was also a vocal advocate against the importation of architectural aesthetics and values from overseas. (Hawley 1988.) His prior projects draw upon the Australian “functional tradition” exemplified by vernacular structures such as wheat silos, rural sheds and cooling towers and feature the honest expression of structure to achieve spatial interest and architectural delight. There is often a sense of repose or languor in their horizontality in response to the landscape and the spirit of place, and climate is addressed by expressive roofs and integrated verandahs that acknowledge the early Australian homestead tradition. (Taylor 1988.) In 1987 The Australian published a commentary on Australian cities and suburbs that featured a picture of Cox in front of the half-constructed Sydney Exhibition Centre. He was quoted as saying that architects needed to understand the core sociological, economic and political forces at play and the “spirit” of what was being expressed in their buildings. (Brass 1987.)

Figure 3: The distinctive mast and cable structure of the Sydney Exhibition Centre.

Much was written in the late 1980s and 1990s about Darling Harbour in terms of its impact on metropolitan development. The discussion was generally led by planners, urban designers and
tourism scholars interested in urban governance and land use policy, waterfront revitalisation, sustainable place making, and the design of tourist precincts. (For example Proudfoot 1996; Dawkins and Colebatch 2006; Clark 1988; Hayllar, Griffin and Edwards 2008.) But architectural scholars kept their distance, apart from a short burst of architectural publications around the time of the Sydney Exhibition Centre’s completion. Jennifer Taylor described the building as “lively” with its “mast and cable system ... successfully linking the building with the masts of the tall rigged ships by the adjacent harbour front.” (1988.) Neville Quarry described the detailing of the structural system as “delicious.” (1987.) (Figure 3) The architectural theorist Karen Burns took a more critical position, noting that the building had “barely entered the mainstream of the notoriously conservative Australian architectural discourse.” (1988.) The Sydney Exhibition Centre was subsequently recognised by a string of awards, including the Sulman Award in 1989, for its innovative steel technology, logical response to function and distinctive roofscape. One of its heritage values has been identified as bringing an “international focus to Australia and Australian architecture.” (Higham undated.) More broadly, the Bicentenary celebrations of 1988 have been attributed to Australia (and particularly Sydney) experiencing “a countervailing sense of its own uniqueness” as Sydney consolidated its place as a “global gateway city” and the financial and communications centre of Australia. (McGillick and Bingham Hall 2005; Rennie Short et. al. 2000.)

The heritage significance of the Sydney Exhibition Centre was recognised in the National Register Listing Report (Higham undated), which claimed the building to be of “high heritage significance as an exemplar of Late Twentieth Century Structuralist architecture” and aesthetically distinctive. However, it was not listed in the Sydney Harbour Foreshore Authority’s Section 170 Register, and its proposed demolition caused the architectural historian Noni Boyd to lament the lack of protection for recent award-winning Australian buildings. (2012.) The City of Sydney considered the significance of the building to warrant a proposal for its partial relocation to the Sydney Fish Market site, with other bays of the building to be reconstructed elsewhere as new community facilities. (Hasham 2013.)

In 2014 the NSW State Government moved swiftly to demolish the Sydney Exhibition Centre and neighbouring Sydney Convention Centre citing “capacity constraints” and too many “limitations which cannot be readily overcome” without redevelopment of the site. (McKenny 2013.) It claimed that $150 million in economic benefit had been lost over the four years to 2010-2011, and that the building was not iconic enough to attract foreign investment. (Moore 2012; Cox 2015.) Another motivation was the quest to improve environmental performance with a 6 star Green Star facility. Cox pleaded with the Government to reverse its decision, but to no avail as there was no upswell of public support. In the aftermath of its demolition he expressed the conviction that architecture in Australia is not respected as an art form but treated as “a commodity.” (2014.) He claimed:

We live in a trash society. We live in a throw away society ... Suddenly in the Twenty First Century we have developed a new syndrome where nothing is valued ... What are our cultural values and how do we see them? ... Rude timber buildings were the foundation of our Australian culture but that is something that is being eroded very quickly. Sydney had a prime example of something quite magnificent ... but it is being replaced by something that is inferior ... It is not a column free structure ... It is not able to host sport events ... It is being compacted vertically ... the destruction of a symbol of the Bicentennial is a shameful thing ... (Cox 2015.)
Identity Politics and the Complexity of the Global Condition

The architectural projects associated with the Australian Bicentennial celebrations in 1988 were founded upon attempts to express a broadly shared national identity and to galvanise a large and patriotic population in the celebrations. The Wran Government’s brief for the Sydney Exhibition Centre was for a design that must be uniquely Australian and celebrate Australian culture. It was a publicly funded development, paid for by the Federal Government and built on public land. It effectively represented the power and authority of the state. The significance of place was a fundamental concern addressed at multiple geographical scales, serving both to ground the building in its immediate “local” micro-situation of Darling Harbour and to relate it to a broader “national” territorial construct of Australia.

However, Australia’s Bicentenary occurred at a turning point in world history as communism collapsed and capitalism gained momentum, transforming the world into a free-market system within a new international economic climate. This late twentieth century phenomenon is called “globalisation.” It extends beyond international trade and capital flows to effect significant social and cultural impacts. Economists have observed that the possibility “to produce a product anywhere, using resources from anywhere, by a company located anywhere, to be sold anywhere” has profound social and cultural consequences. (Adam 2012.) Expanded global horizons generally led to a break down worldwide in the traditional concept of “imagined” national communities and rendered many nationalist mythologies irrelevant. Sociologists agree that a common outcome is the tendency towards homogenisation of culture and place and a compression of the world. The separate pieces of the world’s cultural mosaic lose their “hard well-defined edges” and are no longer organised according to territorial logic and cultural rules. (Adam 2012.) Globalising market forces have led to the rise in recent decades of Public Private Partnerships favouring a universal architectural aesthetic independent of place, geography and territory and offering types of space and non-place to which anyone can belong. The scale and overwhelming force with which the global capital market operates leaves communities struggling with the relationship between national identity and globalisation; and between the expression of local architectural values and a universal architectural language derived from Modernism. Thus the demise of the Sydney Exhibition Centre, designed in a distinctively Australian style, might be regarded as fallout of larger forces and changing societal values associated with globalisation that find themselves reflected in architecture.

In response to globalisation, businesses of all types have established foreign branch offices to take advantage of new international market opportunities. This has led to the emergence of a distinct global elite of business leaders, traders and professionals, including architects, that transcends social and cultural borders. Sklair calls this elite the “Transnational Capitalist Class” and identifies four globalising cultures or “fractions” within it – the “corporate fraction,” “state fraction,” “technical fraction,” and “consumerist fraction.” (2005.)

Behind the new development in 2014 of much of Darling Harbour, including the International Convention Centre (ICC) Sydney, is the “corporate fraction” that calls itself Darling Harbour Live. It is led by the major development firm, Lend Lease, an international property and infrastructure group with head offices in Sydney, New York, Singapore, London and Milan. Lend Lease fits Sklair’s profile of a “corporate fraction” through its mission to become the “leading international property and infrastructure group,” combined with its strong delivery of leisure, retail, residential and
infrastructure projects and its high turnover of Public Private Partnerships (worth $AUD4.1 billion as
at September 2014). (Lend Lease 2015.) Lend Lease is joined by its Australian infrastructure financing
and development arm, Capella Capital; AEG Ogden, manager of the largest network of venues in the
Asia Pacific region; Anschutz Entertainment Group (AEG), a leading international sports and
entertainment presenter; Spotless, an Australian facilities management provider; and Hostplus, an
Australian superannuation fund for the hospitality, tourism, recreation and sport industries. (ICC
Sydney 2015.) The “state fraction” is Infrastructure NSW, a statutory agency established under the
Infrastructure NSW Act 2011 to advise the NSW State Government and commission, oversee, deliver
and coordinate infrastructure projects. The media release in September 2015 accompanying the
attendance of the NSW Premier Mike Baird and Minister for Transport and Infrastructure Andrew
Constance at the topping out of the new International Convention Centre Sydney, encapsulates the
globalising mission of this agency by stating:

We’ll have a state-of-the-art convention centre that truly befits a global city and
cements Sydney as the number one place to do business... the vibrant waterfront at
Darling Harbour will ensure international delegates have an unmatched visitor
experience. (Infrastructure NSW 2015.)

The “technical fraction” comprises the globalising professionals who are centrally involved in the
design of new buildings, represented in this case by Hassell and Populous. Hassell is an architectural
practice originating in Australia, now with eight other offices in China, South East Asia and the
United Kingdom. (Hassell 2015.) Populous is a North American multinational architectural firm that
specialises in the design of sports facilities and convention centres and describes itself as “a global
collective of architects, designers, technical experts and industry veterans. We are the people who
create the places where millions unite.” (Populous 2015.) Both firms fit Sklair’s profile as being
“allied, through choice or circumstance with globalizing corporations and the agenda of capitalist
globalization.” Finally, the “consumerist fraction” comprises those “who are responsible for the
marketing of architecture ... and connect the architecture industry with the culture-ideology of
consumerism.” (Sklair 2006.) In the case of the International Convention Centre Sydney, marketing is
directly resourced through the corporate fraction, Lend Lease, and the state fraction, Infrastructure
NSW, providing closure to the circle of fractions within the Transnational Capitalist Class involved
with the Darling Harbour Live redevelopment project.

The Transnational Capitalist Class – comprising corporations, government agencies, architectural
practices and marketing bodies – embodies a global agenda and an international culture “whose
identity is not linked to any specific society but to membership of the managerial circles of the
informational economy across a global cultural spectrum.” (Adam 2012.) Its members value
continuity in their personal and business routines and strive for an uninterrupted lifestyle,
irrespective of where in the world they happen to be, expecting a hotel chain to provide the same
ambience and amenity in Shanghai as New York. The weaker attachment to local places has had a
major economic and physical impact on global cities and encourages cross-national conformity. The
resulting urban homogeneity is intensified by new infrastructure focussed on supporting the
“hyperspace of global business” through duplication of progressive work environments in slick office
buildings, luxury hotels, efficient international airports, state-of-the-art convention centres, etc.
(Adam 2012.) Importantly the Transnational Capitalist Class now drives the production of
architectural icons previously controlled by the state or church.
Thus, the Darling Harbour Live redevelopment project, and within it the International Convention Centre Sydney, are motivated by a globalising agenda to create a precinct of “world class” facilities, comprising new convention facilities, exhibition halls, an ultramodern theatre, a 600-room hotel, grand ballroom and meeting rooms, all in a prime waterfront location. Unlike the Sydney Exhibition Centre and Sydney Convention Centre being replaced, the new International Convention Centre Sydney will be designed to provide a transnational social space that “could literally be almost anywhere in the world” (Sklair 2006.) – a deterritorialised hyperspace exploiting a neutral and universal architectural language that does not pretend to say anything about Sydney or Australia or cultural identity. (Figures 4 and 5) Its symbolism will lie in the “culture-ideology of consumerism.” (Sklair 2006.) The promotional material being pushed out by the consumerist fraction promises a “striking contemporary design” with “multipurpose spaces” wrapped in the largest glass and concrete envelope possible on the site. (ICC Sydney 2015.) The important change since 1988 is that the development is a Public Private Partnership in which the private sector is pulling most of the strings. Economics and business have become decidedly the main game, although the government still maintains Darling Harbour’s status as a place for the people.
Architecture and urban design are an important part of the economic strategy of nation states that seek to develop their major cities to attract the Transnational Capitalist Class. The demand for a supply of suitable buildings has sparked a building boom in many cities that seek to attract the expanding global corporate business sector.

For this architecture the surroundings constitute neither legitimation nor inspiration for these are derived from what goes on inside the building, from the programme. This autonomy is in many cases reinforced by the fact that the building has an inscrutable exterior that betrays nothing of what happens inside. (Adam 2012.)

This has resulted in the development of architectural styles derived from Modernism that are capable of cutting across geographical and political boundaries and that easily attach to corporate identity and speculative commercial development.

Another economic strategy is the hosting of mega events such as Olympic games or international exhibitions, accompanied by the construction of distinctive and innovative structures that add to the host city’s identity and assist its promotion on the world stage. (Roche 2000.)

Exhibition buildings are important because they are at the coalface of universal trading and the hosting of international trade shows and are therefore valuable assets for nation states and particularly vulnerable to globalising forces and changing architectural trends. Among other perceived deficiencies, the 1988 iconic architecture of the Sydney Exhibition Centre, with its expression of national identity, was of no relevance to the current Transnational Capitalist Class. The desire to reinvent Darling Harbour as a nexus of the global capitalist system was to enhance commercial interests and the resulting architecture is likely to revert to the universal symbolism of Modernism that has spawned countless gleaming exhibition and convention centres worldwide. The dissemination of global modernity has been observed to have led to a general homogenisation of cities, where the “experience of strolling through malls at Canary Wharf in London’s Docklands, at Potsdamer Platz in Berlin and at Manezhnaya Square in Moscow is fundamentally the same.” (Adam 2012.) This new uniformity gives rise to the phenomenon of the “non-place” in which unique spatial identity and native social, political or cultural practices yield to the detrerritorialisation of “hyperspaces” with their monotonous qualities constructed from a universal palette of glass, aluminium, stainless steel, titanium and natural stone, as exemplified in the new glass and concrete structures currently under construction at Darling Harbour. This abstraction of the relationship between culture and place is designed to accommodate the boundary-less commerce of the global
era. The circumstances of the Sydney Exhibition Centre’s demise demonstrate the fragility of iconicity and the fluidity of symbolic expression in the fast-paced global era.

Although cities vying for global trade construct superficially similar built environments that are conducive to the business of transnational corporations, identifying a point of differentiation and promoting place-identity is also essential to attract transnational business and tourism. Importantly, place-identity must be easily accessible and legible to visitors and offer itself as a distinctive “experience.” This tension between standardisation and differentiation creates a dilemma in that “the specific features of local identities are among the most important resources available in the competitive marketing of tourism.” (Adam 2012.) Iconicity is one strategy increasingly employed to differentiate cities, particularly through the commissioning of buildings by “starchitects.” While the original Sydney Exhibition Centre achieved iconic status at a local level, it could not compete with the nationally and internationally iconic Sydney Opera House or the Harbour Bridge, both of which are “characterized by great legibility in terms of their monumentality and ... representational sculptural features.” (Sklair 2006.) Given the enduring iconicity of these two structures it might be argued that Sydney does not require another iconic building to attract international exhibitions and conventions. This is affirmed by the current promotional videos for the re-construction of the Darling Harbour precinct, in which the Sydney Opera House and Harbour Bridge feature front and centre to “fix our visual and emotional compass” (Sklair 2006.) even though they are located in another part of the harbour. (Figure 6) Darling Harbour is therefore not differentiated by the distinctiveness of its architecture although it can appropriate the proximate Sydney Opera House and Harbour Bridge. (YouTube.) It can, however, be differentiated nationally and internationally by its prime harbour side location, and the new buildings being constructed there seek to exploit every opportunity for water views.

![Figure 6: The splash page for the International Convention Centre Sydney website features a panorama of the Sydney skyline with Sydney Opera House in the foreground.](image)

**Conclusion**

Exhibition buildings have been at the forefront of globalisation since their invention as a typology in the mid-nineteenth century. The Sydney Garden Palace built in the Royal Botanic Gardens to house the Sydney International Exhibition of 1879-1880 was part of a deliberate strategy to globalise Sydney and connected the interests of the state with the commercial interests of an elite of business leaders, traders and professionals. (Proudfoot et. al. 2000; Orr 2006.) Likewise, the original 1980s
development that reclaimed Darling Harbour from the urban blight of its industrial past, and the Sydney Exhibition Centre designed by Cox, were part of a globalising strategy that was typically taking place in docklands around the world. (Sklair 2005.) However, this paper has explored how the Australian architectural style of the Sydney Exhibition Centre and its metaphorical references to ships’ masts and sails seem to have become irrelevant. Perhaps Australians now regard themselves as global citizens and no longer recognise the need for a national imagery rooted in a landscape or seascape tradition? Perhaps it is corporate branding rather than specificity of culture and place that now resonates with people in an increasingly consumption driven society? Even the significance of the building’s heritage values held little sway in the context of “urban boosterism” and the possibility of hosting commercially significant mega events. Nevertheless, it is important to keep sight of the public benefit that should be protected in the pursuit of private profit and to continually question the relationship between architecture, place and the needs and expectations of society in Darling Harbour’s redevelopment.

Australian architectural practices have been among those leading the charge to take advantage of new global business opportunities. Adams finds that by 2006, there were fifty-nine major international architectural practices with offices in more than one global region, including American (37%), British (25%) and Australian (8%) practices. (2012.) Cox Architecture has followed this trend and its business trajectory has seen the establishment of foreign branch offices in Dubai, Abu Dhabi and Kuala Lumpur, and a broadening of the practice’s ethos to embrace buildings in places other than Australia that “complete environments” through an intensive examination of context, whether urban or landscape. (Cox Architecture 2015.) Despite Cox’s early concern “only with Australia” and “things Australian,” his discovery that his architectural talent is portable and can be applied in international settings has nurtured a more global outlook. As a result, overseas work has become an important part of his business model,

Cox’s ability to penetrate the essence of his own country, its spirit of place, is now being translated to other parts of the world. His quickness, his acute perceptions, can pick up the essence of Kuwait or Indonesia, or wherever, with comparative ease. His is a creative intelligence that can be applied anywhere in the world. (Towndrow 1991.)

The dilemma posed by the globalisation of architecture was examined by Rem Koolhaas at the 2014 Venice Architecture Biennale. (2013.) He argues that it is no longer possible to talk about “Chinese” or “Swiss” or “Indian” architecture as national identity has been sacrificed to a singular modern aesthetic. Yet he suggests that unique national features and mentalities continue to exist within architecture and should not be overlooked by architects. Beyond seeking the iconic for its own sake and accommodating the forces of a market economy, architects should strive to maintain their core values and ambitions and open the way for new possibilities. Despite the flattening effect of globalisation these can still survive in the design of discrete architectural elements and details of buildings that respond to specific sites, climates and cultural contexts.

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The Emergence of Mapping, Planning in England and the Early English Colonies

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In the English-speaking world, the emergence of modern post-medieval mapping coincided with the emergence of modern land markets. Maps were found, very quickly, to be a useful tool in defining the extent of land and thus in adjudicating land disputes between owners. They soon became part of a proto-planning system used to envisage, to describe and to talk about future growth. Naturally maps became an important way to describe land legally and envisage future uses of land in English colonial settlement, first in Ireland and then in the New World. Maps were not only used in the Settlement of Ireland but in financial disputes about the pace of colonization. As the English cast their territorial net more widely, so map-makers and then surveyors became proto-urban designers laying out towns, and their uses, in increasing detail and across the globe. This is true first in the original American and Caribbean colonies which experienced rapid European settlement, but later true through much of empire, including towns that were never meant to have much in the way of European settlement. Map making had two distinct but related roles. On the one hand it defined private property where none had existed. On the other it provided the basis for “planning” the future of development, although that word was not used in the modern professional sense at the time.

Keywords: maps; colonial history; town surveys

Introduction

In England, the emergence of post-medieval mapping (in other words, post the production of mappae mundi) coincided with the early emergence of modern commercial land market. Maps were found to be a useful tool in defining the extent of land and thus in adjudicating land disputes between owners. As a result maps soon became part of a proto-planning system used to envisage, to describe and to talk about future growth. Naturally maps became an important way to describe land legally and envisage future uses of land in English colonial settlement, first in Ireland and then in the New World. Interestingly, maps were not only used plan the Settlement of Ireland but also in financial disputes about the pace of colonization there. As the English cast their territorial net more
widely, so map-makers and then surveyors became proto-urban designers laying out towns, laying our plats and their uses, in increasing detail and across the globe. This is true first in the original American and Caribbean colonies that experienced rapid European settlement, but later true through much of empire, including towns that were never intended to have much in the way of European settlement (for instance Norwood 1945, xxxvii). Mapping in the English colonies was not everywhere the same. Where land was scarce and potentially valuable - the Caribbean islands being a prime example - the surveyors were brought in early. Where land was more plentiful and outside the boundaries of towns - most of the mainland America colonies and Newfoundland - the need to define the exact terminus of ownership was less pressing.

This paper is divided into two geographically separated but substantively related topic areas. The first concerns the history of English mapping in the context of a modern land market. It turns out that in England a modern commercial land market began to emerge in the late 1200s. However, it is probably only by the time of Elizabeth I that the land market had begun to look something like the one we have today. For much of the early period of land market development, maps were relatively unimportant in defining land or ownership or use. Written surveys were the way land ownership (the term is used broadly here - at the time of the Domesday Book rights to land were newly feudal and the concept of “ownership” does not capture that tenure) and use had been documented from the time of the Domesday Book (1086) through at least to John Stow’s famous 1603 A Survey of London. Darby (1977) and Fleming (1998) provide commentary on the Domesday Book and English mediaeval legal custom. Stow’s 2005 survey was not the last of the sort. However, by the middle 1600s the technology and sophistication of maps meant that survey’s were of less important. Barber (2007) provides extensive treatment of how maps replaced written surveys. It took considerable development of mapping technology and geographical knowledge for maps to become integral to the idea of land ownership, particularly to legal arguments about land ownership and use. In England, the great advances in the technology of mapping started under Henry VIII and continued on until the middle of Elizabeth I’s reign. During this period maps took on the number of roles with parallels to the roles of maps in modern urban planning. Beyond defining ownership and use, there were used to analyze urban problems, to define footprints and lots, to envisage new development be it residential or infrastructural, and to provide the basis for urban design. England was not completely unusual. Maps were used for similar purposes elsewhere (but not everywhere) in Europe. But under Henry VIII and then under Elizabeth I England became a leading user of maps for public administration and what we today would call urban planning (Barber 2007).

The second topic area covers the spread of maps and map making from England to its new found colonies. The big improvements and map making technology that started in the 1400s were very largely associated with Spanish, Portuguese and then Dutch colonial expansion. From the very beginning improvements in mapping and mapping technology were part of European colonial expansion. By the time the English started colonizing (first Ireland and then the New World of North America and the Carribean) the technology of maps had improved considerably. Also, by this time, maps were thoroughly integrated into English legal and administrative arguments about land ownership and use. The result is that very soon after the English started colonizing, maps started being used for a much wider range of purposes than mere navigation or the defining of coastlines. They were used to plat the newly conquered lands, to lay down towns, to define infrastructure, and they were used as one of the bases for legal arguments about land. This process started in the Tudor conquest of Ireland, in particular the settlement of the Plantations in what is now Northern Ireland.
And it carried on into the conquest of in North America, the Atlantic, and the Caribbean. By the early 1600s the pattern had been set with colonial surveyors having the task of defining land and ownership. The major exception is Newfoundland which saw quite early colonization. The first English mission there may have been John Cabot’s in 1496. Newfoundland was then claimed by the Portuguese. In 1583 Sir Humphrey Gilbert landed in St John’s and took possession of the island for Elizabeth I. As a result of this history the colonization of Newfoundland was quite different from that undertaken later in North America. However, even outside Newfoundland the pattern was far from uniform. Where land was plentiful or not seen as particularly valuable there was little need to define the special bounds of ownership. But where there was less land and it was seen as potentially valuable the spatial bounds of land were defined in detail. There are exceptions to this pattern, and those exceptions became more prevalent as British colonial ambition expanded.

The paper ends in the late 1700s in the laying out of towns in what was now a much more global empire. By this time the technology and paraphernalia of mapping had improved dramatically and the role of the colonial surveyor was reasonably well defined. Nevertheless, the Ordnance Survey of England and Ireland was still years off and thus modern mapping based on a mathematically-derived national grid had not yet started (it had in France). That would change in the early 1800s.

**Map-making and the private land market in England and its colonies**

The first step in creating a modern English land market was Edward I’s 1290 passing of Quia Emptores. This statute stopped subinfeudation - the practice of sub-letting land but without passing on the full feudal obligations of that land to the tenant. Practically the statute required that buyers assume all tax and feudal obligations of the original tenants (Pollock and Maitland, 1968). The net impact was to hasten the demise of feudalism and to encourage a more modern, commercial view of land. It reinforced the impact of the Magna Carta which both limited the absolute sway originally claimed by feudal overlords and provided “Rights of due process, inheritance, and protection from excessive taxation are among the most significant which developed during [the] era” (Arundel undated, 1).

We know that by the late 1400s land ownership and rights to use had become the source of considerable legal dispute. In response to problems in the land market and in the courts adjudicating this market, Henry VIII passed three major real estate acts. The most important was the Statute of Uses which outlawed secret land sales. Complementing this was the Statute of Enrollments which, for all intents and purposes, established conveyancing. Elizabeth I passed various acts in the 1570s and 1580s mostly to fix problems with conveyancing. Then until the Victorian era there was little new English legislation to do with real estate. Thus by the late 16th century most of institutions central to the operation of a modern land market were in place.

One of the earliest English maps that dealt with land-use issues describes the rights to grazing in various fields - the 1430 map of Pinchbeck Fen in Lincolnshire (Mitchell and Crook, 1999). This is at best a proto-land-use map. It is fundamentally unclear the extent to which the map regulates land-use or describes current land-use. While the boundary between survey and prescription was blurred in this early map, it is also important not to underestimate the legal importance of later maps. There are examples of maps that appear to have been drawn specifically for dispute settlement. A very early instance is Ralph Treswell’s 1585 Map of Lands between Piccadilly and Oxford Street, attempting to
clarify grazing rights in an area new the contemporary Oxford Circus (see Barber 2013, 75 for a reproduction). It is possible that 1515 was the first time that a map was shown in a court of law. This was in a case about a dispute over the damming of the River Ouse to power the water mills of the Abbot of Ramsey. The damming let to the flooding of neighbouring fields. The court ordered the Abbot to remove the dams. It is likely that the impact of the map illustrating the problem had a direct impact on the verdict. Soon after maps started appearing in other court cases and by the end of then 16th century were fairly common in court proceedings (Mitchell 2006, 213).

Slowly maps were becoming ingrained as evidence in land disputes. In 1622 Sir Thomas Phillips commissioned cartographer Thomas Raven to produce maps of the London Companies (an Irish Plantation) (Phillips 1928). The maps formed part of the evidence submitted by Phillips to Charles I against the London Companies that they were not implementing their legal obligations to implement the Plantation of Londonderry (see http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/british/plantation/companies/lc02.shtml).

It was in the 16th century that people began to realize the domestic importance of mapmaking and to understand that the more accurate a map the more useful it was. Advances in instrument making, particularly in the Low Countries, meant that by the late 16th century reasonably accurate maps were in the grasp of map makers (Wilford 2001). Henry VIII’s break with the Church of Rome during the 1530s meant that there was a serious threat of invasion of England by the Holy Roman Emperor, Charles V. In preparation for an attack Henry VIII commissioned a survey of the English coastline and its defences. A generation on there are what are essentially modern looking maps of the nation. In 1664 Gerard Mercator published a series of detailed maps of the British Isles (Crane 2003). By the reign of Elizabeth I maps were being employed as tools of government. This was encouraged by the Lord Burghley, the Queen’s chief advisor and Treasurer, and the Privy Council which made it clear that local authorities were expected to submit maps and plans of their proposals where appropriate. It is clear that Burghley found maps very useful to his work. Many maps were annotated by him. There are also records of sketch map entirely in his own hand (Margey and Andrews 2011). By the late 16th century cartography was becoming embedded in the work of government. The Great Yarmouth map drawn anonymously in 1570 is a good demonstration of these tendencies. The map is adapted to demonstrate the proposed harbour works to the Privy Council (see http://www.bl.uk/onlinegallery/onlineex/unvbrit/g/001cotaugi00001u00074000.html). The map has becomes an adjunct to a financial and, in this case, military argument for the need to upgrade the port.

The Mercator maps mentioned above were followed by Christopher Saxton’s survey of England and Wales, carried out between 1574 and 1578, and supervised Lord Burghley. Saxton produced 34 county maps - this was the first systematic survey of the Kingdom and Principality. There is evidence that Burghley used this atlas as an aid to policy (see http://www.bl.uk/onlinegallery/onlineex/illmanus/roymanucoll/c/001roy000018d03u00024000.html). Maps had become more accurate both in terms of their spatial accuracy and in terms of the geographical elements they described. They had also become “national.” Precisely because of this maps started to take on civilian rather than merely military or exploratory functions. They had become aids to policy and dispute resolution, not only in the chambers of the central state, not only in London, but also at the local level in the British regions.
Beyond this maps were being used in the provision of what today we would call planning permissions. Thus we have John Carter’s for a row of houses outside the City walls and not along a highway described in John Carter’s ground in Stepney containing eight aker, two roodes and seven perches measured in June 1671, drawn anonymously (reproduced in Barber 2013, 69), or a plan to develop royal mews north of St James Palace Proposalls made and agreed on Betwene Richard Frith of St Martins in the Field, And the severall respective Trademen hereunto subscribing, produced in 1688. Similarly The Ground Plot of Arundell House and Gardens, 1678, describes a proposed redevelopment of the London home of the Duke of Norfolk (partially reproduced in Barber 2013, 77).

More generally, in 1559 a town plan had been drawn by Wm Cunningham for Norwich. Around the same time a town plan had been drawn for London. And in 1574 Richard Lyne engraved a plan for Cambridge (reproduced in Moreland and Bannister 2010, 41). From this time on the pace of town plan production, especially for London, increased: Valegio (1580), Norden (1593), Münster (1598) and then John Speed (1610-11 in his The Theatre of the Empire of Great Britaine) all drew plans. Since London grew rapidly, there was a constant need to update maps. Moreover, the Great Fire also created a need for new map-making. Darlington and Howgego (1963) cover this period of expanded map production in considerable detail in their Printed Maps of London, Circa 1553-1850.

By the late 1700s there were mapped town plans for most of the major cities of Europe, many of the smaller cities of England, and many of the new towns of the New World and indeed some new towns in the old world (the important examples here are the towns of the Irish Plantation in what is now Northern Ireland). One of the first for Sydney, Australia, a relatively late colonial capital, was a now iconic map drawn by Lesueur in 1802 Plan de Ville Sydney, Capitales Colonies Anglaises, aux Terres Australes, in François Péron’s Voyage de découvertes aux Terres australes (1775-1810). Similar sorts of plans exist for many of the early capitals of the Carribean, Canadian, South African, Indian and Austral-Asian colonies. Even quite tiny colonial centres had town plans. For example Jamestown, capital of the south Atlantic British territory St. Helena, has one: J.N. Bellin’s 1764 Petit atlas maritime: Recueil de cartes et plan des quatre parties du monde etc. includes Plan de la forteresse et bourg de l’Isle Ste Helene (see http://www.bweaver.nom.sh/maps/bellin2.htm). It is important to understand that town plans were not regulatory or even prospective layouts, in other words, they were not land-use maps or zoning maps as we would understand these today. They were a description or survey, often quite rudimentary, of what was there on the ground.

By the middle of the 16th century maps were being used to help in the analysis of urban problems. The anonymously produced Plan of the Borough High Street, Southwark, 1542 (partially reproduced in Barber 2013, 48) was commissioned by Henry VIII to identify monastic and other religious precincts in Southwark, in an attempt to resolve a set of interconnected religious and social problems. By the time of the response to the Great Fire more than a century on, they were being commissioned and used to provide background information to the urban design proposals for the rebuilding of London that emerged from that tragedy. Most important was Wenceslaus Hollar’s map of John Leake’s survey of the damage. This is partially reproduced in Barber (2013, 45-6). In 1676 John Ogilby and William Morgan published A Large and Accurate Map of the City of London from Westminster and Southwark. This was a very large scale (high resolution) map, at the time by far the highest resolution and most accurate map of its kind. The map represented a dramatic movement forward in the quality of town plans. It was created with the support of City merchants and was
supervised by Robert Hooke (Barber 2013, 58). It described London ten years after the fire and it helped solidify the role of mapping in describing development.

The 1500s and 1600s proved a time of rapid development in English map making and in the domestic use being made of maps. This period coincided with the solidification of a commercial land market. Unsurprisingly maps were being used as aides in dealing with that land market. This period also coincided with early English colonial expansion. Again unsurprisingly, the uses of maps in England were soon transplanted abroad. As we have already seen, by the 1600s town plans were being drawn of colonial outposts. And maps were being used to guide development of and in legal disputes about development in the colonies.

**Map-making and the new colonies: Bermuda, Jamaica and elsewhere**

In England written surveys and then maps became key both to legitimating ownership when ownership was in some doubt and to regulating the land market and thus ownership and use once a commercial the land market had come into existence. By the time of rapid English colonial expansion the English elite were accustomed to using maps to define, regulate and argue about property. Maps had already been put to good use in the conquest of Ireland and it was therefore to be expected that maps would continue to be used as an aid to conquest and settlement, probably most comprehensively in Edney’s (1997) work on mapping in India between 1765-1843. It is however, important to note great variability in the application of the new mapping technologies available in the home country. Edney (2009) writes: “Land surveying in colonial New England [] remained largely unaffected by the new instrumental technologies introduced into old English property mapping in the seventeenth and eighteen centuries.” For a survey of the variability of (cadastral) property mapping in the colonies see Kain and Baigent (1992, chapter 8).

Much like the Domesday book after the Norman Conquest, surveying and mapping asserted the rights to land of the new colonial masters; and provided the basis for the taxation of that land. Surveying and mapping legitimated the new order. While this argument is essentially correct - and has been made in various colonial contexts - the use of surveying and mapping was at least as important in those places with no pre-existing indigenous populations or where pre-existing populations no longer existed. Presumably in these places there was no need to assert a new colonial order or to legitimate the new colonial owners of land.

Bermuda is the pre-eminent example here. The islands had originally been claimed for Spain and probably had shipwrecked Portuguese fishermen living on them for a limited time; however, the islands were uninhabited when colonized in 1609 by the English. Besides the shipwrecking there was no sign of a pre-existing population of any sort. Barbados is a slightly more complex example. It did have a pre-existing Amerindian population but by the time of the arrival of the first British settlers in 1627-1628 the island was empty of human habitation. In both instances, mapping’s primary purpose was not to assert colonial legitimacy but to define land for modern capitalist ownership. The primary purpose of mapping was to create property from “mere” land. Of course, with such property came taxes and the larger interest of the state.

Early English colonial map-making had two distinct but related roles. On the one hand it helped create private property where none had existed. On the other hand it provided the tools necessary
to manage land and regulate the uses of land. As a byproduct of this, and only in places with a pre-existing population, would the creation of property from “mere” land also mean the assertion of ownership and control by the new colonial masters.

Thus Bermuda was laid out very early and very carefully, in this case by the London mathematician and surveyor Richard Norwood. We know how the survey was accomplished, not only from the resulting survey, map and the colonial record (his platting proved controversial as it benefitted both himself and the governor, see Laughton 1895) but because Norwood kept a journal (the journal was however, much more concerned with Norwood’s religious life than his survey and is a somewhat unreliable source of commentary on method) (Norwood 1945). The early territories in what is now the United States typically were not platted in this detail. And the other Atlantic island colonies were mostly not laid out with the same care as Bermuda. Certainly Barbados was not. In the case of St Helena in the south Atlantic - a way station between England and Cape Town with few prospects for development - even less so. In 1657 Oliver Cromwell granted the English East India Company a charter to govern the island and settlement started a year later. The quality of colonial platting appears to be related to the total amount and perceived value of land after development.

The creation of property from “mere” land is most apparent in Richard Norwood survey and map, contracted by the Somers Isles Company (the Somers Isles was an early alternative name for Bermuda). The company was formed in 1615 and had a royal charter for the commercial development of the islands. For a short time prior to that the Virginia Company and then the Crown had run the islands. Norwood probably arrived in Bermuda at the end of 1613 and his map was finally published in London in 1622. The survey divided and defined the Somers Isles into nine equally-sized administrative districts comprising a public territory and eight “tribes” or as they sometimes called today “parishes”. The tribes were defined areas of land provided to the shareholders (at that time called “adventurers”) in the Somers Isles Company. The tribes were then divided into lots. In 1631 the now famous London mapmaker, John Speed, then used the Norwood survey as the basis of his new map, engraved by Goos and published in Amsterdam. That map was to become the standard map of Bermuda during the seventeenth century and was copied widely (see Julie Sylvester and Anthony Pettit 2005).

Norwood’s was not the first map of Bermuda; that distinction lies with the Peter Martyr map of 1511; moreover, there were a number of maps published in the period between the Matyr map and the Norwood map. The special place of the Norwood survey and resulting maps is that they created new private property that was spatially well-defined for the Company shareholders. It did this comprehensively (that is almost all Bermudian land was surveyed and allotted).

On Carribean islands the English colonizers also used maps to define their ownership of land, though this tended to be considerably less comprehensive than found in Bermuda. This was because it was undertaken by individual landowners. During the 1500s and 1600s wealthy landowners in England had discovered the importance of maps as a way of protecting their interests. Many commissioned “estate maps”. These defined ownership by defining boundaries; it appears that the purpose of the commissioning was to more precisely define the spatial bounds of ownership. These estate maps were often used in legal disputes about land. However, the maps came to have further functions: defining land uses, hamlets, villages and roads on the estate. Thus estate maps soon became part of the land management of large estates.
After the Munster rebellion in Ireland, Francis Jobson and three other surveyors mapped approximately 500,000 of newly forfeited land in the counties of Cork, Limerick, and Waterford. In form this 1586/7 survey was no different from the English estate maps being generated across the Irish sea (Andrews 2007). But in practice they asserted ownership by the new colonial masters over the newly conquered - thus they are what connected English estate mapping to the estate mapping undertaken in the New World.

Estate maps proved popular in parts of the new world, both as a way of defining ownership and managing use. Jamaica probably had the largest number of “plantations maps” in the Caribbean. These started early on as a means of defining ownership, for instance Francis Inians’ 1665 plat of his own property, Vine Plantation. But by the 1700s plantation maps had become as much concerned with the internal spatial organization of the plantation as with defining its external border. The Jamaica Plantation Maps are brought together in a beautiful volume by Higman 1988. Fig 3.1, p.20 has the Inian plat quite different in its quality and intent to say the much later 1794 Plan of Worthy Park Estate, Fig 4.19, p. 203. As in England the need to define ownership had slowly transformed itself into something more - maps provided the basis for managing and “planning” land, although of course he word “planning” was not used in the modern professional sense at the time. By the 1700s surveyors were laying out the new towns of the colonies using the same techniques as the estate and plantation maps. At this point the colonial surveyor had become more than the creator of property from land; he had become an urban land-use planner and designer.

By the early 1700s at any rate, and across the world, English colonial administrators were using surveyors to lay out new towns. The origins of these sorts of maps can be traced back to the maps laying out the new towns of the Irish Plantation. Across the English world, surveyors were not making town plans as traditionally understood. As much as anything, and to use the jargon of our time, they were master planners and urban designers, whether we are talking about accommodating the fast growth of 18th century Dublin (Ó Cionnaith 2012), or about the settlement of the new towns of British North America (Bosse 1989), or about quasi-military settlement of Sydney, Australia (for instance, as in A Survey of the Settlement in New South Wales, New Holland engraved by A Dulton and L Poates in 1792). Maps had become the technological base of their craft.

While surveyor-general maps did not have the precision or legal status that modern land-use or zoning map would have, they did indicate where things should be, and also where things currently were. While they did not have the legal force that land-use and zoning maps in most of the Anglo world have today, in other words, they did not have force in and of themselves, they did have force as part of a military or quasi-military colonial investment in land and development. Thus Dulton and Poates’ map of Sydney was, in function, quite unlike Lesueur’s more famous town plan that followed it.

Conclusions

The modern capitalist land market began to emerge in England prior to modern mapping and as a result of quite distinct social and economic forces. However, as soon as maps were used in land ownership and land use disputes their usefulness was clear and their integration into the institutions of the land market were fast. Just as this was happening English colonial expansion was starting. The technology of mapping useful in adjudicating an emerging land market in England became crucial to
defining property, ownership and use in the new colonies. Sometimes this meant transforming empty land into property; mostly it meant defining the rights of the new colonial possessors.

**Timeline**

Domesday book, defined land ownership (and taxation) after Norman Conquest - 1085

Magna Carta, provided due process, including in land disputes - 1215

Quia Emptores, ended subenfeudation - 1290

Pinchbeck Fen map used to define/regulate land use - 1430

Possible first use of maps in legal case - 1515

Saxton’s survey of England, used as basis of infrastructure and quasi-planning decisions - 1574-1578

Conveyancing reformed 1570s-1580s

Treswell’s map, possible first time map specifically drawn for use in court proceedings - 1585

Irish plantation maps - 1622

Stow’s non-mapped Survey of London - 1603

Bermuda colonized - 1609

Norwood’s map of Bermuda - 1622

Vine Plantation map, Jamaica - 1665

Great Fire of London leading to various new analytical maps, urban design regimes and then town plans - 1666

Sydney cove map by Dulton and L Poates - 1792

Worthington Park Estate map - 1794

**References**


Enthusiasts in Launceston, the second biggest city in Tasmania, had pushed the virtues of town planning between 1915 and 1945 without much success because of a lack of effective legislation and of town planning expertise. The advent of the Town Planning Act 1944 and of the advice given by successive Town and County Planning Commissioners provided new impetus to discussion of town planning ideas and sometimes to action. For example, in 1956 the Launceton City Council adopted a Tentative Zoning Scheme, but did not submit the scheme for the provisional approval of the Town and Country Planning Commissioner Neil Abercrombie. This meant that the scheme could not legally be placed before the public for the statutory period of 3 months for comment and criticism. From the early 1960s, with agitation from businessmen and professionals, grew a general desire to prepare a formal Town Planning Scheme. This was begun in August 1967 after the appointment of English trained Colin J. Taylor as Town Planning Officer and was completed in 1969, but after lengthy public debate and revision was not finally adopted until 1976. In addition to the Town Planning Scheme, Council investigated the feasibility of a civic square and malls; commissioned a Launceton Area Transportation Study; planned for future recreational needs; and established an up-to-date Town Planning Department. This was an unprecedented period of town planning activity in Launceton and this paper will explain why and assess what impact the various proposals had on this important regional city.

Keywords: Launceton, town-planning scheme, zoning scheme, regional cities, Town and Country Planning Commissioner

Introduction

Few would deny that the literature on the development of Australian planning from the 1950s to the 1970s has been capital city centric and presents a skewed view of how far planning had been part of public discourse in Australia. While not enough attention has been paid by town planning historians to what occurred in regional cities and country towns in the first three decades after 1945, some
town planning activity can be discerned in those cities and towns. We know, for example, that planning schemes were produced for key regional cities such as Greater Wollongong, Greater Newcastle and Maitland and Greater Geelong in the 1940s and 1950s (Freestone 2010: 148). Harrison suggests that country towns were ideal places for town planning ideas to germinate. They were governed by one local authority, where growth was “slow” and demands were “modest” and therefore a council was “best able to integrate statutory planning with other urban responsibilities”, or at least more easily than larger cities with a “patchwork of local authorities” (Harrison 1983: 141).

This paper will test Harrison’s proposition by examining the process that led Launceston, the leading city of northern Tasmania, to finalise a town-planning scheme after sixty years of debate in 1976. That lengthy process shows that whatever the size of the city the same obstacles need to be overcome in regional cities as in capital cities: vested interests, conservative aldermen, apathy or ignorance on the part of the public, and debates over what kind of scheme would best suit a particular city’s past history and future vision were some of the issues that proponents of planning in Launceston had to deal with.

In the first seventy-five years of the twentieth century, we can identify three phases of planning in Launceston. In the first phase from 1915 to 1945 architects were the most prominent agitators for action (Petrow 2013). They worked through the Northern Tasmanian Town Planning Association, first in 1915 and then again in a revived form in 1933, to conserve the city beautiful and garden city features that characterised Launceston and had economic, health and aesthetic benefits to residents and tourists. The Launceston City Council made some effort to beautify the city, but financial constraints and a reluctance to interfere with property rights prevented the development of the city-wide or regional plan that planning enthusiasts wanted. The second phase from 1945 to 1956 was more fruitful due to powers given to municipal councils in the Town and Country Planning Act 1944 and the appointment of R.A. McInnis as Tasmania’s first Town and Country Planning Commissioner in 1945 (Petrow 2014). Before he retired in 1956 McInnis advised the Launceston City Council on developing a planning scheme and offered the services of his talented assistant Hans Westerman, who was crucial in gaining acceptance of a Tentative Zoning Scheme (TZS) for the city. Although aldermen had not formally adopted the zoning scheme under the Town Planning Act by 1956, the TZS was a necessary step on the road towards a formal Town Planning Scheme.

The third phase covering the period 1956 to 1976 will be the focus of this paper. In the postwar period Launceston experienced one of its most rapid periods of population growth from 40,499 in 1947 to 56,721 in 1961 and in 1976 to 81,636 (ABS 2006). Actual and expected population growth was one spur to town planning in Launceston, which was dominated by the business and professional elite both inside and outside the Launceston City Council. The body of the paper will examine why the TZS was not finalised, why the Town Planning Scheme devised by Colin Taylor in 1969 was not accepted and why town planning had broken through to become a key municipal function by 1976. While this process of developing a planning scheme for Launceston was underway, the Tamar Regional Master Planning Authority (TRMPA) was working on a regional plan, but I have no space to deal with that scheme here.

To unravel Launceston’s drawn out planning process, this study relies on the published and archival records of the Launceston City Council, which was responsible for producing a planning scheme; the archival records of the Town and Country Planning Commissioners, who advised the City Council on
how to improve its proposed schemes; and the Examiner newspaper, itself a proponent of a planning scheme, which was an outlet for public comment on the draft schemes and for the divergent views on what kind of planning was needed in Launceston. First, I will provide the Australian context for planning in Launceston.

The Australian Context

The 1940s and 1950s presented governments at the Federal and State level with many urban problems in the growing capital cities of Australia. Some problems, such as deteriorating housing and unregulated expansion of industry, had proved challenging before World War Two. Other problems, stemming from post-war prosperity and accelerated population growth, were new: the increasing use of the motor car, urban sprawl, ribbon development, the demand for more housing and associated infrastructure created by a baby boom and a mass migration programme and the threat to open spaces in and around cities (Alexander 2000). The declining price of cars stimulated rapid growth in car ownership; cars changed the face of Australian cities from the 1950s (Davison 2004).

Planners argued that a more co-ordinated approach to metropolitan planning would solve these problems and “created unrealistic expectations about the ability of planning to achieve radical change” (Howe 2000: 87). Alexander has argued that generally the plans of the 1950s were “top-down documents, largely concerned with facilitating development efficiently in the interests of the ruling hegemony of land-related interests” (Alexander 2000: 102). The plans emphasised “the orderly development of residential, industrial and commercial land use” and “the importance of the traditional central business district”. They provided little scope for public participation, but some “people in the community made their voices heard on specific planning issues”.

Transportation studies, often prepared separately from the metropolitan plans by consultants working with State government bureaucrats, became common from the early 1960s and recommended “extensive metropolitan freeway networks as the primary solution to urban network transportation problems” (Freestone 2010: 160). The transportation studies reflected the “automania” of the times, usually ignored public transport options and the needs of pedestrians, and had “social and environmental costs” (Alexander 2000: 110). In the 1960s metropolitan plans began to shift from “limited … visions of the future and blueprints for the control of land use by councils” towards a more “operational role, producing and managing strategic frames of reference for metropolitan development and protection of the environment” (Morison 2000: 129). In the 1970s strategic plans brought “notable improvements in … environmental awareness, responsiveness to issues of equity and participation and attempted to deal with the problems of fringe land development” (Huxley 2000:147).

Launceston’s Tentative Zoning Scheme 1956-1965

In March 1956 the Launceston City Council adopted the TZS in principle. The zoning scheme proposed three residential zones (closed residential, semi-residential and inner residential), three business zones (central business, inner business and suburban business), three industrial zones (light industrial, heavy industrial and noxious and hazardous) and one rural zone (LTPC 1968: 1-2). The
Launceston Town Planning Advisory Committee of community and professional bodies devised these zones after considering traffic needs, especially ring-roads and outlets; flood dangers affecting residential development; existing building regulations, including preventing “undesirable activities” in “good class” residential areas; “economy in the costs of development, particularly in the area called “the urban fringe”; the distribution of shopping centres and children’s playgrounds; zoning around “special uses” such as hospitals and racecourses; and preservation of the existing skyline from “indiscriminate building”. Zoning would be controlled by a map of zones to indicate where the zones were located; a table of use classes, which classified land and buildings into twenty-seven use-classes; and a table of zones, which indicated whether the City Council would allow a use-class in a particular zone or not.

The TZS, with some 30 “painstakingly-drawn” maps and diagrams prepared by Westerman showing “every conceivable aspect of the city’s past and future growth”, was exhibited in the Queen Victoria Museum from 20 March to 4 April 1956 (AA235/1/6; Examiner, 20 March 1956, 3). After the exhibition, the City Council moved the scheme to the Town Hall foyer for public inspection and aldermen adopted the scheme formally in May 1956 (LCC MMCC, 28 May 1956). Only Alderman Keith Darcey, a valuer, strongly objected to the TZS. Following British planner Patrick Abercrombie’s view that cities were “living organisms”, Darcey thought the TZS not “flexible enough” for a city “already showing signs of cramp” and it lacked an imaginative approach to future needs (Examiner, 22 May 1956, 5). Moreover, the TZS was “confined to political boundaries” instead of natural or economic boundaries. Mayor Dorothy Edwards stressed that the plan remained “tentative” and “should be regarded as one for discussion, information and education”.

After aldermen made the TSZ available for public comment, they used it to deal with applications for development, but made no effort to seal the scheme. In November 1958 the Examiner criticized the Council for the delay in finalizing the scheme, claiming that aldermen were “afraid” that zoning decisions would be under the control of the Town and Country Planning Commissioner (Examiner, 12 November 1958, 2). Given some of the Council’s decisions to allow dubious breaches of the zoning scheme, the Examiner saw advantages in “entrusting” administration of the TZS to “an impartial expert”. Some ratepayers believed that alterations were made to the TZS, noted Alderman Edwards, “to suit the business and other interests of aldermen” (Examiner, 25 November 1958, 6). Some aldermen were opposed to “piecemeal changes” and wanted residents affected by the changes to be “given an opportunity to state their views” (Examiner, 16 December 1958, 4).

Like the Examiner, McInnis’s successor as Town and Country Planning Commissioner Neil Abercrombie, who had finalised the Greater Wollongong scheme, thought that the City Council was waiting too long to finalise its scheme. In November 1958 he asked the Council why it had not provisionally approved the scheme under section 14 of the Act and had not submitted the scheme for his provisional approval under section 15 of the Act (AA236/1/285). Until such approval was given, the scheme could not “legally be placed before the public for the statutory period of 3 months” for comment and criticism. Thus any objections to the zoning proposals would have no legal effect. The scheme was in “an almost permanent state of flexibility ... in limbo, a sort of suspended animation”. Altering the zoning “at will” would result in continual argument, disagreement and criticism “simply because there is no finality about anything”. If the scheme was finalized, it would not be “inflexible” as section 21 of the Act allowed for amendments. Abercrombie stressed that zoning was “not an end in itself; it is the means to the end” (AA236/1/285).
In April 1959 Abercrombie advised the Council that the TZS was three years old, but many changes had occurred in the city and it needed reappraisal and revision (AA236/1/285). The Council agreed because, Mayor James McGowen said, of Launceston’s “rapid expansion” in the suburbs (Examiner, 4 February 1959, 3). The TZS also prevented shops from being built in closed residential zones even when they were needed. The Council gave the task of revision to the reconvened Launceston Town Planning Advisory Committee representing a cross-section of fifteen community and professional interests (MVAADR 1960-61: 72 and 1961-62: 78). The 1961 revision included “an amended Map of Zones and variation to the Written Section”. Sub-committees were appointed to deal with shopping zones for Trevallyn, re-planning West Launceston, re-zoning at King’s Meadows and traffic control measures. Despite the revision, the TZS was still not formally adopted under the provisions of the Act. As Lubove (1995: 87) wrote of Pittsburgh, zoning in Launceston represented “form without substance” and Launceston had not appointed its own town planner by 1965.

Preparing a Town Planning Scheme 1965-1970

In the mid-1960s, as Launceston grew in population, momentum built for a more sophisticated approach to planning. Fuelled by civic pride, there seemed to be a desire to modernise Launceston by adopting “progressive and forward thinking” as embodied in planning systems (Shapley 2012: 317). As will be seen in the forthcoming discussion, the push for applying more progressive and long-term thinking to the planning of Launceston came from some leading businessmen and architect/planners for diverse reasons. In his annual report of 1964-65 the Mayor, Dr. R.J.D. Turnbull, noted that town planning was “assuming more and more importance in Council considerations” and that “a proper Town Planning Scheme” would soon be needed “to ensure the satisfactory development” of Launceston (MVAADR 1964-65: 19-20). The City Architect W.L. Clennett took a preliminary step by investigating town-planning developments overseas while on long service leave in 1965 (LCC MM, 14 September 1964).

A significant new development occurred in May 1965 with the emergence of the Launceston Urban Planning Group, comprised of members of the architectural, engineering, building and financial professions, after an illuminating talk on transportation in Launceston by Professor Dennis Winston of Sydney University (Examiner, 20 May 1965, 3, 6 and 21 May 1965, 11). Architect and planner Dennis Green suggested “forming a group to discuss and do something about planning” (MOE 1969-70: 165-6, 352). One early member and Green’s architectural partner, Jack Thomas Newman, stressed that “the involvement of the public in planning is absolutely essential if planning is to be successful” and “acting through local government” was “probably the most successful way” of getting public participation. The Urban Planning Group was especially prominent in agitating for the formation of the TRMPA.

Another key development was the election of Clarence Gandy Pryor as Mayor in 1966. A successful architect, planner and alderman from 1963, Pryor had been a member of the Urban Planning Group. Pryor’s Mayoralty signified greater commitment to a Town Planning Scheme and he received support from other aldermen. In February 1966, after Alderman McGowen moved and Alderman Michael Ferrall seconded a motion, the Council decided to abandon the TZS and prepare a Town Planning Scheme for submission to the Town and Country Planning Commissioner for provisional approval in line with the requirements of the Local Government Act 1962 (LCC MM, 1 February
1966). Ferrall thought greater planning would assist industrial development, while Alderman Green wanted greater planning for playing fields (LCC MM, 26 September 1966). Conflict arose over amendments to the TZS. Alderman Gunn thought once aldermen “talked about town planning commonsense ‘flies straight out the window’” (Examiner, 6 June 1967, 3).

The Council also decided to appoint a Town Planning Officer, which Pryor thought would result in “more active progress” (MVAADR 1965-66: 17-18). Working under Clennett, Colin J. Taylor was appointed Town Planning Officer for three years with the sole objective of preparing the scheme and he began work in August 1967 (MVAADR 1968-69: 33). Taylor was an experienced Chartered Town Planner, with a BA Honours degree in Town and Country Planning from Durham University. He had worked in England, Nigeria and Scotland, where he was County Planning Officer for Ross and Cromarty in the Scottish Highlands before migrating to Australia (ARTCPBV 1969-70: 33). Taylor prepared a number of interim reports for the consideration of the Town Planning Committee, which was formed as a Standing Committee of Council in 1968 (MVAADR 1967-68: 3, 14; LCC MM, 29 July 1969). The new committee dealt with zoning and re-zoning issues, applications for land usage, development and re-development proposals, subdivisions, street design and layout, off street parking and all traffic matters, industrial promotion and all matters relating to buildings.

On 10 November 1969, twenty-four years since the City Council had adopted the provisions of the Town and Country Planning Act, Taylor’s Town Planning Scheme was made public. Somewhat apologetically, Taylor described his report as “the best I have been able to produce within the limits of time and staff available and the Legislative framework by which such schemes are bound” (RLTPS 1969: n.p.). Planning ahead for the next twenty years, he was motivated by the Biblical Proverb “Where there is no vision, the people perish”. The plan aimed to ensure that future changes to Launceston will “never be haphazard” or result in “chaos, confusion, or ugliness” (RLTPS 1969: 1). Taylor’s scheme had a number of objectives: to ensure the “Efficient functioning of the heart of the City”; “Satisfactory and orderly growth”; “More breathing space for recreation and leisure”; “Effective communications by the simplest means”; preserving “environmental areas as places in which activities associated with a particular form of land use or related land uses can be carried on without outside interference”; “Securing more attractive living conditions by higher standards of sub-division layout and landscape preservation”; and “Providing for interim improvements and scope for further change and unforeseen circumstances” (RLTPS 1969: 11).

In drafting his report, Taylor criticised aspects of the Launceston Area Transportation Study (LATS) that had been commissioned by the City Council in conjunction with the Public Works Department and the Transport Commission. Completed by Pak Poy Associates in 1968, the LATS recommended expenditure of $22.7 million, including 28 miles of expressways and a new four-lane Gorge Bridge (Examiner, 17 December 1968, 1). While it amassed valuable information, Taylor damned the LATS for being obsessed with the motor car and its needs, minimizing the role of public transport and devoting little attention to “the environment of the areas through which proposed main roads will pass” (RLTPS 1969: 14). Taylor suggested “a road network” that was “basically simpler and more in scale with Launceston” than the LATS envisaged and made “greater use of existing good roads and will therefore be easier to implement in a shorter time” (RLTPS 1969: 15).

Other criticisms of the LATS arose when Taylor described his plans for the centre of Launceston, where he aimed for easier pedestrian movement and removal of “non-essential through traffic”
Taylor’s scheme reduced the number of existing zones from fourteen to twelve and made the differences between them “more pronounced” (RLTPS 1969: 16, 33). He marked a number of Recreation Zones to create “a network of routes for walking where people can journey on foot for considerable distances away from motor vehicles”. Taylor’s environmental sensibility was evident in his scheme’s desire to preserve a skyline “clothed in trees and support Launceston’s claim to be “the ‘Garden City’ of Northern Tasmania” (RLTPS 1969: 16). He believed that a skyline “cluttered with buildings, poles and wires is restless, and, unless the buildings are monumental, gives no character to a City”.

Mayor F.B. King noted that Taylor had incorporated “many revolutionary and forward looking features” (MVAADR 1968-69: 11). Once the scheme was approved, King hoped it would provide an effective “blue print" for the future of Launceston (RLTPS 1969: n.p.). It would not remain “static”, but would be reviewed “at frequent intervals in the light of future development" of Launceston and the Tamar Valley Region. As Chairman of the Town Planning Committee, Alderman Pryor suggested that the public be made fully aware of the provisions of the scheme, especially “the restrictive provisions”, and that Taylor should embark on a “public education" programme over the next few weeks (LCC MM, 24 November 1969). This was needed because, once the scheme became law, “it will be binding on the Council as well as the public”.

Examiner reporter Michael Courtney provided an excellent summary of the plan, noting that putting cars behind the needs of pedestrians was “one of numerous provocative proposals” it contained (Examiner, 11 November 1969, 1). He predicted that many proposals would be “sternly opposed by various sections of the business community, and by some aldermen”. Mayor King admitted that such “a comprehensive plan” would not suit “everyone” and “somebody is going to get hurt”. He also more ominously said that, until approved, this was “Mr. Taylor’s plan" not the Council’s plan (Examiner, 12 November 1969, 5). Taylor gained influential support. Praising Taylor’s expertise, the Examiner (12 November 1969, 6) thought that he had minimized “the hurt” and gained “maximum benefit for the city as a whole”. President of the Launceston Chamber of Commerce Edmund Rouse strongly endorsed Taylor’s plan and approved its departure from the LATS in its “treatment of the central city area” (Examiner, 12 November 1969, 5). For similar reasons President of the Retail Traders’ Association R.F. Tilley declared his support for Taylor’s scheme (Examiner, 29 January 1970, 4).

Certainly, the report caused unprecedented interest in planning and “encouraged discussion and the expression of view points" from individuals and organisations (MVAADR 1969-70: 26). There seemed to be more division inside the Council than outside. Taylor complained to the Examiner (24 December 1969, 3) that his plan was likely to be “thwarted by political argument and technical
quibbling” over the four-lane Gorge Bridge and other LATS recommendations. Taylor was committed to his plans for improving the central area. At a public meeting when Taylor explained the plan to community leaders he called the car “a pampered pet” and the pedestrian was regarded as “a second-class citizen” in central Launceston (Examiner, 11 November 1969, 5). His plan sought to put the needs of pedestrians first.

But Taylor was soon shocked to be told by the Town Clerk that he should have taken into account “the LATS recommended road plan ... as the basis” for his scheme (AA236/1/285). If he had, Taylor firmly stated that it would have, especially in the central area, “the heart of the Plan”, changed “the whole basis of the Scheme” and invalidated its recommendations. By accepting the LATS recommendations, the Council had “in fact rejected the Planning Scheme”. The LATS could not be the basis of “an alternative planning scheme”, because it contained “many contradictions and absurdities”, such as roads that were two-way on one plan but closed on another. The LATS proposals would intensify traffic in the central area and would result in “an inevitable decline in central business prosperity, necessitating large-scale relocation of established uses” and new suburban shopping centres. Not only would that be “uneconomic and unpopular”, it would “invalidate the previously agreed parts of the highway system”.

The Town Planning Committee asked Assistant City Engineer John Walton, an adviser to the LATS, to draw up “a compromise central city traffic plan”, which kept Taylor’s malls but not his proposal to divert “everything but shopping traffic and delivery vans from the main shopping area” (Examiner, 9 April 1970, 9). The compromise plan allowed continued heavy traffic along the central routes of St. John and Charles Streets, but was unanimously endorsed by aldermen. Taylor urged Abercrombie privately to force the City Council to accept his scheme, but Abercrombie demurred. He believed that, if the body administering the scheme had no “enthusiasm and faith in its operation, then chaos results” and that body would view the scheme “as a stumbling block rather than an effective tool to aid orderly development” (AA236/1/285). Abercrombie thought a better strategy was “to select a moment when the policymakers are in an acceptable mood and then infiltrate rather than meet an unreceptive group head on”.

At a public meeting to answer questions from interested individuals and businesses, the Retail Traders Association and the Urban Planning Group about Taylor’s scheme and the compromise plan in April 1970, Taylor openly criticised Walton’s plan (AA236/1/285). According to Taylor, Walton had used his planning scheme with “a different traffic plan super-imposed on it”. Walton’s traffic pattern had a number of “defects” and did not “solve the problems of the Central Area”. It was “unrelated to zoning and other essentials of planning”, showed “no concern for pedestrians” and allowed two roads to sever “the environmental areas” (Examiner, 1 May 1970, 5). Taylor’s appointment ended in July 1970 and he became Director of Schematic Planning in Victoria. Alderman Pryor praised Taylor for preparing Launceston’s “first Statutory Planning Scheme” and for creating an “appreciation and awareness of planning among the public” (LCC MM, 6 July 1970).

In August 1970 Pryor’s motion that the scheme as modified by the LATS be provisionally approved by the Council and submitted to the Town and Country Planning Commissioner for his provisional approval was carried (LCC MM, 3 August 1970). But this was not done immediately. Evidence given to a Joint Select Committee on Town and Country Planning earlier in 1970 provides some insight into why approval was delayed. Ex-Alderman and long-time advocate of town planning, Keith Darcey,
noted that aldermen favoured the TZS because it gave them flexibility to make changes to accommodate local needs (MOE 1969-70: 76, 81). One example he cited as showing the need for flexibility was to allow Nelson’s Factory at Mowbray to expand into a residential area. If they had declined and forced Nelson’s Factory to move, it would have bankrupted the business. But Darcie stressed that aldermen always considered variations to the TZS “seriously” and “honestly”.

Aldermen Pryor was reticent to say why Launceston had been slow to seal a plan, but thought that the TZS had “worked well” and, despite Taylor’s efforts, ratepayers had not shown much interest in planning (MOE 1969-70: 123-4). Pryor thought that the interest of ratepayers was “directly proportionate to the closeness to which it comes to home, particularly when they are affected”. The Administrator of the adjoining St. Leonards Municipality F.J.C. White, who had been Mayor of Launceston in 1960-61, was more revealing, acknowledging that before the mid-1960s at least some aldermen were “opposed to planning, and there was some resistance to planning as a matter of principle, not as a matter of procrastination” (MOE 1969-70: 123-4). But that attitude had changed. White stressed the “merit in taking it quietly. You have to get the people on your side, otherwise there will be appeals; let people see it and make sure they like it and it is going to work, and then seal it”. People had to participate in the plan and “think it is theirs”.

While Abercrombie was impressed with the amount of work that Taylor put into his scheme and thought it looked “pretty good”, he advised the City Council that some parts of the plan needed reconsideration (AA236/1/285). As government departments were not bound by town planning legislation, then it seemed pointless to include controls that affected government generally. Abercrombie perceived possible “conflict” between the scheme and parts of the Local Government Act and other legislation. He was worried that there was too much detail and this opened the possibility of complicated legal argument over that detail, which would result in “endless delays”. More significantly, the scheme provided “very little flexibility or “elbow-room” for Council to tackle ever-changing development problems in a growing city”. Abercrombie advocated a simpler scheme, which would give Council “the power it desires and the flexibility” to control growth. He urged more consideration was needed for the central business district, the nine blocks comprising “the heart of the City”, which needed “a separate study in depth”. That study would encompass car-parking, traffic and pedestrian movement, the “desirable bulk of buildings” and “even an outline design to assist Council guide future development”. In short, Abercrombie encouraged the Council to find ways of coping with city development “without too many restraining administrative difficulties”.

Getting a positive response from the Council, Abercrombie and his new Deputy Commissioner Noel Lyneham offered to help “work out something more simple for the Council to cope with” (AA236/1/285). They suggested the Glenorchy Planning Scheme as a “simple” model that Launceston could follow when reviewing its scheme. Chairman of the Town Planning Committee Alderman Pryor favoured that suggestion. Abercrombie and Lyneham’s words had some effect. In his annual report of 1969-70 Mayor R.M. Green expressed “a considerable degree of frustration” that the scheme had taken “so long to formulate”, but he acknowledged problems remained (MVAADR 1969-70: 34). Some aspects of the scheme were too detailed, which would “hinder rather than benefit the implementation of the scheme and could easily be the source of conflict and litigation”. He hoped that the scheme would be “streamlined” before formal approval by Parliament. He noted certain “misconceptions” about the scheme, which was more than “a zoning plan” or “a
traffic study”, but embraced “the whole of the requirements of a developing City and area”. Aldermen had yet to be convinced of the scheme’s suitability.

**Breaking Through: Town Planning 1971-1976**

The period from 1971 to 1976 was the most active phase of town planning in Launceston and, by way of a conclusion to this paper, this section outlines all the major changes that occurred, not least the finalising of the Town Planning Scheme and the creation of a dynamic department of town planning. The revision to Taylor’s Town Planning Scheme proved to be “complex” and “time consuming, with a great many decisions having to be made individually before proceeding with the next step” (LCC MM, 19 November 1973). The Council simplified the scheme by adopting policy codes on matters like multi-residential dwellings, building lines and on-site parking. Citizens complained that the Council was too slow and were worried about potential threats to parks, reserves and the skyline that they attributed to the lack of sealed plan (AA236/1/285; AA236/1/293). Alderman Green highlighted the “confusion and uncertainty in the community” despite the Council gazetting an Interim Order, drafted by the staff of the TRMPA, to regulate development and use of land, which became operational in July 1973 (LCC MM, 22 October 1973; MVAADR 1974-75: 6).

In November 1973 the Council adopted a revised Zoning Plan and agreed provisionally to approve the revised Town Planning Scheme (LCC MM, 19 November 1973). In January 1974 Council sent the revised City of Launceston Town Planning Scheme to Lyneham as Acting Town and Country Planning Commissioner and he gave “provisional approval subject to minor amendments”, including some rezoning (LCC MM, 24 June 1974; MVAADR 1973-74: 13). The scheme was then placed on public exhibition for three months as laid down by statute to allow for objections to be heard. The Council received 107 objections. These were considered by a sub-committee of the Town Planning Committee and Council, which sent its recommendations to the Town and Country Planning Commissioner (MVAADR 1974-75: 11). He held hearings in August, September and October 1975 and in 96 per cent of objections found in favour of the City Council decisions (MVAADR 1975-76: 17).

Aldermen had taken seriously the “substantial objections” from the residents of Inveresk about its zoning for industrial and commercial use and decided to make Inveresk “a Special Study Zone” (MVAADR 1974-75: 6,11). Council staff led by the new City Architect and Planner Trevor Kneebone—former campus architect and planner at the Queensland Institute of Technology who had been appointed in December 1974—worked with students from the Tasmanian College of Advanced Education on the Inveresk Area Study to ascertain the views of residents (IASR 1976). This resulted in an amendment to the Town Planning Scheme known as the Inveresk Special Zone, which aimed to confirm and rehabilitate Inveresk as a residential area and to ensure that “commercial and industrial activities within Inveresk are compatible with its residential functions” (LCC MM, 15 March 1977; MVAADR 1975-76: 17).

The Town Planning Scheme was sealed on 1 September 1976 and was put into operation on 1 October 1976 (City of Launceston, Town Planning Scheme 1973). It was much simpler than Taylor’s scheme and was divided into seven parts: preliminary matters, reservation of land, use of land in zones, existing use and non-conforming use, permits, implementation of the scheme and general provisions. Mayor T.D. Room called the sealed scheme an “important step taken by the Council in establishing planning guidelines” for Launceston and praised “the commendable public participation
in the co-operative exercise undertaken in planning for the suburb of Inveresk” (MVAADR 1975-76: 21). However, in the Launceston tradition, the 1976 scheme was “as flexible as possible to accommodate Council’s views on modern trends in Town Planning” and allowed for “the unending variations that could be received and adopted for development applications” (Cleaver 1979: 112-13).

Other developments also marked how much progress planning had made in Launceston. Taylor’s scheme had pushed for the greater “pedestrianisation” of the central business district and the City Council accepted that, taking into account Abercrombie’s advice, the central business area needed a more detailed redevelopment scheme (LCC MM, 15 March 1971). This more focused scheme would “allow for substantial future growth and ensure that both Council and Government expenditure and expenditure by private enterprise” would be “outlayed in the best interests of the City and of its citizens”. In March 1971 the City Council appointed consultants Perrot, Lyon, Timlock and Kesa of Melbourne to prepare a report, which was submitted to a public meeting in 1972. The main recommendations vindicated Taylor’s ideas and included “a pedestrian orientated Central Business District”, extra short-term car parks and “a re-organised traffic system” (MVAADR 1971-72: 15). The public meeting supported the new plan in principle. R.F. Tilley, no longer President of the Retail Traders’ Association, called the study “a most exciting project which would put Launceston in the forefront of development in Australia” (Examiner, 7 September 1972, 5).

One outcome of the Central Business District report was creating malls in Brisbane Street and the Quadrant (MVAADR 1972-73: 16-17). Work began on the Brisbane Street Mall, between St. John and Charles Streets, in February 1975 and was financed by the sale of municipal land that was not needed for municipal purposes (MVAADR 1974-75: 5-6). After the Brisbane Street Mall was opened in October 1975, Mayor D.V. Gunn described it as “a place for people” and hoped it would in the future become “alive with regular happenings of interest, like concerts, art displays and fashion parades”. Plans for further malls, “semi-malls, arcades and off-street parking options were intended to revitalise “the retail core” of the central business district in the face of competition from suburban shopping areas (MVAADR 1974-75: 11).

Other major changes that modernised planning included renaming the Town Planning Committee the Planning and Policy Committee (MVAADR 1975-76: 3). Based on recommendations from management consultants, the City Architect and Town Planning Department was reorganised (MVAADR 1975-76: 17). The department began developing a Strategic Plan for Community Development in nine policy areas—housing, tourism, environment, industrial and commercial, education, recreation, culture, health and transportation—and developed 80 “strategic statements”. Kneebone also prepared a Conservation Action Plan Report for the National Estate and a new “concept for the Civic Administrative Precinct” with a “plaza design”, which was adopted by the Inter-Governmental Steering Committee representing different levels of government. Also noteworthy was the Launceston Recreation Concept Development Project, which was adopted in February 1975 and shaped “future development” of Launceston’s “formal recreation resources” (MVAADR 1974-75: 16).

Kneebone was a very active town planner, speaking or presenting papers to school groups, the Institutes of Engineers, Builders and Management and service clubs (MVAADR 1975-76: 18). At Mayoral receptions for surveyors, planners, architects, builders, financiers, real estate agents and the Chamber of Commerce Kneebone gave short talks on the work of his Department. Mayor Room
welcomed Kneebone’s more public role and held that “maintaining good communications with developers and the like is a real Departmental duty”. Kneebone went on a study tour of North America and Europe, paying particular attention to recycled buildings, conservation, low cost housing, new towns, cycleways, convention centres and civic plazas. His application of this knowledge to meet Launceston’s needs was, claimed noted Hobart architect and planner Barry McNeill, “unsurpassed by any similar city in Australia” (City Architect and Planner’s Department Annual Report 1977-78: 2). Kneebone had achieved much before he left for the Victorian Ministry of Housing in 1979 (Examiner, 12 January 1979, 1).

Conclusion

The Launceston experience shows that instituting town planning in a regional city was not as straightforward as Harrison supposed and can be a long, drawn out process. Arguably, town planning was achieved in Launceston by what Lindblom (2012, p. 178) called the ‘the method of successive limited comparisons’ or ‘branch method’, ‘continually building out from the current situation step by step and by small degrees’ rather than the ‘rational-comprehensive’ or ‘root method’, ‘starting from fundamentals anew each time, building on the past only as experience is embodied in a theory, and always prepared to start completely from the ground up’. Let me conclude by identifying the steps taken towards completing a planning scheme in Launceston.

First, planning will not progress very far if it is discussed in abstract terms and is not agitated for by civic groups and professionals, above all architect/planners, with support from key business interests. In Launceston the Urban Planning Group brought these groups together and became a voice for change outside the City Council. Second, another necessary step is to have aldermen on the Council prepared to champion the cause of town planning and convince doubters that planning would facilitate not hinder city development or economic growth and benefit residents. The Council then could be persuaded to see outside experts like the Town and Country Planning Commissioner as allies not enemies in achieving the best plan for Launceston.

The third crucial step in Launceston was the appointment of a town planner to draw up a planning scheme as a focus for discussion and debate by key interest groups and residents. This enabled the community to clarify what it expected from planning and to understand what impact planning would have on the city. Fourth, the Launceston experience indicated that overly detailed, comprehensive plans were more likely to delay than expedite planning because their implications were too difficult for non-planners to grasp, would create the impression that radical change would threaten vested interests and would generate resistance to details affecting individual circumstances. Launceston resolved this by adopting a plan that was more simplified and flexible so that the City Council could more easily sell its scheme and respond more readily to changing social and economic needs.

Finally, once a simplified plan is accepted there needs to be a period of consolidation and connection with broader town planning developments as reflected in more in-depth reports on particular aspects of city growth and a commitment by aldermen to use these reports to guide municipal action. Then planning can really be said to have made a break through and become a key Council function as it did in Launceston in the 1970s.
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“A Lot of Hardship, There’s Nothing There at All”
Experiencing premature housing development in post-war Sydney

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During the fifteen years following World War Two, thousands of aspiring home-owners on Sydney’s suburban fringe lived in residential subdivisions without basic household amenities and public infrastructure. This situation was the result of weak planning regulations governing the subdivision and sale of property at the same time as a national housing shortage created unprecedented demand for residential land. Aspiring homeowners took advantage of the sale of subdivided agricultural land to purchase an affordable allotment and, in many cases, built a temporary dwelling while they saved to pay for a permanent cottage on site. Living without services was challenging. Households relied on makeshift methods of cooking, lighting and heating, and compromised on comfort and privacy. Once a permanent home was achieved, usually after a number of years, residents still had to contend with a lack of public infrastructure such as sewerage and storm-water pipes, sealed roads, all-weather footpaths, and street signage. Premature subdivision of land may have been officially frowned upon by state and local planning authorities but, in this adaptive incremental way, many Sydney residents acquired basic shelter and moved into home-ownership. This paper describes residents’ experiences of living in “prematurely developed” areas of the Shire of Hornsby on the northern fringe of Sydney. Against the historical backdrop of this under-researched mode of early post-war housing, the paper seeks to recover, understand and convey through their own words the resilience and sacrifices of a generation of suburban temporary dwelling residents in the 1940s and 1950s.

Keywords: premature development; Sydney; temporary dwellings; post-war

Introduction

In 1948, the Report on the Planning Scheme for the County of Cumberland, a New South Wales region which contains most of the Sydney metropolitan area, defined premature development of
land as “the subdivision of land for residential purposes without relation to actual housing needs” (Cumberland County Council (CCC), 1948, 72). The Report then criticised the system of land development prevailing in New South Wales since the nineteenth century which allowed rural land to be subdivided into suburban allotments for its investment potential rather than to satisfy an increased demand for residential space (CCC, 187). The consequent over-supply of allotments was complicated by inadequate subdivision regulations, which specified that any internal roads must be constructed but did not require the developer to install, or contribute to the cost of installing, household utilities, or further infrastructure (CCC, 187). This situation was recognised by urban planners of the time as leading both to scattered, and therefore wasteful, occupation of already-serviced land, and to the subdivision and sale of quite remote blocks which had little prospect of service provision within a reasonable period of time, if at all (CCC, 72). These more remote subdivisions were still without basic amenities when the demand for building land caught up with the over-supply and the allotments were finally occupied during the unprecedented housing shortage following the close of World War Two.

This paper seeks to recover, understand, and convey in their own words, the resilience and sacrifices of those aspiring home-owners in the 1940s and 1950s who purchased allotments in prematurely-developed subdivisions in the Shire of Hornsby, a locality on the north-western fringe of suburban Sydney. It commences with a discussion of the historical context of this un-serviced residential land, followed by accounts of the solutions contrived by residents to achieve a tolerable standard of living without water, electricity, sewers or public infrastructure, and concludes with a discussion of the difficulties of utility provision during a time of exceptional urban development. The paper draws on oral history interviews with residents who volunteered their stories, complemented by primary and secondary sources such as contemporary photographs and maps, state and local government records and histories of utility provision in the County. It has developed from ongoing doctoral research into the role of temporary dwellings in facilitating access to home-ownership, supplemented by previous research for a master’s dissertation which documents the emergence of a small housing estate in Hornsby.

**Premature development and provision of utilities**

Premature development of land due to unregulated subdivision within the County was of great concern to post-war urban planners. The authors of the Planning Scheme for the County of Cumberland estimated that by 1948 there were close to a quarter of a million residential lots which were still vacant, having been subdivided and sold during the preceding seventy years of haphazard suburban expansion. Of these, just over half were situated in or close to areas which were already developed and were regarded as viable building sites. The remainder, comprising almost 120,000 lots, were so remote and widely spread that it was considered impossible to provide utilities within a realistic period. The Report concluded that approximately one quarter of the total urban development of the Sydney metropolitan area could not expect installation of services and amenities in the foreseeable future, with Hornsby listed amongst the localities most affected (CCC, 72). Between 1947 and 1961, the population of Hornsby Shire increased by 60%, with new arrivals settling predominantly in prematurely-developed subdivisions (Australian Government, 1948; 1955; 1962). In order to provide services for this population increase, in 1960 the Shire Council was spending over 60% of its revenue on capital works (Jeans and Logan, 39).
The Kurrajong Estate in Hornsby is one example of premature and un-serviced subdivision. The estate dates from 1917 when approximately 12 acres were divided into 54 lots and sold as multiple holdings to four purchasers. By 1940, the majority was still scrubland with only two houses built close to an existing road. Phyllis Pool, one of the residents, recalls:

it was just a dirt road ...but we had the gas, the electricity and the water...up the road we had a telephone box...we didn’t have one[at home] at that stage.

In 1947, a small number of lots within reach of these utilities were sold and some construction started but the majority were still without services or a graded road in September 1949, when they were sold individually (HSC, Valuation list 1947-1951).

The majority of vacant blocks in the County were held by investors aiming to benefit from proximity to existing facilities or the promise of future infrastructure undertakings, but a small number were purchased by genuine homebuilders (CCC, 72). Basic services such as water, electricity, garbage and sanitary services were usually supplied by the respective entities once a subdivision had reached approximately 25% occupation, although provision to this small number of consumers was uneconomic. Installation and maintenance costs were included in the consumer’s periodic consumption charges, with public infrastructure such as local roads and street-lighting funded through a separate “contribution to works” rate levied by the local authority on improved land only. Under this arrangement, the owners of vacant land were only liable for the general rate and a nominal water rate based on the unimproved value of their property, they were not required to contribute to the installation and maintenance of the utilities and infrastructure which ultimately increased the value of their landholding (CCC, 187).

Where households were widely scattered within a largely-vacant subdivision, the bulk of the initial and ongoing costs of services were borne by the supplier, whether a private company, a government entity or the local council itself, often with agreement from the local council to guarantee any deficit in income (HSC, no. 6/54, file no. 2976). In this situation, installation of amenities was largely dependent on local council access to the grants and loans necessary to fund or underwrite the work, which would either be realised in staged increments or deferred until finance was available (HSC, no. 1/54 file no. 2056).

With provision of amenities already a problem at the close of the Second World War, the rapid occupation of prematurely subdivided vacant land during the fifteen years after the war increased the demand for utility installation in the outer suburban areas to such proportions that the suppliers were overwhelmed and the waiting time for some utilities increased to years rather than months (Jeans and Logan, 41). This situation was the result of a unique combination of economic, legislative and social circumstances which transpired over twenty years, commencing with a world-wide housing shortage and culminating with a large proportion of the population in the fringe areas of Sydney living in temporary dwellings without services or infrastructure.

The housing shortage and the aspiring homeowner

The housing shortage in Australia dated from the depression years of the early 1930s, during which investment in residential building was severely reduced. The building industry had still not recovered
sufficiently to make up the resulting shortfall before World War Two commenced and restrictions on residential building were introduced (Hill, 22; Australian Government, 1944, 22). The combined effect of these two circumstances left the nation with a shortfall of between 300,000 and 365,000 homes by the end of 1944 (Dingle, 22). In 1945, the inclusion of housing due for replacement, the housing needs of Commonwealth territories, and estimates of accommodation required for migrants brought this figure closer to 400,000 units (Boyd, 102; Australian Government, 1944, 22). By 1946, the New South Wales (NSW) government estimated Sydney metropolitan area alone was in need of approximately 90,000 extra homes (Australian Labor Party, 100).

This long-standing shortage of accommodation was intensified by two legislative actions: firstly, periodic renewal of Federal Government control of housing rents, extended in NSW until 1956; and secondly, National Security Regulations which set the selling price of vacant land at no more than 10% above the valuation figure determined in February 1942 by each State Valuer-General (SMH, 13 May 1944, p.4). The first measure reduced investment in residential rental properties, while the second removed any motive to on-sell holdings of previously-subdivided vacant land (New South Wales Government, 1946b, 734-736).

Although a limited number of vacant allotments were offered for sale in the regulated market during the 1940s, it was not until September 1949, when the NSW State Government allowed land sale price control legislation to lapse, that much of the vacant land was made available for purchase as individual building allotments (SMH, 30 December 1950, p.9). This land included a considerable number of prematurely-developed blocks in outer suburban areas, which were cheaper than serviced land and therefore more attractive to the aspiring but marginal home-owner. Many of these purchasers could not qualify for a bank mortgage but relied on savings, wartime reserved pay and gratuities, or private loans to fund their purchase (Logan, 418; Kociuba, Recording 1; Patryn, Recording 16).

Brian Wagstaff, a process-worker, and his wife and baby were living in one room of his parents-in-law’s house at Glebe when he bought their un-serviced land:  

I came up on the train and thought “Ohh, look at the bush, smell the bush, ohh… there was a small crowd standing up on the top of the hill waiting for the fellow… when he came he said “£89 the block”, I had £30 to put a deposit on it…as soon as the banks opened [on Monday] I paid it out… I said to Jess “please say if you don’t want it or you don’t like it…it’s going to be pretty tough you know, there’s nothing there”. We came up on the Sunday, wheeling Gary in the pram, she stood at the top of the hill and I said “It’s there.” And she said “What, all of that?” and I said “No, one block of it…and you think about it carefully, there’s a lot of hardship, there’s nothing there at all, just vacant land” (Wagstaff, Interview 1).

Once in possession of the title deeds, owners could apply to the local council for approval to build a house. In many local government areas, building approval also entitled them to apply for permission to occupy a temporary dwelling before any services were made available (HSC, no.3/51, file no. 1335). As with other outer Shires, Hornsby allowed owner-occupation of temporary dwellings, initially for six months with extensions granted, supposedly for up to two years but in many cases for considerably longer, provided progress continued on the permanent dwelling on the site (HSC, no.3/51, file no. 1335).
The property owner might have received approval but building progress was dictated by available finance and by the nation-wide shortage of building materials (Australian Government, 1946a, 159). Many of the cheaper prematurely-developed allotments were bought by buyers who could not qualify for a housing loan so used all their available funds to purchase land and erect a temporary dwelling (Wagstaff B., Interview 1; Patryn, K. Recording 16; Kociuba, T&A., Recording 1). Many of these purchasers were low-income workers, so progress on the house usually meant working overtime or finding a second job (Wagstaff, Interview 2). Additionally, most building materials were rationed in NSW until October 1952 (SMH, 14 October 1952, p. 1). Acute deficiencies existed for timber, steel products of all types, bricks and roofing tiles, asbestos cement sheeting (fibro), water and gas pipes, earthenware pipes, and baths, basins and stoves, meaning that, even with permission to build, it could take months to receive an order (Australian Government, 1950, 410; Smith, 15). Building material for a temporary dwelling could only be bought as a garage kit, sourced second-hand, or on the “black market” (Patryn, Recording 16; Wagstaff, Interview 3; Kirby, Recording 1). The lack of money among marginal owners, combined with the shortage of materials, meant that for many of the residents of temporary dwellings their anticipated six to twelve months living in their shed, shack or garage extended to become many years. These are the residents whose resilience and sacrifices are documented here.

Experiencing premature subdivision

The Commonwealth Housing Commission Final Report 1944 noted that “1. A home of modern standard and equipment is both a need and a right of every Australian”, soon afterwards the NSW County Planning Report noted that basic utilities such as reticulated water, electricity and garbage and sewerage services were recognised by 1930 as essential for the health of urban residents (Australian Government, 1944, 22; CCC, 187). The Plan concluded that “utilities which should be available in all urban areas are – Sewerage and Drainage, Water Supply, Electricity Supply, Gas Supply, Garbage Disposal, Street Access including paving, footpaths, street lighting and kerbing and guttering” (CCC, 185). In the newly settled fringe areas during the late 1940s and 1950s, it was impossible to achieve these standards.

Access to water was the first priority as permission to occupy any dwelling would not be granted unless clean water was available(Wagstaff, Interview 3). Many households, like the Kirby’s in Mt Colah and the Patryn’s in Hornsby carried all their water from a neighbour until the permanent house was built five years later, while a resident in the nearby suburb of Turramurra brought water by garden hose from the nearest neighbour each day and stored it in his copper until money and pipes were available for his own connection (Oral history, Interview 1). If neighbours did not have reticulated water, the household had to manage as best they could. The Wagstaffs bought a garage kit for their vacant block and Brian’s first concern was water, firstly to mix concrete for the slab floor then for household use:

There was no water here but that creek was there, it wasn’t a bad trickle so I put a dam across temporarily so that it would back up and that’s the water I used to mix the cement for the garage foundations...Mrs Lachman said I could use her well for drinking water while I worked... the garage kit came with guttering so I thought I’d better get a tank...my brother at Como’s neighbour had the water put on and he was wondering
what to do with his tank...my brother brought it up. I didn’t know if it was any good, it could have been full of holes, so I climbed inside...looked for light everywhere, anything that was a bit suspect, I patched up...with bitumen and gal. sheet...I set it up at a reasonable height and put [the pipe] into the house with a tap and a sink and bucket underneath...Many years later, I put a lean-to out the back and put a pipe extension so it was a laundry and we eventually put a bit of a shower in there, pretty cold in the winter I can tell you!...but it got us out of a lot of trouble (Wagstaff, Interview 4).

Washing clothes and keeping clean was always a problem. Many people put a shelter over a brick surround for a wood-fired copper boiler, if not they built an open fire in the yard to boil clothes and for hot water for baths. Others visited family who had a bathroom or they bathed at hospitals and factories once they had finished work. Brian Wagstaff tells of his solution and remembers a neighbour’s washing day:

Twice a week we needed to have a hot tub, I set up many kerosene tins...cleaned them out and use it with a handle...[to] carry hot water from the fire out in the yard, for a bath or whatever, for Jess to do washing...I built it up on stone there...that’s what we did and if it was raining – tough!

We were very envious of Shirley [a neighbour], she had a water-driven washing machine ...the pressure of the water turned it...he had the water connected on where she had the tubs and washing machine, it was water-driven...no electricity (Wagstaff, interview 4).

Whereas access to clean water was mandatory, access to gas or electricity was only recommended. Without mains power or gas lines, most residents of temporary dwellings relied on kerosene for cooking, lighting and heating. The most common appliances were a “tilly” lamp (pressure lamp) and a single-burner Primus “ring” used for cooking and small volumes of boiling water. When Taras Kociuba, a railway stoker, moved his family into three tents in Hornsby, he knew they would have to rely on kerosene:

I bought two kerosene heaters- the ones you can cook on top and you open like this for heater- and one Primus, and we make the kitchen in one tent...no fridge, there was no electricity...Kowalenko had a block of land with a spring...we used the spring as a fridge...we had two tilly lamps for light (Kociuba, Recording 1).

The Wagstaffs started with a single-burner Primus but his wife later discovered a small stove unit in the local produce store:

Jess in Somerville’s found a two-burner primus stove with an oven on top, she came home and said “We’re going to have a lean week this week, look what I’ve bought”. But it was good, she baked cakes and we could have a baked dinner. We had a [kerosene] fridge one side, a stove the other, it was good (Wagstaff, Interview 4).
The Patryns, a barber and a domestic worker at the local hospital, also had a Primus “ring” and Katiusha would ask the chef at the hospital to cook her meat for her. When she needed to cook in a big pan, she too used a fire in the yard and if it rained, her husband held an umbrella over them both (Patryn, pers.comm. April 2011). Despite living directly opposite the main electricity sub-station, she could not afford to have electricity connected:

We already living right on this [place]...I had my Primus...every year you finish work, holiday, I got money...and I put in electricity, we put electricity, we didn’t have electricity and at that time I think “Ready to put in electricity”...and I went into Sydney, I bought jug to make cup of tea (Patryn, Recording 16).

Although the Kociubas ensured they had two heaters for the tents, heating was a luxury for many residents. The Wagstaff family did not heat their unlined and un-ceiled garage, instead they would stand outside near the fire:

Of course it was as cold as hell, ’cause we didn’t have a fire-side heater...we put on more clothes...and I had bricks set up here where we boiled kerosene tins of water and I could keep that going and the kids could stand in front of it...I can remember Shirley and Bill [neighbours] coming across with their little girl one time when we had the fire going, they were living in a garage over there as well, and “oohh, oohh” [hands were held out], ‘cause it was cold, frosty, ice everywhere (Wagstaff, Interview 3).

Without an all-weather surface on the roads, deliveries of mail, milk and building materials and the removal of waste could also be a problem, including the essential Council-organised weekly sanitary service for the sanitary pan which replaced the unobtainable septic tanks. One Hornsby resident recalls:

[The milkman] wouldn’t come down the hill. No, a lot of people wouldn’t come down...every time we had heavy rain we had great gullies in the road...it was so bad and so rugged, and we would have to bring rocks and rubble and logs and things and fill it up just to get the “sanny-man” to come down...We had the tree on the corner, we used to have a nail we drove into the tree and of a night-time we’d go and hang the [milk] billys with the money in the billy...You’d see them [the wives] in the early hours of the morning, in their dressing-gown and racing up to get the milk. [The postman] would have come down [walking?] yes, absolutely...no bike (Wagstaff, Interview 2).

And another remembers the difficulty going out with two small children:

Oh, oh, the stumps, big stumps, the rocks too, small rocks doesn’t matter, but with the pram it was shocking, you can’t push up top...a truck delivering sand for cement broke an axle out there (Kociuba, A., Interview 13).

Progressing with utility provision

The difficulties faced by residents living in prematurely-developed areas were acknowledged by the various authorities responsible for service provision but extension of services was constrained by the shortages of materials and labour after the war, the limited capacity of the aging infrastructure, and
the difficult terrain to be traversed. Coal was Australia’s main form of energy and the national shortage of coal impacted all aspects of utility provision, from power for pumps and machinery, through the heat for firing and furnaces, to the transport of materials to the districts (Broomham, 1987). Additionally, the providers were dependent on infrastructure installed decades previously and, although continually upgraded, it was not designed for the population growth from 1945 (Broomham, 162; Aird, 169; O’Neil, 1981, Interview, 6). The terrain of Hornsby Shire posed a further complication as the expanding township was located along a rocky ridge which drained steeply both easterly, towards established localities with most services already available, and to the west, where the majority of sparsely-populated, prematurely-developed areas were located.

Although provision of reticulated water was of the highest priority for both the local Council and the NSW Metropolitan Water, Sewerage and Drainage Board (MWS&DB), expansion of the reticulation system demanded greater pumping capacity, additional kilometres of mains, and increased manpower, all of which were in short supply (Aird, 75-77). The existing Hornsby reservoir was adequate but, in 1954, Hornsby Shire Council (HSC) requested amplification of mains and an extra temporary pumping unit capable of 4,500,000 litres per day. Whenever possible, the water mains were extended to serve existing cottages, cottages in the course of erection and still-vacant lots (HSC, no. 1/54, file no. 2056). Although HSC had the power to insist that developers install water to new subdivisions, this did not apply to the previously-subdivided land so households in temporary dwellings continued to depend on tanks or informal supply from neighbours (Dale, 1981, Interview, 3).

By 1960, 30% of Sydney homes were still not connected to a sewer, with the majority of these in the newly-settled outer suburbs (Jeans and Logan, 38). Hornsby’s sewerage treatment works dated from 1911, drained only the eastern slope, also served three expanding neighbouring localities and was close to capacity by 1948 (Aird, 1961, 169). The MWS&DB was short of funds, materials and labour and had no plans to provide treatment works to sewer the western side of the ridge (Jeans and Logan, 38). Households in un-serviced subdivisions on the western slopes were consequently forced to rely on the Council-organised sanitary service until the permanent house was connected to an individual home-built septic system (Kirby, Interview 1).

Electricity was bought in bulk from the Sydney County Council-generated supply and distributed through the Hornsby Shire Council-owned grid (Wilkenfeld and Spearritt, 27). HSC was therefore responsible for extension of mains to un-serviced areas (HSC, no. 6/54, file no. 2976). Electricity generation and installation was greatly affected by industrial action, high consumer demand and lack of materials, and many improvements were deferred (Department of the Valuer-General, 1953, Valuation List - Hornsby). As with other utilities, provision to a street was nominally approved but work was forced to wait until “loan money and materials are available” and requests were refused if the street had too few customers for revenue to cover expenditure (HSC, no. 46/53, file no. 2044). The cost of connection meant a sizeable outlay for a household and electricity was not considered a priority for many residents of temporary dwellings who still had considerable progress to make on a permanent home.

The provision of gas to outer areas challenged the resources of Australian Gas Light, the privately-owned provider. Beset by industrial stoppages, shortages of coal and iron, collapsing infrastructure, and Government control of prices which discouraged investment in new extensions, the limited
increases in gas-line coverage were primarily for new Housing Commission developments (Broomham, 162-172). Gas was available in Hornsby township from 1890 but was not extended even to the closer newly-settled developments until 1955 (Broomham, 176).

Road maintenance, kerbing and guttering were primarily the responsibility of the local Council supplemented by grants from the Lands Department and Department of Main Roads (HSC, no. 22/53, file no. 2005). Once subdivided and sold, the developer-graded internal roads became the Council’s responsibility and requests for “made” roads in the form of strips of bitumen down the centre would be regularly entered onto the HSC Works List to complete when loan money, materials and labour were available (HSC, no. 23/53, file number. 2015.) If requested, HSC would provide a load of stone for the resident to construct kerbing and guttering across their frontage but otherwise maintaining access and controlling storm water on roads located for the convenience of the developer rather than according to terrain was the responsibility of the residents (HSC, no. 22/50, file no. 1263).

Conclusion

The challenging experiences of residents of temporary dwellings living in residential subdivisions without basic household amenities and public infrastructure were the culmination of a series of events which unfolded over many decades. These events commenced in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries with the unregulated subdivision of remote agricultural land and its purchase by investors hoping to capitalise on the anticipated provision of utilities and infrastructure which never materialised. With the supply of building land greatly outstripping demand, the majority of remote allotments remained unoccupied until the need for residential space increased during the severe shortage of housing following World War Two. As the un-serviced land was relatively cheap and therefore affordable to marginal purchasers, the allotments were finally bought by aspiring home-owners once profit-limiting legislation lapsed and it came on the market.

Desperate for any form of accommodation and with building materials and labour in short supply, many thousands of these property owners, dependent on savings rather than unobtainable loans, chose to build and occupy temporary dwellings on prematurely-developed land while they saved for the permanent house. With utility and infrastructure providers equally constrained by shortages of materials, labour and funds, these more-remote properties remained without amenities for many years, forcing the residents to devise a variety of solutions to the everyday household problems of cooking, lighting, heating, cleanliness and transport.

Premature subdivision of land may have been officially frowned upon by state and local planning authorities but, in this adaptive incremental way, many Sydney residents acquired basic shelter and moved into home-ownership.

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It's Time, Ngara

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In 1991 Davison and McConville described the 'heritage business' as being "subject to constant tension between the demands for bureaucratic consistency and impersonal expertise on one hand and for popular participation and local autonomy on the other" (p. 11). The decisions and debate over the fate of Australian political icon Gough Whitlam's birthplace 'Ngara' more than 20 years on suggests that despite changes to legislation, the chasm between perceptions and procedures used to define built cultural heritage continues to loom large.

'Ngara' (meaning "to listen, to hear and to think"), rose to media prominence on the discovery it was coincidentally scheduled for demolition the day Gough Whitlam died. The following two days saw finger pointing between the Planning Minster, Heritage Victoria and Boroondara Council against a backdrop of public outcry at its potential loss. The decisions, statements and processes that occurred around 'Ngara' give rise to questions regarding the efficacy and consistency of Victoria's planning mechanisms surrounding built cultural heritage and whether they represent public interests.

This paper juxtaposes relevant examples of the birthplace of leaders from Australia and draws on interviews and surveys as well as analysis of documents including legislation, policy decisions and media responses. Using Gough Whitlam's birthplace 'Ngara' as a case study, it explores the legislation, processes and decisions used to determine cultural heritage in Victoria and explores if the systems and bodies in place provide consistent outcomes, adhere to the adopted "best practice" of the Burra Charter and adequately represent community views.

Keywords:

Introduction

The death of former prime minister Edward Gough Whitlam on October 21, 2014 saw an outpouring of tribute for Australia's iconic statesman nationally and raised questions over the importance of his birthplace, Ngara, coincidentally scheduled for demolition that day. Roughly forty-eight hours of widespread public interest and media coverage later, 'unorthodox' decisions were made in regards
to Ngara changing its fate and drawing attention to the consistency of bureaucratic procedure and the chasm between public and expert interpretations of cultural heritage.

This paper concerns itself with the perceived importance of prime ministerial birthplaces, the subjective nature of cultural heritage and the consistency of mechanisms used to enforce it in Victoria. Its approach through the study of the events and actions that surrounded Ngara exploring both the process and the gap between professional and public definitions of cultural heritage.

Defining cultural heritage

There is no universally accepted classification of cultural heritage (Carter & Grimwade, 2007: 48). In Australia permutations of two phrases derived from the 1974 Hope enquiry into the National Estate (authorised by Whitlam) are often associated (Clinch 2012: 1-2; Conroy 2007: 332) with the definition of heritage – "the places we should keep" (Yencken 1981: 1) and "the things we want to keep" (Conroy 2007, quoting Australian Heritage Commission: 332). "'We want' and 'we should' both emphasise the importance of community consensus in heritage planning" (Conroy 2007: 332). It is this desired consensus – the use of the inclusive 'we' – that informs us cultural heritage should be seen as a form of social action, contested and changing meaning over time (Byrne, 2008: pp. 155, 167) rather than a static reference.

Thus, cultural heritage could be described as a fluid social construct (Byrne, 2008: 155); operating "at a range of different spatial, temporal and institutional scales" (Harrison 2013: 5). "It asserts a public or national interest in things traditionally regarded as private" (Davison & McConville, 1991: 7) while simultaneously being "a profession of faith in a past tailored to present-day purposes" (Lowenthal 1997: x). "The notion of cultural heritage embraces any and every aspect of life that individuals, in their variously scaled societal groups, consider explicitly or implicitly to be part of their self-definition" (Avrami 2000: 7) and is "of immense importance in the construction of identities and, therefore, the behaviour of society" (Turnpenny 2004: 295).

Enshrined in legislation for over forty years, the definition of cultural heritage remains problematic (Conroy 2007: 332). Attempts to define it can be found in the widely used Burra Charter: The Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance (Burra Charter) as well as state thematic frameworks such as Victoria’s heritage: strengthening our communities which states "[h]eritage is an ever evolving, multi-faceted concept that requires a broad understanding of people and their values" (DSE, 2006b: 11).

The legislation of cultural heritage in Victoria

The current legislative framework for the determination and management of cultural heritage in Australia largely derives from a 1997 meeting of the Council of Australian Governments (CoAG)
where it was "agreed that heritage listing and protection should be the responsibility of the level of
government best placed to deliver agreed outcomes" (Australian Government 2015a).50

The premise for the repeal of previous legislative framework introduced in 1975 by the Whitlam
Government (The Australian Heritage Commission Act 1975 and the Register of the National Estate)
being that a multi-tiered system of governance (federal, state and local) helps avoid duplication and
delivers best outcomes for Australian heritage at all tiers (Lush 2008: 68).

Table 1: Three tiers of heritage protection (as pertaining to Victoria)

In Victoria, the assessment of heritage of cultural significance is guided by Burra Charter. Written
specifically for the Australian context (Smith 2006: 24) it is used as 'best practice' by the responsible
authority and arbitrator for state heritage, being Heritage Victoria (HV) and the Heritage Council of
Victoria (HCV) respectively (DTPLI 2015; Walker 1996: 1; Clinch 2013: 4). The Burra Charter states
"[c]ultural significance means aesthetic, historic, scientific, social or spiritual value for past, present
or future generations" (Australia ICOMOS 1999; 2013: 2).

This definition borrows heavily from the Australian Heritage Commission Act 1975 (Clinch, 2012: 2)
prescribed by the Whitlam government. It is incorporated into both the Heritage Act 1995 (Heritage
Act) at Section 3 – used to legislate heritage of state significance and the Planning & Environment
Act 1987 (P&E) at Section 4(1)[d] – used to legislate heritage of local significance. These legal acts
provide two separate avenues of assessment overseen by different arbitrators based on the level of
proposed significance. The exception to this divided arbitration is the Minister for Planning who has
a range of powers at both state and local levels through the P&E and Heritage Act. This includes the
ability to determine a site as being of state heritage significance (Heritage Act sections 43, 78(1)[a]

50 The legislative focus of this paper is built cultural heritage – specifically the treatment of prime ministerial birthplaces.
Legislative acts pertaining to movable cultural heritage, indigenous heritage, and etcetera are outside the scope of this paper.
and 78(2) or at any time amend a local Planning Scheme to include a site under an interim or permanent heritage overlay (P&E sections 20(4), 97b and 185a).

To further operationalise the Burra Charter as a tool of assessment by arbitrators, eight criteria (nine at federal level) were agreed upon to replace former measures found in the Register of the National Estate (RNE) – a term Whitlam borrowed from John F Kennedy (Spearritt 2011). Known as the HERCON criteria "[t]hese model criteria have been broadly adopted by heritage jurisdictions across Australia" (DPCD 2012a: 1) and are used to guide the determination of whether a site is of cultural significance in Victoria at both state and local levels (HCV 2012b: 3; DPCD 2012a: 1).

Table 2: HERCON criteria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Importance to the course or pattern of our cultural or national history (historical significance).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of our cultural or natural history (rarity).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of our cultural or natural history (research potential).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of cultural or natural places or environments (representativeness).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>Importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics (aesthetic significance).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period (technical significance).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G</td>
<td>Strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons. This includes the significance of a place to Indigenous peoples as part of their continuing and developing cultural traditions (social significance).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>Special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in our history (associative significance).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(DPCD 2012: 1)

Nominated sites must fulfil one of the HERCON criteria. Comparison is made against existing registered examples to help determine if it meets a threshold of significance (DPCD 2012a: 2; HCV 2015a). This threshold is used to judge the level of significance of a place's heritage value to the community (Australian Government 2015b). Wording is subtly changed in these tests to apply to the level of cultural significance (ie: local significance requires a lower threshold than state significance). Arbitration on the significance of local or state nominations is separated. Despite a 2007 recommendation, there is no automatic introduction of interim protection should a site fail to reach the threshold of state significance but be referred for consideration at the local level (DPCD 2007: pp. 116, 118). Instead, separate applications for heritage significance (state and local) must be lodged, appealing to threshold of each one.

Community versus professional perceptions of cultural heritage

Determinations through this legislation as to what constitutes cultural heritage (and at what level) are increasingly becoming politicised with growing awareness and the desire for greater input in heritage outcomes by the Australian public (Freestone 1993; Huxley in Yiftachel (eds) 2002; Perkin 2010). Incompatibility between the bureaucratic traditional rational view of planning (where the goal is identified before the process, ie: through comparison and criteria), and inclusive communicative planning (where the goal emerges through discussion with multiple parties rather
than conforming to a predefined structure) (Olsson 2008: 374-376) occurs as increasingly autonomizing communities wish to protect what they identify as culturally significant irrespective of authorised determination and expert assessment.

This gap between public and professional perceptions of cultural heritage is understood by Victorian governing bodies (Ballarat City Council 2004: 9; DSE 2006a: pp. 12-13, DPCD 2007: 37) but persists despite inclusionary definition (A-ICOMOS 1999; Smith, quoting A-ICOMOS, 2006: 103) and prior acknowledgement that governance needs to both further engage with communities (HCV 2011: pp. 2-3) and “[e]nsure that the recognition and protection of Victoria’s diverse heritage continues to be reflective of community values.” (DSE 2006b: 19).

In his 2006 paper Your solution, their problem - their solution, your problem Spennemann contends that the lack of recognition in planning documents of the fluidity of cultural significance associated with Australia’s ‘balkanized’ heritage (ie: categorised heritage) is problematic (p. 34) – “Clearly, values are mutable and heritage sites that may be evaluated as insignificant today may be regarded as significant tomorrow” (p. 35). Such fluidity is further limited by the requirement for comparative analysis in determining cultural significance, which is likely to contain examples that reflect the bias of those previously or currently in authority (Lush 2008: pp. 68-74; Byrne 2008: 169). Academics critical of the Australian process suggest that heritage decisions are made for the community rather than with it (Gentry 2013: 518; Waterton & Smith 2011: 15; Waterton, Smith & Campbell 2006: 351; Smith 2006: 105), imposing a homogenised and self-reinforcing version of cultural values Smith terms an Authorised Heritage Discourse (Smith 2006).

Byrne suggests that “[f]or the staff of many government heritage agencies it is often a struggle to keep in mind, and to remind others, that cultural heritage is about the people, communities and the values that they give to heritage places" (2008: 158). However, “[P]ublic perceptions of cultural heritage can be equally myopic. “[P]ublic opinion, often coloured by nostalgia, omits, consciously or unconsciously, places that do not fit the present value system” (Spennemann 2006: 30). There may antagonism or apathy towards retaining post-war and brutalist structures (such as the Harold Holt Swimming Pool) for example. This nostalgia can also support the common misnomer of heritage being about ‘old buildings’ rather than "about history and storytelling, a necessary narrative where collective and/or individual occasion becomes memorable." (HCV, 2014: 42).

This question of whether birthplace is part of the necessary narrative of Whitlam, how the determination is arrived at and if it is representative of broader community is explored in more detail below.

**Research methods used to investigate the decisions surrounding Ngara**

An intensive mixed methods case study of Ngara was used to investigate the efficacy and consistency of heritage mechanisms and the level of public participation in the decision making process. A highly publicised and lengthy case study like Ngara allows inquiry into the actions and perceptions of multiple stakeholders across governance, communities, professional and political spheres and local and state apparatus and qualifies as an appropriate method for testing an extreme case (Yin 2009: 47).
The study triangulated a number of qualitative and quantitative data sources including semi-structured interviews, media coverage, literature (including policy, legislation, frameworks, submissions, guidelines, reviews and correspondence) as well as observation of the HCV panel meeting determining Ngara's inclusion on the VHR. A multi-stage cluster sampling method was also employed with a total of 194 valid responses collected from two streams of informants. 35 responses from Kew (29 of those within a two block radius of Ngara) and 159 responses not confined to municipal boundaries. The survey used a mixture of Likert scales and multiple indicator measures (at face validity) and was distributed approximately 6 months after Whitlam’s death.

Purposive sampling was used to identify four participants (two heritage professionals and two intimately involved in the events) who engaged in face-to-face semi-structured interviews and subsequent correspondence. These include an executive committee member of A-ICOMOS, a heritage consultant with over 20 years experience, the city editor of The Age newspaper involved in covering the events and the Kew resident who alerted the media and provided submission at the HCV panel hearing.

**Clarification of acronyms**

The table below contains a list of acronyms used in this paper as well as a brief description of the function in the context of Ngara.

**Table 3: Acronyms**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BCC</td>
<td>Boroondara City Council</td>
<td>The local government for Kew, where Ngara is situated.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HCV</td>
<td>Heritage Council of Victoria</td>
<td>The deliberative body for determining state heritage.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HO</td>
<td>Heritage Overlay</td>
<td>Protective status for local heritage issued by the Minister for Planning; can be applied as an interim measure or a permanent change made to a Planning Scheme (which acts as the register).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HV</td>
<td>Heritage Victoria</td>
<td>The bureaucratic arm of HCV and responsible authority for state heritage once a decision by HCV has been made.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IPO</td>
<td>Interim Protection Order</td>
<td>A temporary protection order issued by HCV while a site awaits determination.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P&amp;E</td>
<td>Planning and Environment Act 1987</td>
<td>Legislation guiding the inclusion of heritage of local significance in the Planning Scheme.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RNE</td>
<td>Register of National Estate</td>
<td>Former register for heritage of national significance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VHR</td>
<td>Victorian Heritage Register</td>
<td>The register for heritage of state significance.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Ngara

'Ngara' (meaning 'to listen, hear and think' in Darug language) (HV 2014: 2) was built (and possibly designed) in 1915 by Whitlam's maternal grandfather Edward Maddocks. Tim Smith, executive director of HV describes Ngara as "a single storey red brick late Federation Queen Anne style house, typical of the period in which it was built" (HV, 2014: 2). Whitlam was born there on July 11, 1916 (allegedly on the kitchen table).

Estimations regarding the period Whitlam resided at Ngara span between eighteen months to two years (HV 2014:3; HCV 2015 pers. comm., 18 May). The family sold Ngara on 25 October 1917 shortly before moving in 1918 to Mosman, NSW (Hocking, 2008; HV, 2014). Alterations were made to the house in the late 1950s and early 1960s changing its external appearance (HV 2014: 9) however the original fabric and "overall form of the building has been retained and the plan can be clearly understood" (HV 2014: 9). Whitlam is known to have visited Ngara on at least one occasion in the 1960s (HCV 2015b; Smith 2014).

Despite community knowledge that Ngara was Whitlam's birthplace (Gervasoni 2015 pers. comm., 1 May; Frawley 2015 pers. comm., 3 May), Boroondara City Council (BCC) only became aware of its significance through correspondence from HV advising the site had been publically nominated for inclusion on the VHR. A 1988 thematic assessment of the area had failed to identify Ngara despite using concepts derived from the Burra Charter (Sanderson 1988: 9; Clinch 2012: 148).

Alerted to the potential significance of the site by HV (who received the VHR nomination) BCC attempted to preserve Ngara on the grounds of associative significance (see HERCON Criterion H), revoking demolition consent and submitting an amendment to the Planning Scheme under the P&E. The interim Heritage Overlay (HO) submitted to the Minister for Planning (Minister Guy) and Interim Protection Order (IPO) submitted to HV were rejected and consent for demolition was reissued. Demolition began coincidentally on the morning Whitlam died.

A number of interesting statements and actions were made over the forty-eight hours following Whitlam's death. These include:

1. An erroneous statement by Minister Guy regarding his lack of ability to intervene as Planning Minister (3AW 2014).
2. An assurance by Tim Smith of HV that the death of Whitlam would not change HV's decision (3AW 2014).
3. A choice to lodge a second IPO with HV by Matthew Guy on ministerial letterhead (3AW 2014) rather than use his authority under Section 20(4) of the P&E as requested by BCC.
4. The acceptance of the second IPO by HV along with its enforcement within 24 hours rather than refer the matter back to the minister under Section 32(2) of the Heritage Act.
5. A 'tweet' by Minister Guy that the cultural significance of Ngara was likely to increase over time (Guy 2014).
6. A media statement by Minister Guy that lodging a second IPO was an action anyone could have done.
A timeline on the following pages chronologically details the sequence of events, helping to establish their context and their interrelation. Key participants, stakeholders and organisations have been quoted where appropriate. This timeline can be used to understand the flow and impact of actions as well as pinpoint the above inconsistencies and inefficacies in the process surrounding Ngara.
Fig 1: Timeline page 1 of 2

23/10/2014

HCV accepts the second IPO.

Minister Guy tweets that he lodged an IPO and it has been accepted.

The Age publishes Planning Minister Matthew Guy's backflip to save Gough Whitlam childhood home. Quotes former Planning Minister Mudden pointing out precedent exists.

Minister Guy talks to 3AW afternoon radio suggesting that trigger for the second IPO was the imminent destruction of Ngara.

Victorian state election held. Liberal Party defeated. Guy no longer Minister for Planning.

Boroondara Council submits a new request the to new Minister for Planning Richard Wynne for an interim Heritage Overlay.

19/12/2014

Tim Smith of HV makes his determination that Ngara is not of significance to Victoria. HCV requests submissions for hearing to be made by 16/02/2015.

New Minister for Planning Wynne extends IPO under 62(3) of the Heritage Act 1995.

18/05/2015

HCV convene panel hearing.

24/05/2015

Minister Wynne applies interim Heritage Overlay

26/06/2015

HCV decides Ngara is not significant to Victoria

10/11/2015

Boroondara Council submit Planning Scheme amendment c208 to Minister Wynne requesting a permanent Heritage Overlay on Ngara.

"As PM Whitlam's birthplace, it is likely that the cultural significance of this house will become recognised more strongly as time passes." (Guy, 2014)

"This power under the Heritage Act is not available to the Planning Minister, hence my need to apply. Hopefully accurate reporting in future." (Guy, 2014)

"Mr Guy's intervention came as precedents were highlighted with planning ministers intervening to protect properties of historic importance - even after demolition had commenced." (The Age, 2014)

"Anyone could have done what I have done which is go back to Heritage Council who assessed this permit earlier this year and say why don't you take a second look at it you may find, because what they did find was that there was not imminent threat of destruction. Well now that there's a bigger in the front yard you may wish to have a second look at what you've determined." (Guy, 2014)

Although this place is one of the few physical links in Victoria to Gough Whitlam's life, the association of the place with Gough Whitlam is not strong enough to meet the threshold for state significance." (Smith, 2014: 3)

"...the association between the birth and, approximately, the first eighteen months of Gough Whitlam's life does not constitute evidence of a special association between Whitlam and the Place. The Committee determines that the association between Whitlam and the Place does not warrant the inclusion of the Place on the Register." (HCV, 2015: 10)

Fig 1: Timeline page 2 of 2
Beyond the failure of the thematic study to identify the potential cultural significance of Ngara, Guy’s erroneous statement, and Premier Napthine’s suggestion that it was ‘inappropriate’ for a Planning Minister to fulfil BCC’s request to revoke the demolition permit it issued, a further matter arises regarding consistency of process surrounding Ngara.

While Minister Guy’s introduction of a second IPO and refusal to use the legislative mechanisms available to him in the Heritage Act and the P&E can only be speculated on, this action nevertheless ensured the fate of Ngara would be deliberated upon after the Victorian state election. The lodgement of a second IPO within twelve months is only admissible if ‘new evidence comes to light’ or if a site faces imminent destruction (HCV, 2012a: 1). Minister Guy’s prior knowledge of Ngara’s imminent demolition, submission of a second IPO on ministerial letterhead and statement that “[a]nyone could have done what I have done” (Guy 2014) suggests an ongoing reluctance to facilitate local governance’s initial request for Ngara’s protection at the local level.

Similarly curious is the decision by HV’s Tim Smith to accept the second IPO and not refer the matter back to the minister (via Section 32(2) of the Heritage Act) to allow amendment via the local Planning Scheme. If indeed as Smith asserted, Whitlam’s death would not change the decision, his reason to accept the second IPO rather than refer it to Minister Guy (who had the power to legislate Ngara’s protection at either state or local level) remains unknown.

The eventual decision by subsequent Planning Minister Wynne (who replaced Guy) to apply an interim Heritage Overlay on the site before the expiration of the IPO instituted by HV was through diligence – no automated system of interim controls exists between the “local and state ‘streams’ of heritage conservation” (DCPD, 2007: 13). Bureaucratic consistency (or lack of) aside, the question remains as to the public’s perception of Ngara significance.

**The public response**

Unlike other controversial heritage decisions in Victoria (such as those made regarding the Palace Theatre or the Windsor Hotel) there was no rally or prominent social media group demanding action (ie: Save the Palace). Despite this, internet media coverage of Ngara in The Age over three days received far more ‘views’ than multiple weeks of coverage of the Palace Theatre (Lucas 2015, pers. comm., 21 May) suggesting a broader-based community interest regarding Ngara and its potential loss. In moderating online comments on Ngara, The Age’s city editor “was struck that it wasn’t black-and-white, there wasn’t just a clear, ‘we must save this beautiful house’ ” (Lucas 2015, pers. comm., 21 May).

This lack of a simplistic kneejerk reaction regarding the fate of Ngara was also witnessed in the distributed surveys (n = 194). Around 60% of all respondents (aggregate) believed preserving Whitlam’s birthplace was important and a similar amount believed that if preserved Ngara would be of national cultural significance. The survey results also found that only around 10% of all respondents felt that the decision made to demolish Ngara reflected community views, with around one third unsure and the rest believing it unrepresentative. The cultural significance of Ngara was
agreed by all interviewees (professional and involved) and all parties at the HCV panel meeting deliberating on its VHR inclusion to involve Whitlam's birth (HCV 2015b).

**Birthplace as cultural heritage**

In the flurry of media comments surrounding Ngara, Minister Guy and HV's executive director espoused two very different views regarding cultural significance. On October 22 Tim Smith claimed "Mr Whitlam's passing does not change the decision" (3AW 2014). Twenty-four hours later Minister Guy tweeted "[a]s PM Whitlam's birthplace, it is likely that the cultural significance of this house will become recognised more strongly as time passes" (Guy 2014).

At first blush, this could be seen as HV seeking to prevent emotive reaction to heritage decisions. There was consensus among interviewees that the death of Whitlam played a role in the public's response to Ngara. However, HV's recommendation against inclusion of Ngara on the VHR using comparative analysis shows that no birthplaces of Australian prime ministers are included (HV 2014: 11). HV makes further comparisons of Ngara with the birthplaces of Mary MacKillop and Arthur Streeton as well as the Victorian residences and holiday homes of prime ministers and other prominent Victorians included in the VHR. In all cases, architectural significance is cited as a reason for inclusion (HV 2014: 15). One of the sites used for comparison – Dodgshun House – is noteworthy. The building inhabiting the site has no association with MacKillop yet is considered significant for spiritual reasons (Criterion G). Despite its inclusion due to spiritual significance HV duly states in their comparative assessment that Dodgshun House "demonstrates architectural significance sufficient for inclusion in the VHR on these grounds alone" (2014: 15).

There are eight separate HERCON criteria and only one needs to be achieved to meet the threshold of significance. The repeated reference made by HV's assessment of Ngara to the architectural significance of Victorian residences of prominent people is at best curious and at worst highlights a lack of ability to interpret non-tangible significance. Criterion H (the only criterion applied for in the nomination on behalf of BCC) does not provide adequate scope to assess architectural significance, nor should it need to given associative significance is being tested.

The identification of political leaders' birthplaces being culturally significant is well established internationally. While presidential birthplaces in the USA are often cited (ie: Richard Nixon’s 1913 kit home birthplace in Orange County), Commonwealth examples also exist. These include Mahathir Mohamad’s parent's home in Alor Star, Kedah (Malaysia), a section of Mvezo village where Nelson Mandela was born on the banks of the river shortly before his family fled during his infancy (South Africa) and even a structure built on the original site of Wilfrid Laurier's birthplace in Laurentides, Quebec (Canada).

While the international examples above are all considered respectively to be heritage of national importance, currently no birthplace of an Australian leader is considered so. The closure and repeal of statutory powers of the RNE saw the redistribution of responsibility and level of significance of several prime ministerial birthplaces to the "level of government best placed to deliver agreed outcomes" (Australian Government 2015) – namely state or local.
As Table 4 below shows, there is little consistency between Australian states in regards to the level of protection (if any) given to prime ministerial birthplaces (as well as conjecture to some locations). Birthplaces of prime ministers born overseas are not listed as they fall outside Australia’s ability to legislate.

Table 4: Prime ministerial birthplaces in Australia

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Prime minister</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Period of association</th>
<th>Heritage status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>VIC</td>
<td>Stanley Bruce</td>
<td>'Stradbroke', 71 Grey Street, St Kilda.</td>
<td>1883-1893</td>
<td>Listed: local HO5 (precinct overlay), Former RNE 11989.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIC</td>
<td>James Scullin</td>
<td>Believed to be close to a former railway siding, near Langi Kal Kal, Traralgon.</td>
<td>1876-1887</td>
<td>Cairn at junction of Western Highway &amp; Erindale Road. Listed: local HO823 (precinct overlay).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIC</td>
<td>John Curtin</td>
<td>Believed to be 21 Hall Street or the corner of Hall Streets, Creswick.</td>
<td>1885-1894</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIC</td>
<td>John McEwen</td>
<td>'Linden', 73-75 Main Street, Chiltern.</td>
<td>1900-1907</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIC</td>
<td>Gough Whitlam</td>
<td>'Ngara', 46 Rowland Street, Kew.</td>
<td>1916-1918</td>
<td>Awaiting decision for HO.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIC</td>
<td>Malcolm Fraser</td>
<td>'Norla', 16-18 Irving Road, Toorak.</td>
<td>1930</td>
<td>Demolished, 1934.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSW</td>
<td>Edmund Barton</td>
<td>Believed to be at multiple locations including Hereford Street, Glebe, Sydney.</td>
<td>1849-?</td>
<td>Plaque erected on Arundel Street.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSW</td>
<td>Sir Earle Page</td>
<td>Possibly Grafton Hospital or Haddon House, Queen Street, South Grafton.</td>
<td>1880-1895</td>
<td>Unknown.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSW</td>
<td>Ben Chifley</td>
<td>Havannah Street, Bathurst. Believed to be number 29.</td>
<td>1885-1890</td>
<td>Unlisted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSW</td>
<td>Harold Holt</td>
<td>58 Cavendish Street, Stanmore.</td>
<td>1908-?</td>
<td>Unlisted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSW</td>
<td>Billy McMahon</td>
<td>Possibly 144 Redfern Rd, Redfern, Sydney.</td>
<td>1908-?</td>
<td>Unknown.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSW</td>
<td>Paul Keating</td>
<td>Former St Margaret’s Hospital, 437-441, Bourke Street, Paddington, Sydney.</td>
<td>1944</td>
<td>Listed: Sydney LEP 2012 I1438 (Local).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSW</td>
<td>John Howard</td>
<td>Possibly Valesco Hospital, 38 William Street, Earlwood.</td>
<td>1939</td>
<td>Unlisted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAS</td>
<td>Joseph Lyons</td>
<td>14 Alexander Terrace, Stanley.</td>
<td>1879-1885</td>
<td>Listed: 905 (State), Former RNE 12003.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SA</td>
<td>Bob Hawke</td>
<td>63 Farquhar Street, Bordertown.</td>
<td>1929-1939</td>
<td>Listed: 18237 (Local).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QLD</td>
<td>Arthur Fadden</td>
<td>Ingham.</td>
<td>1894-?</td>
<td>Unknown.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QLD</td>
<td>Frank Forde</td>
<td>Mitchell.</td>
<td>1890-?</td>
<td>Unknown.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QLD</td>
<td>Kevin Rudd</td>
<td>Selangor Hospital, Nambour.</td>
<td>1957</td>
<td>Unlisted.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
With the exception of Ngara, all prime ministerial birthplaces listed in Victoria have either been demolished or are considered to be only of local heritage significance. This includes the birthplace of Stanley Bruce, formerly of national significance on the RNE. As such the outcome of Ngara’s refusal for inclusion on the VHR is consistent with HCV’s comparative driven assessment using ‘balkanized’ (Spennemann 2006: 34) HERCON criteria. However, the question remains as to whether this reflects wider public perceptions of the importance of birthplace. Surveys, interviewees and state government’s response to media coverage all suggest the decision was not in line with community sentiment, despite the lack of public demonstration. Perhaps it’s time for Australian heritage bodies to engage in conversation with the broader community about the significance of birthplace.

Conclusion

This paper has sought to explore the legislation, processes and decisions used to determine cultural heritage in Victoria and test if they provide consistent outcomes, adhere to the adopted ‘best practice’ of the Burra Charter and adequately represent community views through the case study of Ngara. Ngara provides multiple examples of a lack of processual consistency for determining cultural heritage in Victoria – despite adapting a system supposedly empowering the tier of government “best placed to deliver agreed outcomes” (Australian Government 2015). The reflexive actions taken by state governance in the media spotlight suggest a failure to engage effectively with local governance and communities both in the identification and determination of cultural heritage. The fractionalisation of heritage into threshold based, goal-oriented criteria (HERCON) applied for consistency fails to adapt to the fluid and mutable nature of cultural heritage (Spennemann 2006: 35) despite illumination of the broadly inclusive Burra Charter principles being HERCON’s raison-d’être.

To "[e]nsure that the recognition and protection of Victoria’s diverse heritage continues to be reflective of community values" (DSE 2006b: 19), re-evaluation of the processes – not just legislation – should be undertaken. Victorian governance needs ‘to listen, to hear, and to think’ about the ‘places we keep’.

Acknowledgements

The author wishes to thank Dr. David Nichols, Heather Myers and the University of Melbourne.

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Myers, H 2016, The Age newspaper at Media House, 655 Collins Street Docklands, photograph, viewed 13 January 2016. Used with permission.
Myers, H 2016, Whitlam’s birthplace, 46 Rowland street, Kew, photograph, viewed 13 January 2016. Used with permission.


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Where Should We Put the Memory?
The iconography of commemoration in Australian public parks

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For nearly 200 years Australia’s urban public parks and gardens have been used for the public display of memory. This is manifested most frequently in three iconographic customs: special landscaping, naming, and the placement of commemorative and historical artefacts. From the statue of New South Wales’ Governor Richard Bourke (1842, Sydney Domain) to the Anzac Peace Park (2010, Albany, Western Australia), the association between parkland and commemoration has been long and persistent. This has been by way of landscape designs and plantings, memorial gardens, parks named after important events (Australia’s Bicentennial), and public reserves that commemorate worthy people (Don Bradman). Parks also act as containers for countless commemorative objects as diverse as monuments, cannon, agricultural equipment, plaques and flowers. By exploring these conventions through examples from across the nation and over two centuries, the paper considers the relationship between Australia’s urban public parks and the commemorative icons contained within them. Have public parks become emblematic settings for national and local feelings, or dumping grounds for public commemoration or, perhaps, a bit of both? The paper considers the commemorative capacity of Australian urban public parks as a way to consider whether the memorials make meaningful gestures, and to explore the relationship between memory and place.

Keywords: Australian urban parks; public commemoration; memorial rose gardens; place and memory.

It seems straightforward to declare that a public park is a special place, a fitting setting for symbolic representation that more banal places, such as bus stops, cannot provide. One such representation is commemoration. Its association with Australia’s urban public parks is the subject of this paper. Parks are remarkably versatile locations for those seeking to make public expressions of remembrance, for the amelioration of feelings, national pride and so on. But is a public park the right place for the iconographic representation of memory? Or to put it another way, does it matter where commemoration is placed within a nation’s public landscapes? The relationship between
commemorative objects and the nature of their locations has only been touched on in the literature (Lake, 2006; Martin, 2006; McShane, 2012; Gibson, 2013). This paper considers the relationship between the urban public parks and the commemorations that they contain. The commemorative features can take a variety of forms: a name, a monument, an object, a piece of landscaping. The examples that follow have been chosen as they demonstrate trends across the whole country and over a time span from the 1840s to the 2010s. They address matters of nationalism, war, the complexities of meaningful commemoration, and the sometimes intricate and problematic relationships between urban parklands and overt expressions of remembrance. So, to begin with a statue and two guns.

**COLONY AND EMPIRE**

In April 1842, a large bronze statue of Sir Richard Bourke was unveiled in a prominent position at the Macquarie Street entrance to Sydney’s Domain parklands. The European tradition of placing commemorative objects in the form of monumental figure sculptures within urban public spaces began with the erection of a statue of King Louis XIII in the Place Royale (now Place des Vosges) in Paris in 1639. The square had been made in 1612 as part of Henri IV’s program of urban renewal that saw Paris become the precursor of the modern city and an exemplar of urban modernity. (DeJean, 2014, 45-61). The location of that statue, within an outdoor space specifically intended as a walking place for all Parisians, generated a close association between the concept of commemoration and urban public spatiality. This idea finally percolated into Britain in the early nineteenth-century, and thus to Australia.

Although Bourke was not universally liked during his seven-year term as governor of New South Wales (NSW), a campaign to pay honour to him began before his departure from Sydney in December 1837. The association with Australia’s first public park was not accidental, as the committee that raised money for the statue was led by Sir John Jamieson, who had previously been one of the commissioners who oversaw Sydney’s Botanic Gardens (Sydney Herald, 23 June 1836; Sydney Gazette, 22 December 1837). In time the public donated over £2000 towards the statue’s cost. With no foundry in Australia, the statue was made and cast in Britain (sculptor Edward Hodges Baily) and installed with an engraved plaque explaining at length Bourke’s service to Australia (Sydney Gazette, 25 November 1837; 12 April 1842; Sydney Monitor, 11 December 1837).

Some twenty-three years later, in the spring of 1865, two Russian cannon were placed on either side of Bourke’s statue without ceremony or inscription. The cannon had been captured during the Crimean War (1853-1856) and were presented to the City of Sydney by Queen Victoria as part of her government’s distribution of war trophies to cities around the British Empire. Sydney Council had to hold the guns in storage while permission was sought from the NSW Lands Department to place them near Bourke’s statue. It was not lost on observers at the time that one gun would point towards the residential area of Woolloomooloo, and the other towards the ‘Australian Library’ (now State Library of NSW, Sydney Morning Herald, 26 August 1865).
Figure 1: Statue of Governor Sir Richard Bourke, and Russian cannon, The Domain, Sydney, c.1866. (State Library NSW a089204)

In 1914, five decades after the cannon first flanked Bourke’s statue, their meaning had become hard to decipher. A Sydney writer lamented that the guns did not have ‘some commemorative inscription… to record the deeds which won them, and the imperial spirit which inspired the gift of them to Sydney’ (Sydney Morning Herald, 17 January 1914). The placement of the guns next to the statue had created a confusing relationship between a governor who left the colony in 1837 and the spoils of a European war fought in the 1850s. In 1925 the physical link between Bourke’s statue and the ‘imperial’ guns was broken when the Domain was re-landscaped and the weapons were relocated to Centennial Park. The positioning of the cannon in 1865 set a precedent for locating military paraphernalia in public parks in Australia, despite the hovering question of whether public parks are suitable places to display weapons of war. Today one of the Russian cannons is aimed directly at Centennial Park’s Visitor Centre and the guns’ status as icons of empire has faded along with their validity as representatives of the power of Great Britain.

WAR AND THE ROSE

If the placement of cannons in public parks has stretched meaningful connection between military endeavour and urban leisure, flowers may provide a more appropriate language for the commemorative expression in such places. A strong relationship between roses, memory and public parks developed in Australia in the twentieth-century. Although roses are visually pleasing and resilient plants and have had an association with Australian public space since the 1830s, the iconographic lineage between Australian war history and the flower may not be immediately apparent. In 1943 the president of the National Rose Society of Western Australia (NRSWA), Charles Frost, attempted to persuade the Perth City Council to make a ‘civic rose garden’ in the city. In November that year he accompanied Perth’s Town Clerk William Bold and City Gardener H.N. Braithwaite on a tour of the city’s parklands with this in mind (West Australian, 5 November 1943).
The following year Harold Boas, a city councillor and architect, attempted to make the idea his own by proposing ‘rose gardens of memory’ in Australia’s capital cities to honour ‘fallen soldiers’ (West Australian, 5 November 1943; 20 May 1944; Mail, 13 May 1944). Instead, the Perth City Council acted on Braithwaite’s suggestion of establishing a ‘Peace Memorial Rose Garden’ on a small reserve of public land in the developing residential suburb of Floreat Park (West Australian, 22 June 1944; 7 November 1944). The rose garden’s name suggests that the Perth Council was focussed on the future and its five-year plan for the city’s expansion rather than on the war (see for example West Australian, 16 November 1944; 6 June 1947). The plantings and the reserve (now named the ‘Rose Gardens’) are still well maintained today (TOP, 2015).

Possibly inspired by this urban rose planting, at the close of World War Two the NRSWA began a campaign to have a rose garden made in Kings Park (Perth’s premier public reserve) that would be ‘more national in character, a truly State memorial’. The society asserted that the garden would represent all the people of Western Australia (WA) and would be not only ‘beautiful’ and ‘dignified’, but also a ‘symbol of culture and refinement’. The NRSWA launched a public appeal for funds, and in November it donated the proceeds from its record-breaking spring show to the ‘Perth Memorial Rose Garden trust fund’ (West Australian, 22 September 1945; 10 November 1945). The idea and the Kings Park location were supported by the RSL and WA’s Minister for Lands, Lindsay Thorn, at least in principle if not financially. However, throughout 1946 and 1947 the plans attracted significant opposition, primarily from those concerned for the indigenous flora and fauna of Kings Park, among them the Wildlife Preservation Society of Australia, the Gould League of Bird Lovers and the Western Australian Naturalists’ Club, and the scheme did not eventuate (West Australian, 17 December 1946).

Notwithstanding this failed effort, the NRSWA also instigated a campaign to have memorial rose gardens created as places of public commemoration in every part of the state. It did this, I surmise, by contacting every local government body in WA. By May 1946 the NRSWA was claiming that 50 had agreed to ‘launch’ a rose garden ‘in their own districts’ (Sunday Times, 26 May 1946). This dramatic assertion, while reflecting the extent of the society’s campaign of persuasion, was a considerable overreach. I have identified seven memorial rose gardens that were constructed and planted in public reserves in Western Australia in the late 1940s and early 1950s (Collie, Fremantle, Kondinin, Mosman Park, Nedlands, Pinjarra, Wagin). Despite the low number, these rose gardens were a tangible and sensual way to represent significance, and this use of the flower can be understood as a mediating artefact between the real place and the metaphysical resonances of loss.

One rose garden prompted by the NRSWA’s urging was planted at Collie in 1950 in the town’s existing Soldiers Memorial Park. The history of this public park illustrates the complexities that one site can accommodate when it comes to public commemoration. It is also among the early examples of a soldiers’ memorial park in Australia, a form of commemoration favoured by many towns and suburbs following World War One. And the park’s history demonstrates that although the association in Australia between the rose and war gained prominence with the mid-century efforts of the NRSWA, it actually has antecedents from the interwar period.

In October 1915 the people of Collie held a public meeting. In this new mining town, only 20 years old, the community wished to determine how it should ‘do honour to those who have left here to battle for the Empire’ by making a permanent memorial of some kind. The most popular suggestion
was to turn a ‘plot of ground’ in the town into a garden where a block of granite could be erected and engraved with the names of local men who had served in the war. A memorial fund was started, and although several years passed before this objective was met, it was eventually realised. Work began in 1921 to landscape a site on the banks of the Collie River. The war memorial was a handsome obelisk of Western Australian granite listing the names of the men from Collie who had died in World War One. The land was grassed by volunteers working on Saturday afternoons, and members of the bereaved families planted an avenue of 100 ornamental trees (West Australian, 5 September 1921; 6 February 1932). The very landscape, along with the obelisk, had become an icon of grief and particularly of remembrance. This marking of the land became a notable and common practice at a time when so many bodies of Australia’s war dead had been buried far away on Europe’s battlefields.

Over time the park in Collie accumulated other commemorative objects that enhanced its status as a memorial garden. To mark Western Australia’s centenary in 1929, an ornamental gateway was commissioned. For the opening of these ‘Centenary Gates’ in 1932, new flowerbeds were dug and planted with roses (FIG 2). On this celebratory occasion Colonel Herbert Collett, state president of the RSL and later a National senator, took the opportunity to remind those present that everyone ‘should not forget the war… We need to be constantly reminded of what war costs’ (West Australian, 14 October 1929; 6 February 1932). After 1945 the names of local men who had died in World War Two were added to the war memorial.

Figure 2: ‘War memorial, surrounded by a rose garden’, Centenary Park (Soldiers’ Memorial Park), Collie, Western Australia, 1935. (Western Mail, 25 April 1935)

Eighteen years later, in the winter of 1950, the municipal council planted 147 roses as a memorial garden in remembrance of all the Collie men who had died in the two world wars (West Australian, 19 August 1950; 2 September 1950). This suggests not only that this planting was prompted by the NRSWA’s urging, but also that the 1930s planting of roses had not survived. Then, in 1990, a ‘new’ planting of roses was made to remember two specific war victims, again suggesting that the
previous planting had not endured. As a final gesture to Collie Park’s status as a commemorative place, in 2000 a ‘sacred stone’ was placed near the war memorial to commemorate Aboriginal people killed in war. In 2010 the park was listed on WA’s heritage register, which cited and dated its commemorative features: the war memorial and ‘avenue of honour’ (1921), the ‘commemorative arch and gates’ (1930, sic) and the memorial rose garden (1990) as reasons for its heritage status (HCWA, 2010).

The Soldiers Memorial Park in Collie is a significant example of how a community has maintained a persistent connection between remembrance and an urban landscape constructed for commemorative ritual. But the memorial park also exemplifies how such connections are not necessarily stable. First, the park’s name suffered one period of slippage, when in the 1930s it temporarily changed from Soldier’s Memorial Park to ‘Centenary Park’, then reverted to the original name. Second, the three versions of the memorial rose garden act as a reminder that public places with ornamental features (whether commemorative or not) require constant care, vigilance and money, or the plantings will suffer. Third, the desire for commemorative longevity can clash with other cultural concerns. In the case of Collie’s Soldiers Memorial Park, this is the matter of environmental attitudes to plants. The trees that make the avenue of honour are Camphor Laurels (Camphora cinnamomum, native to SE Asia). These beautiful evergreen trees are found in many Australian parks, and there is no question that the mature collection in Collie is noteworthy and historic – indeed it forms part of the park’s significance as a Western Australian ‘heritage place’. As Collie’s park demonstrates, the Camphor Laurel as an ornamental species was once desired in Australia. Now, however, it is classified as an invasive pest.

Despite the effects of time, commemoration has been accommodated well in Collie’s memorial park. This is not always the case. Another Western Australian town, Albany, where Australia and New Zealand’s first contingent of World War One troops gathered for departure to the Middle East, has taken recent advantage of Federal Government funding to revive its existing foreshore reserve as the ‘Anzac Peace Park’, which ‘opened’ in 2010 (for Albany’s relationship to Anzac see Stephens, 2014, 39). The new landscape design has created the Pier of Remembrance, the Interpretive Walk and the Lone Pine Grove.

The Albany Peace Park, however, makes no reference to the Albany RSL Nurses Memorial Rose Garden, which is located nearby. This modest garden of roses was planted in 1935 on a small and slightly derelict public reserve next to Albany’s railway station. The garden’s circular layout was designed by Jack Page, RSL member and Albany’s Municipal Gardener, with volunteer labour provided by members of the local RSL. The garden not only resuscitated public land, it also recognised the ‘gallant women’ of the 1914-18 war. In the 1930s this was an unusual remembrance of women’s war service (Albany Advertiser, 25 February 1937; 1 April 1937; 24 April 1939; 15 June 1939). It is unfortunate, therefore, that the memory and status of this memorial garden and the associations it makes between women and war have been overtaken in the town’s war commemoration by the new park. Local (and gendered) history has been subsumed by the town’s attempt to make an iconographic connection to the greater (and largely male) national history of Anzac, thus demonstrating how selective the management of heritage can be. At least the local council gardeners maintain the roses.
NAMING AND NATION

As Albany’s Anzac Peace Park demonstrates, the common practice of naming of parks or portions of them, to commemorate an event or person, can result in tenuous commemorative meaning. This is particularly so when associated with expressions of nationalism. In 1988 a number of parks in Australia were named ‘Bicentennial’, as communities claimed their place within that national historical narrative. At least four ‘bicentennial’ parks appeared in Sydney when suburban councils and government agencies used funding flowing from state and national governments. A new, 47-hectare Bicentennial Park was created on the banks of the Parramatta River in Concord, a transformation of so-called ‘derelict’ land into a park with riverside wetlands and ‘lakeside meadows’ (Sydney Olympic Park 2015). The park is now part of the much larger Sydney Olympic Park precinct, and the ‘Bicentennial’ name commemorates no more than government largesse. There is no link between the form of remembrance and what the funding enabled, that is, the environmental recovery of land and wetlands damaged over time by neglect and industrial pollution.

Another ‘Bicentennial Park’ is in the Sydney suburb of West Pymble. The local council used the funding to amalgamate an existing reserve, known as the Lofberg Oval, and an adjacent quarry into a more extensive sporting and active recreation park. The renaming acknowledged the generosity of governments at a time of heightened nationalism. But the new name wiped away a meaningful reference to West Pymble’s history, as the original recreation reserve had been named after a family with connections to the area dating from the 1850s (Cameron-Smith, 2012). In both these examples the park as an icon of the Bicentennial is asserted through the naming, but the value of ‘bicentennial’ as a commemorative declaration of government munificence will inevitably weaken over time.

Park naming as a form of commemoration can be tricky in other ways, as exemplified by Glebe Park, in Bowral, a NSW country town. Don Bradman, Australia’s ‘greatest cricketer’, lived part of his life and began his cricket career in Bowral. In 1938 the Bowral Council named the cricket ground in the northern portion of Glebe Park the Bradman Oval. This commemorated Bradman’s sporting prowess and the town’s connection to him as a national figure. At the time Bradman was at the height of his cricketing fame and the oval was a shabby, unkempt playing field. The naming encouraged the Bowral cricket club to contribute to the upkeep of the ground, which it did for nearly ten years, until in 1947 the council introduced ground fees for all council playing fields: the cricket season fees for the Bradman Oval were ten guineas, double the fee for other council ovals. (Argus, 12 October 1938; Southern Mail, 13 September 1940; 15 October 1940; 30 September 1941; 19 September 1947; 21 November 1947).

The Bradman connection proved a boon to Bowral when the oval gained a new pavilion in 1989 to house a collection of cricket memorabilia. It was subsequently named the ‘Bradman Museum’. But when Heritage New South Wales listed the site in 2000, it mistook ‘Bradman Oval’ to be the name of the whole park. In 2010 the museum was extended, using a grant of $7.4 million dollars from the NSW government. The name was extended as well, to the ‘Don Bradman Museum and International Cricket Hall of Fame’. Despite such excitement, the oval has continued to function the same as any well cared for country town sports ground, hosting the cricket and football seasons for the people of Bowral and the district.
In recent years, however, something else shifted attention a little from Glebe Park’s sporty end. In 2013, as part of Bowral’s 150th anniversary shindig, a bronze statue of the children’s famous character, Mary Poppins, was unveiled in the park. The connection? Poppins’ creator, Helen Lyndon Goff (who wrote as P.L. Travers) lived opposite the park during her childhood. The idea of the statue began as a local ‘Mary Poppins Birthplace’ campaign by Bowral schoolgirl Melissa McShane, was promoted by the Southern Highlands Youth Arts Council, and paid for with a Federal Government Tourist Quality Program grant of $26,400 plus $50,000 raised by the community (Southern Highland News, 17 January 2012, 10 August 2012, 30 March 2015).

Figure 3: Mary Poppins, Glebe Park, Bowral. (author 2015)

However, this statue of Mary Poppins is not the only one in an Australian park, nor is it the first. That honour belongs to suburban Sydney, where – also at the behest of a local schoolgirl (Gracie Drew), and because P.L. Travers had lived across the road – in 2004, the Ashfield Municipal Council installed a bronze statue of the fictional character into Ashfield Park (Sydney Morning Herald, 13 March 2004).
Is it possible to compare these two statues and their capacity to commemorate the reading habits of schoolgirls? Or is it more a question of how the landscape contributes to the remembrance, or at least the ability of people to engage. In Ashfield the statue is placed on a stone plinth, in a tightly planted garden bed within the park’s fenced, shaded children’s playground. In this location the statue is charming but passive and sombre, with the character of a memorial. In quite striking contrast, the statue at Bowral is of Mary Poppins in flight, and quite low to the ground on an open lawn. It is a statue to be touched and climbed on, and so creates a dynamic relationship between the memorial object and the park. At Ashfield Mary Poppins is just another memorial in the large park. On the other hand, at Glebe Park Mary Poppins has added a second field of play and it can be argued that the statue’s presence has saved it from being subsumed by the grandiosity of the ‘Bradman Oval’ agenda. This is not just because of the Heritage Register’s name slippage, but because Glebe Park clearly survives as a viable and useful place of local public recreation and commemoration in the face of the cricket museum’s national positioning. Bowral’s Glebe Park has easily accommodated two unrelated iconographic figures, one representing sport and the nation and the other international children’s literature, and both functioning as centres of action and play.

THE FADED MEMORY

The placement of the Mary Poppins statues highlights the common commemorative practice of utilising parks as containers of local memory. However, this can be a slightly troubling practice, as it does not necessarily sustain history in a meaningful way, as two cases illustrate. In December 1874 the government in NSW recorded the transit of the planet Venus by taking scientific observations at four locations in the colony, one of them at the regional town of Goulburn. This attracted some local attention at the time. A plaque was made to record the event and it was installed in the town’s
Belmore Park. In 1997 the plaque was placed on a low and unprepossessing brick column and repositioned in the park to make way for a children’s playground (Goulburn Herald, 25 November 1874; Sydney Morning Herald, 21 December 1874; Goulburn Mulwaree Council, 2014). Its present location on a path and crowded next to a seat makes the plaque’s meaning almost incomprehensible. In the second instance, a farm wagon has been placed in Apex Park in the Victorian regional city of Wangaratta. While the wagon is discernably old, there is no sign or label to explain its presence. Wangaratta is a lively city with an important regional performing arts centre. As it has no public repository for history however, it seems the park is functioning as an outdoor museum, but without any of the intellectual infrastructure that would attach meaning to the object. In this context it is possible to see the park as a kind of dumping ground for historical objects that a community feels should be kept, but doesn’t quite know what to do with.

With the academy’s interest in ‘memory studies’ over the last decade or so, the words ‘commemoration’ and ‘memorial’ have come to be associated most closely with loss and mourning (Damousi, 2010). For example, in a book optimistically titled Places of the Heart: Memorials in Australia, the authors define ‘memorials’ as ‘objects designed to preserve the memory of a person, animal or event that is symbolic, usually away from where the physical remains are buried’ (Ashton et al, 2012, 1). I do not wish to suggest that there is no link between public space and public mourning. The instances of expressive public war memorials included in this paper illustrate exactly that connection. But there are myriad ways in which people utilise urban park landscapes in order to make public expressions of memory, not just of loss.

‘Commemoration’ and ‘memorial’ do not deserve such a narrowing of meaning, and I take this opportunity to restore these two words to a status of multiple meanings and relevance in the whole matter of how we publicly remember the past. I wish to restore a meaningful connection between these two words and the human need for remembrance in all its forms, both sad and happy. As an example of the latter, in 1976 the Perth City Council redeveloped Delhi Square, a small public reserve in West Perth, and renamed it the Harold Boas Gardens. It has since become, to quote the City, a ‘premier park for wedding ceremonies’ (COP, 2015). It is also the case that weddings by their nature are a form of commemoration, and it is fitting that public parks have become places for nuptial festivities and celebrations. While Boas was not the only person promoting the creation of rose gardens in Western Australia in the 1940s, he certainly gave his support to the idea. So it is appropriate that he should be remembered by relating his name to a public park, even if, over time, his significance in Perth’s history will fade away.

**CONCLUSION**

Are public parks suitable locations for commemoration? Those who undertake the task of associating commemorations with public parks do so with the intention that the remembrance will have a meaningful future. Australia’s urban public reserves are maintained as public open spaces over time, which implies that they should be safe havens for a commemorative name or a memorial object. But a stroke of a municipal pen can replace a local history with the grander one of the nation, as with the nominal transformation of the Lofberg Oval to the Bicentennial Park, or a community’s attention can shift from say, Don Bradman to Mary Poppins.
The physical manifestations of memory in Australia’s urban public parks frequently demonstrate attempts to connect the local to a larger agenda and certainly make patterns of association as the examples here demonstrate: the colony and empire in the 1860s; ornamental planting and global war in the 1920s and 1940s; local recreation and national pride in the 1930s and 1980s; children’s play and international literature in the 2010s. It is not surprising that parks can accommodate such variety of purpose, but the spatial relationship between such locations and memory can be troublesome of confusing. Nevertheless, the urban park continues to be a favoured repository for the display of public memory. This, it would seem, can have a transformative effect, so making the park itself – and not just its representation of memory – an iconographic object of remembrance.

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Fibro Coast

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Fibro Coast sought to bring together both historical and contemporary artworks, cultural heritage, architectural and oral history, to create a platform for public consideration of the particular type of fibro beach cottage that is found on the Gold and Sunshine Coasts. The project aimed to creatively review its continuing legacy not only as a structure within the built environment, but also its contribution to the character and contemporary culture of both communities.

Fibro Coast and Fibro Coast The Bleach* Extension

Fibro Coast drew together architectural and cultural history and the work of historical and contemporary artists to reflect on the humble fibro beach cottage as the simple but much loved place that, in the era before the high rise and the resort, defined holiday experiences on the Gold and Sunshine Coasts. The exhibition addressed difficult and controversial themes for communities struggling to come to terms with the appreciation of the memories that these properties hold but also the land values they now attract.

The project entailed two presentations of the exhibition, two off site projects, multiple public programs, a digital platform and a theatre production. These brought together both historical and contemporary artworks, cultural heritage, architectural and oral history, to create a broad platform united by clear graphic design branding which aimed to facilitate public consideration of the particular type of fibro beach cottage that is found on the Gold and Sunshine Coasts. The project aimed to creatively review the continuing legacy of the fibro shack, not only as a structure within the built environment, but also its contribution to the character and contemporary culture of both communities.

Through the work of contemporary artists, audiences were offered new insights into these issues and the exhibition project involved a number of innovative community engagement strategies to allow different points of connection to these ideas with new audiences.

The Gold Coast is a linear city and the siting of the Gallery over 25 km from the greatest concentration of these extant fibro cottages offered the potential for a related site specific project delivered in partnership with a vibrant new youth and families festival.
The Bleach Festival working in partnership with the gallery secured funding support from the Community Partnership Program of the Australia Council and this allowed for the delivery of a major site specific series of installation by artists who had work in the exhibition space in the southern suburbs of the Gold Coast with accompanying memory trails and audio tours.

An additional community engagement strategy was to develop a digital platform instead of a printed catalogue to allow wider contact with the exhibition material and to service the touring venue of The University of the Sunshine Coast and to utilise social media marketing including a #fibrocoast which generated a large following quickly.
From Eyesore to Icon
Reappraising Sydney’s Sirius Apartments (1975-80)

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Designed by Tao Gofers in 1975 and completed in 1980, the Sirius apartments located in Sydney’s historic Rocks precinct has, since its opening, attracted significant public criticism, including the National Trust of Australia who bluntly described it as ‘that lump in the Rocks’ (Glascott 1979: 6). Designed to counterpoint the iconic presence of the Sydney Opera House across Circular Quay, the Sirius apartments were conceived towards the end of a period when the Brutalist idiom dominated architectural thinking and practice internationally.

The Sirius apartments were proposed by the NSW government as an alternative to the relocation of public housing tenants in the Rocks, subsequently resulting in the temporary lifting of construction bans. Perennially nominated as one of Sydney’s great architectural eyesores (Purcell 1986: 27), Sirius reflects heroic ambitions, both socially and architecturally. Through its direct and honest aesthetics, Sirius presents a powerful civic image that communicates the potential role played by the built environment in the lives of a society’s inhabitants, a role focused on the culture of the everyday, an iconic image of an egalitarian ideal expressed in architecture.

The paper contextualises and presents a reassessment of the conception and development of the Sirius apartments as an urban icon and is informed by personal communication with the building’s architect, Tao (Theodorus) Gofers. The paper situates the building in the context of the 1970s redevelopment plans for the Rocks, the project’s critical reception as an urban eyesore and its contemporary re-evaluation as an iconic Brutalist artefact.

Keywords: Brutalism; The Rocks redevelopment; Sirius apartments
Introduction

Sydney’s greatest and famed asset is its harbor with the almost equally famous bridge as the backdrop. Nearby, the Opera House, is one of the modern architectural wonders of the world. And now this encroachment of a collection of ‘human filing cabinets’ with all their ugliness and sterility (Rawson 1979: 4).

The planning and construction of the Sirius apartments occurred at a pivotal point in the urban development of Sydney, coinciding with a period of sustained national economic growth and prosperity that led to a boom in commercial office construction during the 1960s and 70s. Changes in Sydney’s planning laws were critical to the dramatic changes that affected Sydney’s urban fabric during this period.

Prior to 1957, for nearly 50 years, the 1912 Height of Buildings Act had determined the vertical scale of Sydney, limiting buildings to a maximum height of 150 feet (45.72m). In 1957 the Height of Buildings Act was amended and Sydney’s skyline began to be dramatically altered from this time on. After removal of the height limit, approval from the Chief Secretary’s Department was required for buildings taller than 150 feet, with recommendations from a newly created body the Height of Buildings Advisory Committee (HOBAC). The HOBAC, a non-elected body, was created to determine development constraints on a discretionary case by case basis. Until the 1960s, Sydney did not experience any significant office construction. In the period 1960-1976 for example, net office space in the Sydney CBD accounted for more than 50% of the total net office space over the entire period of 1800-1976 (Sydney City Council, 1980). The commercial office boom transformed Sydney during this period however, the retention of the city’s historic urban fabric and the realisation of civic design opportunities were secondary to the maximisation of site potential:

Sydney has been described as a builder’s city because of the tremendous commercial building boom that is currently taking place. The central business area, by Sydney Harbour, is the focal point of this activity, which is no mere co-incidence because it is also the nerve centre of the State of New South
Wales.....old buildings which have outlived their economic usefulness, are being tumbled into oblivion and, in their place, new buildings are rising that give a modern design and contour to the skyline (Sydney’s Skyline 1960: 9).

The conception and development of the Sirius apartments are part of the story of the dramatic economic and cultural shifts taking place in Sydney during the 1960s and 70s and their impact on the urban fabric of the city. The paper contextualises and presents a reassessment of the conception and development of the Sirius apartments as an urban icon and is informed by personal communication with the building’s architect, Tao (Theodorus) Gofers. The paper situates the building in the context of the 1970s redevelopment plans for the Rocks, the project’s critical reception as an urban eyesore and its contemporary re-evaluation as an iconic Brutalist artefact.

**Urban Planning & Historical Context**

The Rocks are an iconic Sydney location, a historic precinct located on the western side of Sydney Cove, between Circular Quay and the approaches to the Sydney Harbour Bridge. In the 1960s The Rocks came into the NSW Government’s focus as an opportunity for major redevelopment because it was primarily in public ownership and was located in close proximity to the Sydney CBD. Sydney historian Isadore Brodsky, reflecting the overwhelmingly optimistic pro-development psyche of the time, wrote of the iconic importance of The Rocks as a focus for major redevelopment:

> The prediction that Sydney will come to look like Manhattan finds every support from the number of skyscrapers that have so excitingly pointed the new way for Australia’s pioneer metropolis during the past five years. In keeping with this dynamic trend it was inevitable that The Rocks, especially where it constitutes the western hinge of that great portal, Sydney Cove, should have invited the attention of developers. On the corresponding hinge of Bennelong’s Point where the vaulting of the Opera House has soared to a new height in world architecture, a challenge was trumpeted to the western shore (Brodsky 1965: 139).

In March 1962, the NSW Labor Government issued a call for expressions of interest from developers for the sale or lease of 19 acres of land in The Rocks precinct (Freestone 2010: 225). The successful proposal was submitted by the developer James Wallace Pty Limited in association with architects Edwards, Madigan and Torzillo. The scheme provided for thirteen high-rise residential towers accommodating approximately 3,500 residents and four 32 storey office towers linked by a series of plazas and courts on a terraced podium of up to six storeys (Webber 1988: 129-130).
Following the election of a Liberal-Country party coalition in May 1965 however, the Wallace scheme for The Rocks did not proceed. In 1967, the new government commissioned John Overall, the then Chairman of the National Capital Development Commission to provide a report on the future redevelopment of The Rocks. The Overall scheme had similar features to the previous Wallace scheme and proposed the development of high rise offices and retail outlets, with a workforce of between 19,000, provision for 1,000 residents in apartments, hotels, motels and serviced flats for tourists (Webber 1988: 130). The report led to establishment of the Sydney Cove Redevelopment Authority (SCRA) by an act of parliament in 1968 and in January 1970, as the statutory body charged with the redevelopment of Crown land in The Rocks, SCRA came into being (Webber 1988: 132). In December of the same year SCRA published the Sydney Cove Redevelopment Scheme. The SCRA scheme proposed approximately two-thirds of The Rocks to be cleared and rebuilt as commercial office space with a population of 1,200 residents (Webber 1988: 130).

As part of the government’s redevelopment plan for The Rocks, all public housing residents were to be relocated to other suburbs. A large majority of the residents however, wished to be rehoused in the Miller Point area, with the aim of retaining the established community of public housing tenants in the area. In response to community opposition to the redevelopment plans, building unions announced a “Green Ban” on the commencement of work until all public housing tenants were satisfactorily rehoused. The NSW Builders Labourers Federation, (BLF) the organisation representing Sydney’s construction workers had by the mid-1960s become increasingly with concerned with issues of urban planning, particularly in relation to protecting open space, existing housing stock and areas of heritage value. The green bans instituted by the BLF were a form of grass roots environmental activism that challenged the pro-development psyche of the time.

Supported by the BLF, planners, academics and architects, the residents of The Rocks developed “The Peoples’ Plan” in April 1973 and argued that the future planning of The Rocks should involve
consultation with its residents as fully as possible. The document communicated the residents’ desire that the area remain predominantly as a residential and historical precinct, distinct from the CBD. Above all, it recommended that the key to the revitalisation of The Rocks was through retaining the existing residents and a commitment to the preservation of its historic buildings (The Rocks Peoples’ Plan Committee 1975). The Sirius apartments were proposed by the government as an alternative to the relocation of public housing tenants, subsequently resulting in the temporary lifting of construction bans.

The Sirius Apartments: Development Options

In response to the People’s Plan, the development options proposed by the NSW Housing Commission were essentially aimed at solving a political problem, the rehousing of the existing residents of The Rocks in the local area. The building’s architect Tao Gofers notes that the time frame to identify and develop a range of development options was extremely short, a matter of less than one week. This short time frame was primarily due to the urgency of finding a political solution that would result in the lifting of the Green Ban.

No development controls for the site were in place at the time the options were being developed, however, a range of outcomes were sought by the various stakeholders who included the NSW Premier’s Department, The Rocks Residents Action Group, The Sydney Cove Redevelopment Authority, the BLF, Sydney City Council and the Maritime Services Board. For the Premier’s Department, the economics of the development were paramount, allowing for an overall land cost per unit that was consistent with existing Department of Housing measures. The Rocks Resident Action Group sought to incorporate the ideas developed in the People’s Plan, primarily for a mix of residents and a non-standard design. For the Sydney City Council, the key outcome was for a medium scale development that was similar in scale to the existing 5 storey Bond store on the site. The Maritime Services Board’s key priority was maintaining views of harbour traffic from its Harbour Control Tower, located on the western edge of The Rocks. For SCRA, The lifting of the BLF Green Ban would allow it to begin a process of evicting residential and commercial squatters and renovate existing buildings so they could be leased profitably and facilitate the development of The Rocks as a historical tourist precinct. A positive resolution of the Green Ban was a key priority for the BLF and would demonstrate that industrial action could be effective in changing government policies and a legitimate method of protecting Australia’s heritage. For the Housing Commission, represented by the Chairman Jack Bourke, the priority to further develop the Commission’s concept of social housing by including a mix of units that would allow for an overall tenant mix representative of the wider community.

According to Gofers, the key design aims of the project were to:

- Incorporate existing Housing Commission standards, particularly in relation to appropriate unit floor space and design and construction quality
- Limit the visual impact on the southern approach to the Harbour Bridge through a predominant 5-6 storey massing, based on the existing Bond store
- Maximise the views to Circular Quay and the Opera House
- Reduce the impact of train noise from the Harbour Bridge
• Incorporate a mix of 1,2,3 and 4 bedroom units and aged pensioner units with appropriate community facilities
• Incorporate off-street parking with access from Cumberland Street
• Provide pedestrian access from Cumberland Street and Gloucester Walk
• Respect the existing site context, i.e., the small scale urban form of the immediate surroundings

Gofers produced four development options for the site, comprising concept drawings (plans, elevations, perspectives) and accommodation/density statistics.

Option 1 (refer Figure 3) proposed a low scale development fourteen 2-storey terraces in a mix of Victorian and Federation styles.

Figure 3: Development Option 1, 1976.
Reproduced with permission of Tao Gofers.

Option 2 (refer Figure 4) proposed a 20-storey high-rise building with two levels of underground parking. The tower provided 160 one and two bedroom units with 8 units per floor.
Option 3 (refer Figure 5) proposed a mix of four of the current standard Housing Commission flat designs, ranging in height to 6 storeys. The development provided 82 units including 24 one bedroom, 40 two-bedroom and 22 aged pensioner apartments.
Options 1 and 2 were developed to illustrate the extremes of site development that were possible. Neither option was regarded as an appropriate solution architecturally or politically by the design team who strategically assessed that they would be rejected by the key stakeholders, the NSW Premier’s Department and The Rocks Resident Action Group. The third option was developed as a mid-range solution proposing around 80 units, a number that was seen by the design team as acceptable to both the government and the residents. Like Options 1 & 2 however, Option 3, was also presented with the strategic aim that it would be rejected, in this case on architectural design terms because of its use of conventional Housing Commission aesthetics.

Option 4 (refer Figure 6) was therefore designed strategically as the preferred option by the design team. Several options were developed in-house before the Sirius proposal was finalised. Option 4 was also presented at a higher degree of resolution, including presentation drawings, a scaled model and professionally rendered perspectives. The scheme proposed a building with a relatively long and narrow footprint with a massing of 11 storeys in the middle, tapering to one and two storeys at the north and south ends. Option 4 provided for 79 apartments comprising 5 four bedroom units, 8 three bedroom units, 38 two bedroom units, 11 one bedroom units and 17 one bedroom apartments specifically designed for aged tenants.

The four options were presented to stakeholder meeting on 23 July 1976. After some discussion, all parties agreed that Option 4 was an acceptable solution and, provided that displaced residents would be accommodated in the development, the BLF would remove the Green Ban over The Rocks. Gofers notes that while the Premiers Department sought to increase unit numbers, Jack Mundey of the BLF immediately contacted the print media to state that the BLF had dropped the Green Ban in light of the Housing Commission’s proposal to construct Sirius. According to Gofers, the approval procedure took less than three hours. Following stakeholder approval, Development Application
documentation was prepared by the Housing Commission and on 4 August 1977, the HOBAC recommended that the development be approved (Minutes of the Meeting of the Height of Buildings Advisory Committee 1977: 2).

The Sirius Apartments as a Brutalist Icon

While the Sirius apartments are commonly described as Brutalist, its architect Tao Gofers concedes that it was never consciously designed as a Brutalist artefact. By the time of its conception in 1975, Brutalism had already reached its peak in terms of global architectural practice. At its worst, Brutalist architecture had by this time become simply gestural, dominated by a focus on monumentality and heroic form making. At its best however, the emphasis on the truthful expression of structure and materials and its memorability as an ideological image, is reflective of Brutalism’s original ethical ambitions.
As in other Brutalist work, in the design of the Sirius apartments there is an appeal to fundamental architectural principles such as the emphasis on repetitive forms and geometries, the parts strongly expressive of individual functions within an overall structural and formal system. The Brutalist concern for the expression of the objectness of a building can be seen in the design of Sirius with the centrality of the building’s image, its ability to be comprehended easily is a function of its formal expression. The modular spaces and forms of Sirius parallel the Brutalist desire for the expression of an egalitarian society. In Sirius, standardisations of forms reflect an aspiration for social cohesion and for the communal good.

The Sirius project was originally planned as two integrated components, a stacked commercial block to the south and a stacked residential block to the north as shown in Figure 6. Only the residential block was built, in accordance with the agreement to house potentially displaced public housing tenants.
Figure 7: Axonometric & unit types – Cumberland Street.
CAD Documentation by Eugene Kirkwood.
Figure 8: Axonometric & unit types – Cumberland Street.
CAD Documentation by Eugene Kirkwood.
The Sirius Apartments were designed to accommodate 200 tenants of different demographics in 79 apartments of various configurations in a stepped profile of repetitive cubic forms. As shown in Figures 7 and 8, this repetitive external appearance is deceptive as it shows no indication of the extraordinary spatial complexity of the interlocking unit types and their fit within the topography of the site and the overall massing of the complex.

The complex comprises 5 four bedroom units, 8 three bedroom units, 38 two bedroom units, 11 one bedroom units and 17 one bedroom apartments specifically designed for aged tenants. The apartments range from single storey units to two and three storey walk-ups. Most units located on the eastern side of the building have views of Circular Quay, the Opera House, the Harbour and the City skyline. Some apartments were designed to span east-west with views in both directions. As part of the tenant selection process, potential tenants were interviewed for their suitability for high density apartment living during the design phase. All units in the Sirius complex have access to a communal roof garden which is landscaped with large trees and shrubs potted in striking purple fibreglass planters. Access to outdoor space is a key feature of the overall building design with all units benefitting from connection to a combination of roof gardens, courtyard gardens and balconies. A community space of about 200 square metres, the ‘Phillip Room’ is located on the ground floor and provides space for reception and general activities areas and a supervised area for children’s activities. The seventeen aged units are provided with a special community room, the ‘Heritage Room’ is located on the eighth floor with access to a garden terrace and extensive views of the City and North Sydney. Clothes drying rooms are provided on each floor of the high-rise section and at each stairway in the walk-up sections. Planted areas on the podium, extensive use of private outdoor space, the provision of community spaces and clothes drying rooms contribute to the potential for sociability and a spirit of community within the complex.

The incorporation of standard family units with aged units in the Sirius apartments was not typical of the NSW Housing Commission’s approach to tenant mix at the time. Due to more stringent requirements for security, accessibility and safety, the design of aged accommodation was generally delivered as stand alone developments. The 17 aged units in the Sirius apartments are located in the tower section of the complex with two units per floor for levels two to eight and single units located on level nine, ten and eleven. All aged units are accessible by lifts and incorporate special features such as emergency call buttons that are linked to a distress call panel in the apartment foyer and Building Manager’s office. Electronic locks on aged unit doors were also incorporated in the case of accidents or emergencies. Additionally, lifts were specifically designed so they could accommodate ambulance stretchers.

The material palette of Sirius is dominated by the conspicuous use of raw off-form concrete. Contrary to the Brutalist aspiration of truth in material expression, Sirius was originally designed to be off white in appearance, using a lighter cement mix (Sydney Morning Herald 2014). Gofers notes that the monumentality and external white appearance of Sirius was conceptualised as a counterpoint to the iconic presence of the Sydney Opera House across the Quay. Due to budget constraints, however, the building’s concrete finish utilized a standard concrete mix, resulting in a darker appearance than was originally intended.
Critical Reception & Re-evaluation of the Sirius Apartments

At its official opening in 19 March 1980, the Sydney Morning Herald reported that the Sirius apartments attracted strong public criticism from several commentators, including the National Trust:

The staggered-level building Sirius, in Cumberland Street, with its central tower rising above the southern Harbour Bridge approach, has drawn strong public criticism. The National Trust has called it ‘the lump on The Rocks.’ The former Minister for Planning and Environment, Mr Landa has described it as ‘damned awful’. Some architects have criticized the design, motorists have complained that it cuts off Harbour views and some members of the public have suggested that the central tower be demolished (Glascott 1980: 3).

Brutalist architecture is often characterised by its disregard for its context. Architectural historian Reyner Banham, the key chronicler of the Brutalist movement, referred to this as a form of urban ‘bloody-mindedness’ (Banham 2011: 23). Designed with an emphasis on rigorous planning, context was generally a secondary concern in Brutalist projects. Negative public reaction is often related to the way in which Brutalist works imposed themselves on the environment. In the case of the Sirius apartments, the setting is as dramatic as the formal aesthetics of the building. Sirius is located on a prominent site and rises dramatically from the low scale cottages, warehouse and bond stores of The Rocks with extensive views of the Harbour, the City and the Sydney Harbour Bridge. Sited on Cumberland Street, the complex is located with its eastern façade facing the southern approaches of the Sydney Harbour Bridge and its western façade facing Circular Quay and the Sydney Opera House. Negative criticism of Sirius, like much brutalist architecture of the time was also often motivated by a sense of outrage at what these buildings had replaced. In the case of the Sirius apartments this involved the demolition of an early nineteenth century 5-storey bond store.

Sirius was the first structure to be constructed above the Sydney Harbour Bridge approaches other than the 61 metre high chimney of the Mining Museum (1902-1909) located between George Street and Hickson Road. Tao Gofers however argued at the time of its completion that the development was in harmony with its context:

The building, of reinforced concrete with precast window panels, is finished in a sandstock brick colour to reflect the historic origins and materials of the area. The project is of variable height and reflects the irregular roof shapes of the buildings and the resultant sculptural quality is in harmony with the dominant forms of the Bridge and the Opera House (Gofers 1979: 6).

While Gofers argues that the massing of the Sirius apartments was in keeping with its context, criticism at the time however, saw this as a key failure of the project. Melbourne-based architect and Sydney Morning Herald architectural critic Norman Day addresses this in a strongly worded critique published shortly after its opening, commenting that it appeared ‘...as if designed by a group of droogs from Clockwork Orange...’ (Day 1979: 7). What is significant in this commentary is the association of the project with the urban imagery of Stanley Kubrick’s film “A Clockwork Orange”. The predominant use of precast concrete technologies and modular construction processes and their uncompromising, stark architectural expression in the Sirius apartments, it could be argued, is a key reason for the negative commentary of the project at the time of its completion. The repetitive
housing modules are confronting in their sameness and suggest a dehumanizing of its occupants. Kubrick’s 1971 film presents a dystopian vision of the future employing the Brutalist architecture of London’s Thamesmead housing development to convey a powerful sense of urban decay and disenfranchisement. As architectural critic Shene Neufeld has noted, the association of Brutalism with societal violence and oppression has persisted in the social imaginary, partly as a result of the legacy of Kubrick’s compelling visual expression (Neufeld 2013: 115).

Not all commentary at the time of its opening however was critical, particularly when the focus was not on its visual appearance but on its spatial planning and interior finishes. The Sirius apartments were truly egalitarian, built on prime real estate and providing spectacular views of the city to those who could never afford such amenity. The Sydney Morning Herald’s society columnist Leslie Walford for example, praised the amenity of the building while deftly avoiding criticism of its external appearance:

Sirius is a building to admire, sturdy outside, unusual even, but inside it is positively luxurious, spacious, well planned, with excellent safety devices such as emergency call buttons for the aged tenants…..I was really astonished at the thoughtful planning and quality of this large building, with its public areas, gardens, little private courtyards and a garage per unit (Walford 1980: 130).

Sirius can be understood as a legacy of a moment when governments believed that all citizens were deserving of quality urban housing. The design of the Sirius apartments represents a proposition for an urban habitat, an interest in urban living. Some of the critical reaction to the project, can be traced to the fact that its prestigious location with extensive city views were provided to low income residents:

Perhaps there is some merit in his criticism that the block spoils the line of the Sydney Harbour Bridge but, I cannot help detecting hints of a more general resentment which is perhaps leveled at those people who might win a place in this unique setting – people who ordinarily would never be able to afford harbourside accommodation….At The Rocks the Housing Commission has endeavoured to harmonise the ‘stepped’ building with the environment and bring back people to the city already vandalized by massive office developments (Christie 1979: 6).

Since its completion in 1980, the Sirius apartments have been perennially nominated as one of Sydney’s great architectural eyesores (Purcell 1986: 27). In recent years, however, an undercurrent of respect for the project has emerged, heightened by the potential demolition of the project as a result of the NSW government’s decision to sell off the Sirius apartments as well as 214 other government owned properties in Millers Point (Hasham 2014). Adding to this new critical appreciation, in 2015, reflecting a growing re-evaluation and appreciation of Brutalist architecture internationally, the NSW Heritage Office proposed that the Sirius apartments be recognized for its architectural and social significance and listed on the State’s heritage register. The draft listing proposes that the building is ‘a rare, representative and fine example of the Brutalist architectural style’ (NSW Department of Environment and Heritage 2015) and of state significance in terms of its aesthetic, historical and social values.
Conclusion

The Sirius apartments were conceived towards the end of a period when the Brutalist idiom dominated architectural thinking and practice internationally. In his 1966 retrospective account of the Brutalist movement in “The New Brutalism: Ethic or Aesthetic”, Banham concedes that the meaning of the term had devolved from the Smithson’s aspirations for an architecture based on a socially progressive ideology to an descriptor of an aesthetic approach marked by monumentality, bold geometric forms and the dominant use of concrete. Brutalism satisfied a need for monumental architecture, to be seen to reflect the democratic attributes of a civil society. The aesthetics of Brutalism were informed by its political motivations and aspirations of a postwar utopia based on a progressive social ideology and a commitment to social outcomes. Despite the intention to foreground ethics over aesthetics, a distinct aesthetic emerged from the Brutalist movement marked by a focus on the tectonic essence and material presence of architecture.

Brutalism was an uncompromising architectural aesthetic that continues to polarise the public, raising recurring questions in terms of historic preservation. In this context, the growing international rehabilitation of Brutalism has seen a number of significant exhibitions and scholarly work aimed at reassessing its value and significance. In 2012 the World Monuments Fund listed British Brutalism on its threatened architecture list with a number of significant buildings put forward as worthy exemplars (World Monuments Fund 2012). More recently, the British Pavilion at the 2014 Venice Biennale of Architecture, presented the large scale urban renewal projects of the 1950-70s as the maturing of British Modernism, reflecting an ambitious social, architectural and political agenda that has been unrivalled since (British Council 2014).

This re-evaluation of Brutalist architecture highlights how critical interpretation in architecture is a function of the passing of both time and fashion. As a much maligned architectural style, Brutalism has been seen as an unfashionable historical anachronism, a wilful architecture associated with urban and social decay. Debates over the aesthetic merits of Brutalist architecture are problematic because often current attitudes to brutalist buildings often echo the widespread criticism these buildings received when first constructed. By the time of its conception in 1975, Brutalism had already reached its peak in terms of global architectural practice. At its worst, Brutalist architecture had by this time become simply gestural, dominated by a focus on monumentality and heroic form making. At its best however, the emphasis on the truthful expression of structure and materials and its memorability as an ideological image, is reflective of Brutalism’s original ethical ambitions.

Architectural critics Michael Kubo et al argue that, given the contingencies associated with the term Brutalism, its architecture may better conceptualized as ‘heroic ’, ‘…a cultural project meant to reveal the messy realities of its time and forge a new honesty about architecture’s role within the broader social and urban transformations of the post-war area.’ (Kubo, Grimley & Pasnik 201: 167). In this context Sirius reflects heroic ambitions, both socially and architecturally.

The Sirius apartments can be understood as a legacy of a moment when governments believed that all citizens were deserving of quality urban housing. Through its direct and honest aesthetics, Sirius presents a powerful civic image that communicates the potential role played by the built environment in the lives of a society’s inhabitants, a powerful image of an egalitarian ideal expressed in architecture.
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Damnation
From the Hinze Dam to the Tugun desalination plant

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Australia’s major cities have long relied on large dams as their main source of water. These dams, including Warragamba, are household names in their own cities. Some cities are blessed with good quality catchment areas, most notably Sydney, while others, including Brisbane, have catchments compromised by agricultural pursuits and very little green space in their immediate hinterland. Outside the cities and country towns, rural Australia continues to get by on tank water, just as it has done for the past two centuries (Frost et al 2015).

Criss-crossed with creeks and rivers, the indigenous people of the region had no difficulty in accessing clean water. The infant European settlements of the area now known as the Gold Coast relied on tank water for drinking and the waterways for commercial quantities of water. A dam on Tallebudgera Creek was replaced in 1962 with the Little Nerang Dam. At the time, the Gold Coast’s population hovered around fifty thousand. Fifty years later it boasted a population of half a million, a tenfold increase.

The Gold Coast developed rapidly as a tourist resort in the 1950s and 1960s, with key Melbourne entrepreneurs, Stanley Korman and Bruce Small, introducing canal developments, based on the Florida model. Waterways, sun, surf and sand came to dominate how the Gold Coast promoted itself, not just to residents of Brisbane, bereft of surf beaches, but to the Sydney and Melbourne markets who could fly or drive (Davidson and Spearritt 2000, 161-162).

Prior to the introduction of sewers – which require a great deal of water to keep them flowing – ‘night soil’ collections and septic tanks dealt with toilet and laundry waste, though not in what today would be regarded as an environmentally acceptable manner. While sandy soil septics easily coped with the volume, the water table became increasingly contaminated. With the coming of more substantial blocks of flats the beachside suburban holiday houses and fibro shacks were gradually demolished and replaced by apartment blocks that were only feasible if connected to the sewer.

51 This paper was not subject to peer review.
With the roll out of a sewerage system in the 1960s, sewerage treatment plants were built at Elanora, Benowa and Tugun. More dramatically, work started on the Hinze Dam, in the foothills of the Lamington National Park, with the Border Ranges national park beyond (Gold Coast City Council 2013, 27-29). Named after Carl and Johanna Hinze, pioneering rural grandparents of former South Coast MLA and Minister Russ Hinze, most Queenslanders assume that the dam is named after the latter, not least because of his reputation for pork barrelling, on behalf of both himself and the National Party. Opened in 1976, it had a storage capacity of 42,400 megalitres (ML). With the rapid growth of the Gold Coast, including a quarter of a million new residents between 1961 and 1991, the dam wall was raised in 1989, increasing capacity fourfold, to 163,500 ML, offering the Gold Coast ‘an assured water supply’ (Courier-Mail 20 March, 1989; Gold Coast Bulletin 20 March, 1989).

When the Hinze Dam level fell below about 50 per cent, water was pumped in from the huge Wivenhoe dam, west of Brisbane. As the great urban drought started to unfold in south-east Queensland from 2005, the Gold Coast city council became increasingly alarmed that the Coast could no longer rely on water from Wivenhoe, if Brisbane itself was running dry.

The onset of the water crisis

The Queensland state government was (and remains) well informed about the rapid rate of population growth in south-east Queensland (Queensland Government Statistician’s Office 2016). So why did the state government and the major councils, including Brisbane and the Gold Coast, allow water stocks in the dams to fall to perilously low levels while simultaneously allowing the government’s own electric power stations to continue to rely on potable water supplies, rather than recycled water? By 2006 the power stations were using up to one fifth of SEQ’s daily consumption of water.

Only 17 per cent of south-east Queensland is held in state forests and national parks, compared to 43 per cent of Greater Sydney (Brisbane Institute 2003). One obvious result is that the catchment areas for dams in SEQ are not a patch on the Sydney catchment areas. Because so much of the environment of SEQ was carved up into small rural landholdings by the early 1950s, when it came to locating new, large dams they ended up to the north-west of Brisbane in a relatively dry catchment area, dotted with farms. The Wivenhoe dam site, to complement the smaller Somerset dam, was selected as much to prevent flooding as to collect and store water.

The Gold Coast’s hinterland dams, though smaller than others in SEQ, are set in catchment areas of higher rainfall. Even so, Gold Coast property developers got worried at the thought that the water might run out. Imagine the indignity of having to buy in water – via truck – from northern New South Wales to fill up your lap pool. It hardly goes with the Gold Coast’s image of sunshine, instant palm plantings and unlimited largesse, from meter maids and schoolies week to champagne at the annual V8 Supercar race. The 2010 Gold Coast marketing campaign, ‘Very GC’, bragged of ‘miles of sandy beach, lush green rainforest, world-class golfing greens and world famous theme parks’ (Gold Coast Tourism 2010).

The city most threatened by the water shortage was Toowoomba, where water bureaucrats and some politicians thought recycling the best remedy in such a dire situation. So with state and federal government support, a local referendum on the issue was called. On 29 July 2006, 62 per cent of the
city’s population voted against the referendum question, ‘Do you support the addition of purified recycled water to Toowoomba’s water supply?’ Clive Berghofer, a former National Party member of parliament, a real estate developer and a medical research philanthropist, masterminded the ‘no’ campaign, complaining that Toowoomba, with its population of 120,000, would become known as Poowomba if the ‘yes’ campaign succeeded (van Vuuren 2007).52

Deducing that it would be hard to convince south-east Queenslanders to embrace recycled water, the state government report Water for South-East Queensland came up with the notion that demand for water could be reduced dramatically if the community understood the severity of the crisis (Queensland Government 2006b, 6-8). ‘If Queenslanders are to maintain the lifestyle they currently take for granted, it is essential that demand for water is reduced and supplies are increased, so that economic growth and wealth creation can continue’. Despite the defeat of the Toowoomba referendum, the report stated that ‘recycling within residential and non-residential developments will need to be introduced’.

In late October 2006, less than two months after his victory in the state election, Beattie announced that he would hold a referendum in the coming year on water recycling. The South-East Queensland Council of Mayors were unable to present a united front, and said – nervous after the Toowoomba result – they would not take sides in the referendum, though Brisbane Lord Mayor Campbell Newman came out in favour of recycling. Beattie abandoned the referendum idea in late January, explaining that the situation was so dire that purified recycled water ‘is no longer an option, we have no choice’. He also explained that the Queensland Water Commission had given him ‘compelling advice’ to cancel the March 17 plebiscite (Queensland Government 2007). For once Beattie got a favourable editorial in the Courier-Mail: ‘with Brisbane’s Wivenhoe Dam at just above 20 per cent capacity, Premier Peter Beattie has made the right decision to press ahead with recycled drinking water for south-east Queensland and scrap what would have been a farcical $10 million plebiscite over the issue’ (Courier-Mail 29 January, 2007). Five days later the newspaper informed its readers that some of them were already drinking recycled water (Courier-Mail 3 February, 2007).

The south-east council mayors had bickered for months about uniform water restrictions and they would often break ranks. Outrage greeted Gold Coast Mayor Ron Clarke when he allowed his own residents a ‘wet weekend’ of hosing down their driveways and washing their cars in May 2006, simply because the Hinze dam happened to be full (Courier-Mail 21 April, 2006). But Clarke’s action reflected the local view voiced by many Gold Coast residents that they should not be dictated to by Brisbane (Gold Coast Bulletin 1 May, 2006, 25 May, 2006). The complications of overlapping jurisdictions and financial responsibilities in the water bureaucracies are much less tractable.

The phenomenal success of the Queensland Water Commission in its 2007 ‘Target 140’ campaign, with Brisbane soon boasting the lowest per capita water use of any major Australian urban area, shows just how much consumption can be reduced with media support and a degree of bi-partisan consensus (Queensland Water Commission 2010, 107-108). The Water Commission, defunct since January 2013, continued to run a clever and successful marketing campaign for its Target 140. Their

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52 Premier Peter Beattie’s Community Cabinet met with the Toowoomba Water Supply Taskforce in December 2006, months after the failed referendum, and announced a 47-kilometre pipeline from Wivenhoe Dam to Perseverance Dam. See Queensland Government, 2006a.
website carried weekly updates on dam levels and household consumption. One of its key selling points was that if residents could stick to 140 litres per day they would still be allowed to water plants with a bucket or watering can for a few hours a week. This approach had the great merit that the Commission, while attempting to severely curtail household usage, was not trying to mandate exactly how and where individuals can use what is deemed as a reasonable, if heavily constrained, daily rate of consumption. There is an element of trust in this that paid off in a level of region-wide compliance that is quite remarkable. Council mayors were mightily relieved that the Commission took responsibility for determining water restriction policy. Gold Coast Mayor Ron Clarke wanted to break ranks again in January 2008 when heavy summer rain overfilled the still relatively small Hinze Dam and he suggested that allowing ratepayers to water down their driveways would reduce the risk of flooding! The Water Commission did make one minor and sensible concession: Gold Coast beaches could again turn on their outdoor showers (Courier-Mail 18 January, 2008; Gold Coast Bulletin 18 January, 2008). Overseas tourists, not appreciating the severity of the water shortage, were always perplexed as to why the outdoor showers were turned off.

Desalination to the rescue

In 1994 the Albert Shire Council and the Gold Coast City Council, before they were amalgamated the following year, produced a 14-page glossy brochure entitled, Water... Lifeline of a City, replete with photographs of the Hinze Dam wall, a natural waterfall, sprinklers on golf courses, with the largest image the obligatory swim-suited woman lolling on a red flotation device in a swimming pool. Like most such brochures there is a brief explanation of the water cycle and of Australia as the driest inhabited continent, before readers were informed that a reliable water supply is ‘vital’ for ‘the nation’s most popular holiday region’. The little Nerang dam and the Hinze dam were said to provide for the region’s needs ‘well into the next century’. The brochure also devoted quite a few pages to saving water. With sixty per cent of water used inside their homes, householders were advised not to use their toilet bowel as a bin or ashtray, take shorter showers and check their taps for leaks. The forty per cent of water used on the garden could be reduced by soaking, not spraying, using mulch, adding a timer to your sprinkler, letting the lawn go brown in summer and installing a swimming pool cover. You were even instructed as to how to read your water meter (Spearritt 2010, 29-30).

Because the Gold Coast has a higher average rainfall than Brisbane, the Hinze dam fills quickly, but because it is a small dam it also empties quickly. The Gold Coast continued to draw water from Wivenhoe, but once levels fell below 30 per cent the Gold Coast looked like it might be hung out to dry. The Goss Labor government, having abandoned the proposal to build the Wolffdene dam in the early 1990s, ostensibly in response to resident opposition to the proposal in the lead up to the 1989 state election, had not left the Gold Coast with a conventional legacy of large urban dams. Despite the Bjelke-Petersen government (the original architect of the Wolffdene plan) having rezoned much of the land around Wolffdene as ‘rural/residential’, thereby increasing subdivisions and property development and effectively making the dam proposal economically and politically more fraught, Goss’s government still wears most of the blame – including from former Natural Resources

53 On average, Brisbane receives a little over 1000mm of rain annually, while the Gold Coast and its hinterland receive close to 1400mm. See Bureau of Meteorology, 2016.
Department senior officials – for opposing the dam’s construction as part of its successful 1989 election platform (Norton 2007; Centre for the Government of Queensland 2011). This criticism extends to the dubious suggestion that, in the absence of a dam at Wolffdene, the flood events of 2010-11 in Brisbane and the Lockyer Valley were worse than they might have been.

Ironically, Goss effectively lost office a handful of years later when his government attempted to push forward with another major infrastructure development – this time a highway duplication between Brisbane and the Gold Coast – which stirred similarly negative sentiments among likely-affected residents of swinging electorates through which the development would pass. It seems that both Premiers Goss and Beattie were willing at times, in respect of different problems related partly to population pressures, to wear a level of voter backlash against potentially unpopular building projects in areas south of Brisbane and on the Gold Coast that more often than not, especially in terms of the latter, have voted for the conservative parties. Gold Coast investors got worried as water reserves became sparser, as did their backers, the banks and the superannuation funds. The Gold Coast had lived through the rise and withdrawal of Japanese investment in the 1980s, and had seen property booms and busts ever since, so investors and developers were understandably jittery (Hajdu 2005; Forbes and Spearritt 2006).

By early 2005 the Gold Coast was well on the way to the strictest water restrictions in its history. Gold Coast Mayor Ron Clarke announced in April that south-east Queensland needed at least six mini-desalination plants, but a Brisbane City Council spokesman pointed out that using recycled water at Swanbank Power station would save as much potable water as one of Clarke’s projected plants. By September 2005, Clarke was heavily pushing for a fast-tracked desal plant, allegedly necessary because the coast’s population would increase from 500,000 to 1.2 million within 50 years (Courier-Mail 27 April, 2005; Gold Coast Bulletin 24 September, 2005). The Gold Coast council decided to bankroll a $165 million desalination plant to create a ‘bulk water source’, ‘regardless of the drought’ (Gold Coast Bulletin 26 November, 2005). As part of the water grid the State Government agreed, in June 2006, to partner with the Gold Coast City council and in November 2006 they formed a 50/50 joint venture company to develop and own the desalination plant, to be built on council land to the immediate west of the Gold Coast airport. This plant would have a capacity of 125ML per day. The promotional video for the site, with its intake off Tugun beach, described the project as ‘environmentally sound and sustainable’, while admitting that the desal water will be ‘so free of salt and minerals’ that ‘minerals will have to be added’ for potable consumption.54

A bold and well prepared state government and a similarly well-informed Gold Coast City Council could have rolled out a mammoth water tank initiative, offering 150,000 suburban dwellings on the Coast 20,000 litres of tank capacity, retaining potable water supplies for kitchen and bathroom. This could have been undertaken for a maximum cost of $750,000,000 over that period, including the cost of a pump and plumbing in for toilet and laundry use. This is calculated on a realistic basis of $5,000 per dwelling. But governments rarely want to give out anything for free, especially something that might add to the value of the properties, even though the Tugun desalination plant cost a lot more than a sustainable tank roll out. The Rudd Labor government’s home insulation roll out, an

54 Video presentation viewed 29 January 2008. The propagandistic details of the project, in addition to its regular Community Newsletter, could previously be viewed at the now archived project website: www.desalinfo.com.au.
admirable scheme in terms of environmental impact, made – with problems in implementation – most governments wary of improving dwellings on a mass scale.

The Tugun plant cost $1.2 billion, not counting the operating costs, and even at full capacity would never be able to manufacture more than one quarter of the regions requirements.\textsuperscript{55} The Gold Coast desal plant was a tempting instant fix, with the added attraction of using the latest technology, just like the plants at Kurnell in Sydney and Wonthaggi in Gippsland, all promptly mothballed within months of completion. The Tugun plant proceeded without any environmental impact statement. Beattie told one local protestor, ‘If we don’t have desal, we’re not going to have any water. If you don’t have water, you’re dead’ (\textit{Courier-Mail} 1 February, 2007). Such insights appeared to propel Labor Premiers nationwide to embrace the desal ‘solution’ (Warren 2007).

All this is the more extraordinary because both the Sunshine Coast and the Gold Coast have regular and considerable rainfalls, with the potential for householders to capture rainwater and for councils to harvest stormwater, rather than let it go into the creeks and the ocean, which it does at the moment. The Gold Coast and the Sunshine Coast received so much rain in January and February 2008 that every tank could have been filled and refilled within days.\textsuperscript{56} Such are the ironies of knee-jerk and alarmist infrastructure developments which do not adequately address alternative options. In going down the high capital cost and high energy cost road, Queensland has committed a generation to paying through the nose – at an estimated cost of nearly $100 million per year, even when not in use (\textit{Gold Coast Bulletin} 3 April, 2014) – for a desal plant, when other options were not adequately explored, especially the water tank option.

The Hinze dam, with its wall raised again by 2011, now stores 310,000 ML of water, six times its capacity when first opened. If, for the sake of argument, it is at two thirds of its capacity, in the space of a few days of heavy rain it collects and stores more water than the Tugun plant can make in a year. And it collects that water without the extraordinarily high power bills and carbon emissions – from coal-fired electricity – that desalination demands.

\textbf{Conclusion}

After the turnaround in rainfall seasons following the drought years, and with south-east Queensland residents still reluctant to consume water at pre-drought levels, the decision was taken by the LNP state government in 2012 to leave the Tugun desal plant, along with other water grid infrastructure, in permanent ‘stand-by’ mode (if not shut down entirely), effectively mothballing the costly facility. As reported at the time, this was largely in response to topped up water storages and declining revenue to water utilities because of continually low household consumption:

\textsuperscript{55} For a telling assessment of the advantages, disadvantages, costs and benefits of desalination, see H. Cooley et al, \textit{Desalination}, with a grain of salt, 39-68 [see entry in reference list].

\textsuperscript{56} The Sunshine Coast, with almost 500mm, and the Gold Coast, with almost 600mm falling in January and February 2008, received roughly 150mm and 230mm respectively above the average rainfall totals for those months. See Bureau of Meteorology, 2016.
A spokesman for the Minister for Energy and Water Supply [Mark McArdle] said permanent water restrictions were under review because people's water habits had changed since the water crisis. ... The Newman Government is also set to shut down the $2.5 billion recycled water plant and associated pipelines, showpieces of the Beattie and Bligh Labor administrations. It will be a further piece of costly drought-busting infrastructure shelved amid falling demand, after the Tugun desalination plant was mothballed earlier this year (Courier-Mail 15 October, 2012).

But it seems there’s life in the old plant yet: “The Gold Coast’s increasing population is set to press the controversial $1.2 billion Tugun desalination plant into more regular use. The plant, which has rarely been used since it was built in 2008 by the Bligh Government, was switched on yesterday and is increasing its intake before it starts providing water to more than 170,000 homes cross the city” (Moore 2015; Gold Coast Bulletin 31 August, 2015, 1 September, 2015). Seqwater officials claimed that, despite this recent start-up being a ‘temporary revival’ while overdue repairs were carried out to a water treatment plant at Mudgeeraba, the Tugun desal plant may well be reactivated permanently from 2020 to supplement residential supply during the summer months. Coincidentally, after its wall was raised in mid-2011, and even after the Newman government dispensed with compulsory water use restrictions in January 2013, the Hinze dam hasn’t dropped below 80 per cent capacity at any time in the last four years (Seqwater 2016).

It is possible that the seeming lack of political criticism of and reaction to the fortunes of the Tugun desal plant, besides the odd angry outburst in state parliament by then Premier Campbell Newman (Howells 2014), reflects that Liberal and National Party politicians have been wary of offending constituents in Gold Coast electorates, which overwhelmingly are home to supporters of the conservative parties. Any suggestion that these residents should have to go without being able to fall back on the desalination plant, one that allows them greater ‘licence’ to continue living a lifestyle predicated partly on a relatively profligate and decidedly ‘un-Brisbane-like’ consumption of household water, might be too politically risky even for incumbent Gold Coast LNP members.

When you fly into the Gold Coast airport you see the multi-coloured roof of the desal plant abutting the northern end of the runway. Few people realise that it cost more to build than the runway itself.

The Hinze dam has stood the test of time, and has an informative interpretation centre open to the public, set in pleasantly landscaped grounds. It continues to provide the Gold Coast with a reliable water supply. And as long as householders continue to be careful with water use – and install tanks especially for garden and or/pools - it will continue to supply water to the coast for decades to come. It could become an icon of sustainability, a reputation that could be readily augmented if businesses and new dwellings have to install tanks. Lifting those requirements in January 2013 was a retrograde step by the Queensland tate government and the water authorities, keen to encourage profligate water use to boost their revenues. Water tanks are still compulsory for new dwellings in Sydney and Adelaide and they should be on the Gold Coast and Brisbane too.

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Ralph Neale’s Landscape Australia
Its role in charting a landscape profession

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Landscape architecture in Australia was advanced in 1979 when the first issue of a national professional journal, Landscape Australia, was published. Encouraged by the staff of the Centre of Environmental Studies at the University of Melbourne, Ralph Percival Neale (1922-2014) was the journal’s instigator and inaugural editor and he continued to produce the journal for the next 21 years as the only public forum for the profession. Neale was a shoe manufacturer, historian, photographer, painter, and naturalist who managed to bring these multiple skills and interests to bear on the journal. His contribution helped to present a particular charter for the profession that was overwhelmingly pitched at stewardship of the land. He did so in a manner that relied as much on representations of iconic Australian landscapes as it did the intellectual content of the articles and letters within. This paper explains Neale’s influence along with the broader motivations of a group of conservation-minded people that helped define a profession for Australia. It also examines the meanings and ideas communicated in the journal’s cover graphics, logos, slogans and photography, in order to shed light on the symbols that underpinned the identity of the Australian Institute of Landscape Architects (AILA) in its early decades of existence.

Keywords: Ralph Neale; landscape architecture; conservation; professions.

Introduction

In early 1980, the Australian Institute of Landscape Architects (AILA) was just thirteen years old, having begun the process of institutionalisation in August 1966. The 1970s were the time for establishment, with landscape architects forging practices that encompassed the realms of landscape reclamation, landscape assessment and planning, and site planning and design (Saniga, 2012, 199-254). By 1987, urban design had emerged as a new and lucrative field of work that even further challenged landscape architects’ ability to define their own professional orbit. There was rallying for territory between landscape architects and architects, planners and even engineers and
scientists in forestry, ecology, etc. One founding member wrote: “A lot of time and energy was spent (in education and practice) fighting often rear guard actions for recognition – it seemed that this upstart profession was being denigrated and shot-at wherever and however possible – we had to be kept in our place (ie gardeners).” (Williams, 2003). Organisations like the National Capital Development Commission (NCDC, formed in 1958) and various public works departments and boards had more or less ‘delivered’ landscape architects roles in public service. Still, the road ahead was uncertain.

Charting the new profession of landscape architecture was not made any easier with the extremely diverse disciplinary make-up of those individuals who had decided to align themselves with it. For example, one key contributor, Richard Clough (second AILA President, 1969-1971), was trained in architecture at the University of Sydney (1947) and then undertook landscape education at University College in London in 1949 followed by work experience with Sylvia Crowe between the years of 1954-56. Soon after he returned to Australia he was recruited to the NCDC (in 1959) by Peter Harrison (1918-90) and found a role in generating landscape plans for broad scale open spaces in the nation’s capital (Saniga 2012, 170 & 174). A very different kind of practitioner, but one also of influence, was Alistair Knox (1912-86) in Melbourne. He held no formal training in landscape, architecture, planning or architecture yet was ardent in partially defining himself as a ‘landscape architect’. For Knox, the professional title held the potential to aid his conservation battles: membership of the AILA “[did] open occasional doors that would otherwise remain closed” (Knox, 1975, 72). Institutionalisation thus held the potential to give shape to a newly defined group despite the fact that “with all those folk and all their divergent views, it was rather hard to see how a harmonious Institute would form” (Bunzli, 1991, 204).

Notwithstanding the broad make-up of those who had decided to call themselves Landscape Architects, the profession moved forward with a degree of purpose. This came in response to a shared concern for improving the visual quality of the Australian urban environment in the wake of the post-World War Two development boom. Complicit was a heralding of the importance of Australia’s indigenous landscape. These shared aims helped galvanise members into action under the maxim ‘Stewards of the Land’, although as will be discussed, the extent to which landscape architects became conservationists needs some qualification. In achieving unity the fledgling AILA was dramatically aided by the birth of the journal Landscape Australia in the late 1970s. Its founder and inaugural editor, Ralph Percival Neale (1922-2014) established a vibrant forum for sharing ideas whilst also formulating a public platform for promoting stewardship of the land. Neale (see Figure 1) used images and words in a combined way to form a well-crafted sales pitch that could underwrite the new profession. As sociologist Andrew Abbott argues, identity and an appreciation of the usefulness of a new profession in the public mind is an essential part of success (see Abbott, 1988, 60). The aim of this paper is to explain the significance of Neale’s publicising of an emerging landscape architectural profession in Australia. It presents an overview of Neale’s contribution and establishes a framework for understanding the techniques with which he helped solidify what the AILA’s inaugural president retrospectively described as a “unity of purpose” (Spooner, 1991, 206), in a situation when unity seemed difficult to conceive.
A new profession: Ralph Percival Neale (1922-2014)

Ralph Neale’s life was summed up well by his son as: ‘Shoe Manufacturer, Yachtsman, Journalist, Historian, Artist, Publisher. A FULL LIFE’ (A Neale, 2014, 4). Born in 1922, Neale grew up in Melbourne in the suburb of Camberwell. He had attended Camberwell Grammar School between 1929 and 1932 and Wesley College in Prahran from 1933 to 1937 and by the age of 15 Ralph had finished school. Neale had very much enjoyed drawing and had an appreciation and fascination for aesthetic objects, “...particularly ships, old and new, Malcolm Campbell’s speed record motor cars, and aeroplanes piloted by Charles Kingsford Smith”. (Neale, undated, 4-5). Neale’s mother organised for him to attend water-colour classes with local artist Mary Andrew. In these classes he claimed to have developed tonal appreciation, as Mary Andrew reputedly had a distinctive water colour technique that she applied to painting gardens (Neale, undated, 9-10).

Neale spent almost all of 1938 travelling the world with his family, exploring cities and landscapes of England, Wales, Scotland, Belgium, Italy, Switzerland, France, Luxemburg and Germany. The family returned to Australia via New York shortly before the outbreak of World War II. It was an experience that he claimed was highly significant in broadening his outlook (Neale, 2014, 2). Upon returning to Australia, Neale entered the family shoe making factory, Cherub Shoes, continuing a family lineage
that extended back to his great grandfather, James Neale (1815-1876), who had begun in the shoe business in Twerton, Somerset and London. In 1941 Ralph Neale was assigned to the 6th Battalion of the AIF and in 1942 was stationed south of Geraldton, predominantly surveying parts of Western Australia. The process of map making Neale found useful later in life (Neale, 2014, 1) when his association with both landscape architecture and publishing took hold. After the war Neale returned to the shoe-making business where he eventually became Managing Director and over the next two decades he sharpened his business skills. It was through an army friend, George Silcock, that Neale met his wife to be, and in 1946 he married Vivienne Silcock (1917-2014). They had two sons, George (b. 1948) and Andrew (b. 1951) and by 1952 had moved into a new home in Mont Albert designed by Roy Burman Grounds (1905-1981). Neale had sought out Grounds because he considered him a "newly rising architect" (Neale, 2014, 10) and Neale was very interested in, and appreciative of, good design. He remained in the shoe making industry until 1974 when he sold his share, forgoing the long-term family association with a company that by the 1970s had become Niblick Cherub Footwear. The lead-up to Neale embarking on a new career in association with a new profession in Australia – landscape architecture – is significant; it came as a result of involvement in a local conservation battle over a piece of public open space in Melbourne.

In 1961 Neale had started sailing and racing dinghies on Albert Park Lake in South Melbourne. He described Albert Park as a ‘little kingdom’ (Neale, 2014, 2), inferring the web of politics, nepotism, and bureaucracy at local, state and even Federal Government levels. In 1961 public protests broke out over a proposed bowling alley to be built in Albert Park to be operated by a private company and in 1970 the Chairman of the Albert Park Committee of Management, Patrick Kennelly, reputedly proposed to build an 8 storey tower on an island within the lake as a ‘revenue-raiser’ (Neale, 2014, 3). These threats to Albert Park Lake as a public resource, and a good venue for sailing, were a catalyst for Neale and others in the sailing community to establish the Albert Park Protection League (APPL). Neale was pivotal and also took on public relations, liaising with the community and the media. In the process of organising a public meeting in October 1970 he sought speakers of note and consequently developed associations with two of the most influential academics and conservationists in Melbourne at that time, architect Robin Boyd (1919-1971) and Emeritus Professor of Botany at the University of Melbourne, John Turner (1908-1991). In discussions with Turner, Neale learnt of George Seddon’s writings, namely, Swan River Landscapes (1970) and became interested in different ways of conceiving urban parklands and new philosophies for considering the Australian landscape (Neale, 2014, 3-4).

The APPL were successful in their campaigns and Neale reflected on the early 1970s as a time when as well as managing the shoe business he spread his energies widely: native plant regeneration on a 20 acre property he had purchased in St Andrews north east of Melbourne; increased activities with the Albert Park Yacht Club in restoration work (a 1910 yacht the Acrospire); and, research and writing the Club’s centennial history. With these broad interests and activities as a backdrop Neale discovered landscape architecture through a newspaper article written by Anne Latreille in Melbourne’s The Age newspaper titled “Landscape Art earns a place” on 28 June 1974 (Neale, 2014, 7) and subsequently enrolled in the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT) Course in landscape design led by Ronald Rayment. Between 1974 and 1978 Neale continued studies and interest in landscape design while also pursuing writing and research in yachting history. At an informal gathering in 1977 that was associated with the Centre for Environmental Studies at the University of Melbourne it was suggested to Neale by Jeremy Pike, a landscape architect and
academic working under Professor George Seddon, that the AILA required a professional journal (Neale, 2014, 11). On 1 February 1978, Ralph Neale registered ‘Landscape Publications’ as the business name under which the AILA’s official journal, Landscape Australia, was to be published. This was a commitment which, as Turner argued, put landscape architects, and the Australian public at large, “greatly in his debt” (Turner, 1987). The first subscription received was from Mr Donald Sigsby, 16 October 1978 and the first edition released in January 1979. Within its first year of publication, the journal received the Pink Heath Innovative Award from the Victorian Garden State Committee and in 1980 the Robin Boyd Award for Environmental Design from the Victorian Chapter of the Australian Institute of Architects. Praise from other sources beyond Victoria would follow. In 1982 Shirley Stackhouse labelled it “the stylish and impressive quarterly publication” in the Sydney Morning Herald (see Stackhouse, 1982).

Ralph Neale’s business acumen no doubt formed a part of his driving force, as did his involvement in public activism and conservation. In 1979 he reflected on his own personal trajectory, stating: “it seemed to me that there were important things in life I hadn’t done. I regretted that I wasn’t doing something of more benefit to others” (in Powell, 1979, 17). In terms of his motivations, Neale explained that personal interests and skills fortuitously combined with a fledgling profession, enabling him to fulfil his main aim which he put simply as: “the growth of the profession” (Neale, 2014, 186). He wrote:

‘I formed the view that I was now carrying out a national work of benefit to the public in general...They [public sponsorship bodies] did not know how small was the amount of money spent on urban improvement at that time in Australia. Throughout the nation we depended on recreation areas that had been improved by our grandparents’ and great grandparents’ generations. There were only a handful of people qualified or experienced in landscape design, and they were hungry for work. The people who would change the face of our cities and towns were only now beginning their education in landscape architecture. A journal in landscape architecture then, and for many years to come was to defy the economics and could only come about through short cuts, dogged determination and belt tightening on the part of many madly enthusiastic people, apart from myself.’ (Neale, 2014, 17)

Many were employed at Landscape Publications, the longest serving being Ruth Sanderson as Assistant Editor (1982-91), Ruth Bonniface in Subscriptions (1986-2001), John Temple, Don Anderson, Elizabeth Jacka as Consultant Editors, with many other less long-serving participants along the way. Neale’s wife, Vivienne, was essential in proof reading throughout his writing career. These people helped bring Landscape Australia to press, but it was Neale who unswervingly piloted the ship. The following analysis establishes essential dimensions of his aims, demonstrating how the championing of a conservation ethic came from a potent mix of imagery and words in a journal marketed to the landscape profession and beyond.

**Conservation and the iconic potential of Australian landscapes**

The burgeoning conservation movement of the 1960s and 1970s in Australia saw new strategies for opposing inappropriate development. Libby Robin has detailed the way in which environmentalists at the time formed alliances across professional and disciplinary boundaries: scientists, amateur
naturalists, economists and bureaucrats (Robin, 1998). Hutton and Connors explored the diverging political strategies associated with the Australian Conservation Foundation (ACF) having initially been founded in 1965 by cautious or conservative-minded people who were “mostly Canberra-based scientists” (Hutton and Connors, 1999, 107). The joining of forces and combined efforts toward conservation battles and environmental consciousness involved a diverse array of societies, from local tree preservation groups such as the Field Naturalists Club of Victoria (FNCV) through to national organisations like the ACF. Talented amateurs often played commanding roles, with committed people like Herbert B Williamson featuring prominently in the twentieth century in Victoria (see Latreille, 1999, 21). Dyson found that egalitarianism helped make for a concerted effort in organisations such as the Society for Growing Australian Plants (Dyson, 2015, 368). Ralph Neale was one such talented amateur, and the journal he created and promoted with vigour was a significant attempt to galvanise a community at least partially for the purposes of conservation.

Neale developed a visual language that promoted a revering of trees and landscapes, particularly Australian ones. In addition to advocating the conservation of plants and their natural or semi-natural settings, he also championed cultural landscapes that had been consciously designed. In December 1977 when Neale began devising his publication, his first task was the preparation of a business emblem. He designed and made a scratch-board logo or colophon depicting an Australian flower (Neale, 2014, 11). Although Neale clearly had talents in watercolour and painting in general, his choice of scratch-board probably stemmed from his personal introduction to Professor John Turner over the Albert Park resistance. Turner was talented in the art of scratch-board and his art work featured throughout the centenary history of The Wallaby Club, a walking club linked with conservation and landscape appreciation of which both Turner and Neale were members from 1941 and 1985 respectively (see Landscape Publications, 1993), with Neale serving as President from 1998-99. Neale selected Banksia integrifolia because he felt it appropriate due to the species’ widespread providence across Australia and it remained the logo of the journal for as long as he was publisher (see Figure 2). He also noted that “younger people” would have dismissed it as “old-hat” but that in his belief it suggested permanence and tradition stating that: “To me, it said ‘We have been in business for some years....’” (Neale, 2014, 12). Neale’s representation of Australian flora as a logo communicated a sense of age and timelessness linked to the Australian environment. The co-related sense of authority that came from a publication that was well-established also furthed Neale’s aim of achieving a voice in politically hostile and professionally competitive contexts.
The visual appropriateness and symbolic impact of book covers, journal covers and the like is undoubtedly an art in its own right and an important consideration in marketing any publication. It could be argued that an additional layer of significance applies to cover designs for professional journals, because as well as appealing to the general public or interested amateur, the cover must speak to the identity of the profession concerned. Fookes (1994) in a research report titled, ‘Where on earth are we going? What will it be like when we get there? Architecture Australia 1960-1980’ undertook a survey and analysis of the front cover designs for the journal Architecture Australia between 1960 and 1980 in order to explore how the visual content of the covers represented alternative directions for the architecture profession. Likewise, the front cover graphic of Landscape Australia during Neale’s editorialship, which ceased at the end of 1999, was arguably linked to his own aspirations in terms of an identity for the profession in Australia in its first two decades of existence. In 1978 whilst planning for the first edition, Neale identified the fact that journals of this nature typically were confined to black and white printing, largely due to the expense of colour productions. He concluded it was “…very important to have an attractive cover photograph...The black surround of the cover was at the time unusual, but [he] thought it enhanced the colour of the photograph...” (Neale, 2014, 22). The first edition in January 1979 through to Landscape Publication’s last issue in 2002 (when Neale sold the journal to Universal Magazines) consisted of a colour image set in a black-border (see Figure 3).
In the first decade, approximately 70% of the cover images were attributed to Neale. Approximately 30% of the covers include commanding views of landscape scenery, 40% are of newly designed landscapes (often featured within that edition) and 30% featured tree specimens. It is interesting to note the choice of descriptive words and phrases found on the inside cover when captioning the cover image depicting trees: “magnificent” (Landscape Australia, 1979, 3; Landscape Australia, 1980, 3), “luxuriant” (Landscape Australia, 1979, 55; Landscape Australia, 1983, 3), “gloriously vibrant” (Landscape Australia, 1981, 279), and “memorable Australian experiences” (Landscape Australia, 1983, 251). Mature trees were icons linking past and present and were representative of Australia’s heritage. Referring to the cover image of the first edition (see Figure 3) Neale wrote: “Not surprisingly I chose the Royal Botanic Gardens in Melbourne where I found the perfect tree, an old paperbark, Melaleuca linariifolia.” (Neale, 2014, 22). Issue One of 1982 depicted Eucalyptus camaldulensis or River Red Gum and the associated caption by Neale communicates the iconic significance of trees in representing the profession:

‘1982 is the YEAR OF THE TREE in Australia. For ‘Landscape Australia’ and probably all its readers, every year is the year of the tree. Our cover shows that not all farms in Australia are without trees, and in fact we know that many farmers are conservationists in the real sense.’ (see Landscape Australia, 1982, 3)

Cultural landscapes figure strongly in Neale’s choice of cover images. In 1988, Australia’s bicentenary, each of the four edition’s covers contained a painting that Neale had completed specifically to commemorate “contributors to Australian life and landscape ‘improvement’” (Neale,
2014, 85). He also noted the irony in such intent given that some might argue that colonisation had undoubtedly caused unfathomable degradation to the Australian landscape.


Regardless, Neale persisted with his endeavour and noted the “best intentions” and “influence” of these contributors (Neale, 2014, 85-86). He carefully researched the history of his subjects and on the basis of historic narratives he managed to glean, he imagined and created the depictions. Through the year of 1988 he published his paintings in the following order (see Figure 4); Thomas Shepherd (1779-1835), colonial nurseryman in NSW from 1826 and early advocate for the value of Australian indigenous flora; the German-born Dr Ferdinand von Mueller (1825-96), Director of the Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne between 1857 and 1873; Walter Burley Griffin (1876-1937) alongside Charles Weston (1866-1935) with Walter’s wife, Marion Mahony Griffin (1871-1961) in the background set within the Yarralumla Nursery in Canberra in 1916; and finally, Albert Morris (1886-1939), one of the key instigators behind the landscape revegetation of the mining township of Broken Hill, New South Wales. All these narratives he depicted consist of actors and scenes that underpin hallmark achievements in the designed landscape in Australia.
A conservation agenda for the Australian Institute of Landscape Architects?

Ralph Neale’s agenda to engage the profession of landscape architecture in the process of improving the quality of Australia’s landscapes was fittingly reflected in the cover motto of the journal: ‘Helping you to make Australia a better place to live’. This motto first emerged in the last edition for 1986 and continued through to the second edition of 2001, with only minor changes to its wording along the way. In 1978 when travelling abroad as preparation for the inauguration of the journal, Neale met many notable landscape architects (Garrett Eckbo and Julius Fabos for example) and publishers including Grady Clay, Managing Editor of Landscape Architecture journal in the USA (Neale, 2014, 14). Clay later praised Neale’s journal in providing “clear insight into both the problems and unique aspects of the emerging Australian landscape” (Clay, 1982). In reading Neale’s account of the people he met and places he visited in America (Louisville, Boston, Seattle, Oakland and San Francisco to name a few), it is clear that as well as formulating ideas for publishing on landscape architecture, his travel experiences led to a ‘reformulating’ of his ties to the Australian (urban) landscape. Having been involved in the protection of Albert Park he had no doubt become more acutely aware of the state of open space and public parks in Australian cities by comparison. Whilst travelling in the USA, Neale wrote to his wife: “It is so different to Europe. When I think about our cities, they don’t seem to (sic) bad after all…Generally the feeling I have so far [of USA cities], is one of dismay.” (Neale, 1978). He commented on vandalism in public space and reflected that the only landscapes of any quality were to be found at forecourts or spaces around flats where a guard was paid to patrol the space.

These experiences were a reaffirmation of the need to herald valuable landscape design principles from the past whilst also identifying environmental degradation and the need for conservation into the future. He employed impassioned and emotive references to trees and landscapes, and the threats they faced. In 1979 his short article “Australia, 2000 A.D.?” (Neale, 1979, 131, see Figure 5) called for action to protect the remaining stands of Australian trees if society was to avert the “turning [of] the landscape into a gum tree graveyard”. (131). Emotive and metaphorical language in reference to nature can be explored via literature concerning wilderness experience. Knopf (1987)
proposed four broad themes that he identified within literature concerning the values of natural environments and these included: nature as restorer, nature as competence builder, nature as diversion and nature as symbol (see Knopf, 1987, 783-825). Knopf discussed how various writers have found nature to symbolically represent life, continuity, enduringness, forces greater than or resistant to human action and even mystery and spirituality (Knopf, 1987). Such dimensions resonate with the manner in which Neale incorporated symbolism within Landscape Australia and the genre of nature pilgrimage.

For example, Neale was an admirer of the work and advocacy of the forester Richard St Barbe Baker (1890-1982), otherwise known as The Man of the Trees, who was prominent in advocating the protection of forests and starting up branches of The Men Of The Trees groups around the world (see Figure 6). St Barbe Baker had appeared on an Australian Broadcasting Commission ‘Science Show’ in early 1979 and a transcript of an interview between the Show’s presenter, Robyn Williams and St. Barbe Baker was published in Landscape Australia (Williams and St. Barbe Baker, 1980, 47, 49, 51, 53 & 55). In another film found elsewhere, footage of St. Barbe Baker shows him addressing a tree specimen. Looking up into the tree’s canopy, he states: “Stand firm. Grip hard. Thrust upwards to the skies. Bend to the winds of heaven.” (St. Barbe Baker, date unknown, film transcript). Trees were icons of life, longevity, and romanticism for the past and lost landscapes. In a related example, E F Schumacher, an economist and also a member of The Men Of The Trees, narrated a 1977 film on forest destruction in Western Australia due to timber harvesting and said:

‘Well, what do we see here? The scene, of devastation. This is no longer a forest, this used to be a forest. It used to be like a temple. And now it, looks like a battlefield. Abandoned machinery. Everything abandoned. How can this happen?’ (Schumacher, c.1977, film transcript).

Such references to religious edifices, heaven (and earth), temples, graveyards, etc, by activists and writers alike can be found in Landscape Australia. Supporters within the profession of landscape architecture included practitioners such as Alistair Knox and Bruce Mackenzie (see examples in Saniga, 2012, 188-197) but the extent to which the broader professional community in the AILA were prepared to join the ranks is less clear. Certainly, many of the articles in Landscape Australia that were pro-conservation were written by people who were not landscape architects and Neale was acutely aware of antagonism and scepticism regarding conservation. After St Barbe Baker had spoken in 1981 to a packed crowd in Wilson Hall (University of Melbourne), reputedly of over 1500 people, Neale reflected that “many scientists, politicians and industrialists regard him as an old man with extreme ideas” (Neale, 1981, 284). Neale felt that the profession of landscape architecture in Australia was not conservation-minded and said:

‘The other thing of course is that the Institute has never been prominent in things like, “Save Albert Park”, for example, or, you know, nor did the architects of course. No one came out and said, you know, “this Institute, frowns very much on this proposal, to put a car track in the middle of Melbourne”. Ahhh. [Saniga: Why do you think that is?] Well, they’re afraid they’ll upset someone! That’s been a disappointment I think.’ (Neale, 2000)
Regardless, Neale continued to ensure issues regarding conservation of both urban and non-urban environments were published. For example, in 1979 he published a photograph taken by wilderness enthusiast, Antonius Moscal, of the ‘Thunderush’ at the Franklin River in Tasmania’s wilderness (see Volume 1, Number 4, 1979). In quoting Moscal’s appreciation for the value of wilderness as an escape from “the sterile jungle of our concrete edifices” (Moscal quoted in cover caption by Landscape Australia [R Neale], 1979, 179), Neale wrote: “He [Moscal] as well as many other Australians, is appalled at the proposal to dam the river for hydro-electric power.” (Moscal quoted in cover caption by Landscape Australia [R Neale], 1979, 179). He also strove for a balanced perspective, giving those who were on the development side of the ledger the opportunity to write articles or respond to criticism regarding controversial landscape projects. For example, landscape architect Mike Tooby in Western Australia had completed landscape consultancies for Alcoa involving impacts to existing Jarrah forests and having received criticism from other members of the local profession who were against industrial use of natural resources, he responded that such critics “engender a sense of hopelessness among those who might otherwise strive for a solution’ (Tooby, 1980, 262). The key issue was that many landscape architects of the time were completing consultancies that were contentious developments like mining or freeways, as opposed to taking an activist position. They claimed that there was a need to ensure a satisfactory outcome to works that were deemed to be inevitable in a progressive Australia.
Conclusion

This paper has provided a brief introduction to the life and work of Ralph Neale with particular emphasis placed on the quality of his visual and literary work via the journal Landscape Australia. In terms of the richness of Neale’s contribution to Australian society and landscape, the content of this paper only scratches the surface. His life was marked by extraordinary achievements and the way in which his contribution could be discussed in terms of the emergence of the profession of landscape architecture in Australia is extremely varied and far beyond the scope of this paper. He advanced landscape architecture in complex ways, on the one hand firmly advocating the AILA and delivering the Institute its professional journal, but on the other, maintaining a degree of autonomy that would enable him to be outspoken about conservation and environmental issues, as well as maintaining a degree of tactfulness in promoting the profession. By his own admission his business success and survival required him to ‘stand alone’, acknowledging of course the important contribution of his staff and, importantly, his wife, Vivienne. A significant part of his independence was the ability for him to find an outlet for his creative expression, through photography, painting and words. With great effort but with corresponding personal fulfilment, Neale did advance landscape architecture in Australia and the many benefits of his journal persist to the current day.

Acknowledgement

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Tūrangawaewae, time and meaning
Two urban Māori icons

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What imbues a place with meaning, making it ‘iconic’? Can labels such as ‘icon’ fit alongside Māori concepts of place, and if so how?

This paper considers these ideas through the lens of two Māori buildings in downtown Wellington: the architecturally designed Te Raukura, which opened in 2011 and is used as café, function centre and tourism base, and the remains of a whare (Māori house) from Te Aro pā, a site inhabited until the 1880s then rediscovered during excavations in 2005 and now visible to the public. While neither was intended as an icon, both have deep and historic significance for Wellington city’s iwi (tribe). These values and meanings are not necessarily visible to other Wellington residents or to the tourists who visit both places, but visitors may also take meanings from, and attribute value to, the buildings and their surroundings.

Drawing on the researchers’ ‘insider’ position as members of Wellington iwi, the research explores the layers of meaning that Te Raukura and the Te Aro whare are acquiring for members of the iwi, and others involved with the building and excavation, identifying three key themes: layers, visibility and footprints. The paper also considers the public expression of some manuhiri (visitor) narratives. We conclude that for iwi, both buildings represent tūrangawaewae (a place to stand). They have the potential to become in some sense ‘icons’, over time. The extent to which such meanings can develop alongside non-Māori ones is still to be tested.

Keywords:
Introduction

... Gustav Eiffel, or Jørn Utzon, did not say “I'm going to design an icon.” No, they designed a building or structure which was so unusual that it earned the right to be an icon. (Honey, 2015)

What imbues a place with meaning, making it ‘iconic’? Who gives places their meanings? How can labels such as ‘icon’ fit alongside indigenous Māori concepts of place such as tūrangawaewae (a place to stand)?

We consider these questions through the lens of two apparently very different but closely related Māori buildings in downtown Wellington, New Zealand’s capital city: the architecturally designed Te Raukura, which opened in 2011 as an organisational base, café, function centre and tourism base as well as housing valued waka (canoes); and the remains of a whare (Māori house) from Te Aro pā, a Māori settlement inhabited until the 1880s, rediscovered during excavations in 2005 and now open to the public. While neither building was intended as an icon, we propose that both have significance for Wellington city’s iwi (tribes), and may be in the process of ‘earning’ iconic status.

The impetus for this paper came from, and draws on, the daily lived experience of the authors, both ‘insiders’ as members of Wellington’s iwi manawhenua (tribes with authority/responsibility for ancestral lands or places). Mellish had a leading role in ensuring that the Te Aro site was preserved and made open to the public, as well as a major role in the development of Te Raukura – in which she now works. She was also very involved in design and funding efforts to build Te Raukura and Te Aro pā, and sees them as important for the iwi and the capital city as the physical expression of Māori culture in Wellington. Stuart edited a book that included a chapter on Te Raukura written before it opened (Love, 2010), which has led her to continue research into cities, the spirit of place (mauri) and how that shapes Māori urban wellbeing and aspirations for development. She noted that even watching the building go up was laden with meaning, and wrote at the time that it was a statement ‘that iwi and hapū are part of the city’ (Stuart, 2010, p.101).

The research found that the two sites have also acquired stories and layers of meaning for iwi members and for others involved with the building and excavation. We argue that while these meanings are based in the past, they are fully contemporary and will continue to develop over time. Pākehā (European New Zealanders) and manuhiri (visitors/tourists) are also developing their own stories about the buildings and their surroundings, and expressing them in forms such as blogs and tourist comment sites.

We start by introducing Māori concepts of place, particularly as applied to buildings and places where people live. We outline the story of Wellington’s harbour, Te Whanganui-a-Tara, setting the context for a brief history of Te Aro pā and its ‘unearthing’, and the building of Te Raukura. We then discuss some of the stories and meanings that have emerged from research, highlighting three key themes and finally linking them to the concept of tūrangawaewae.

Māori values of place and the ‘whare’

Māori as an indigenous people have a deep sense of place, and connections to place, both material and spiritual. Whenua (land), is also the term for the placenta, a constant reminder of our descent
from the Earth Mother (Barlow, 1991). Land, the natural world, and created objects such as buildings have their own mauri, a spiritual force described as ‘the bonding element that holds the fabric of the universe together’ (Royal, 2003, p.174), and which can be embodied in a community or place (Barlow, 1991). New Māori meeting houses or public buildings include a mauri stone in their foundations, literally embedding mauri into the building. Similarly, traditional rituals precede the opening of Māori public buildings, and of many ordinary whānau (family) homes (Barlow, 1991).

Because of this, Māori tribal buildings are more than material objects. What constitutes a ‘Māori building’ is still a matter of debate, but Brown (2005) identifies two characteristics: taking local tikanga (practices and custom) into account; and the guiding role of kaumatua (elders). In her view, when these are taken into consideration ‘A unique set of design principles results ...’ (2005, p.104). Brown quotes Māori architect Rewi Thompson as saying that without kawa (protocols) ‘the building would have no meaning’ (Brown, 2005, p.108).

Another attribute of place is tūrangawaewae, a term used to describe ‘places where Māori feel connected and empowered. It can be translated, literally, as tūranga (standing place) and waewae (feet)’ (Buchanan, 2011). It is used particularly to describe ancestral land, and many Māori aspire to live on, or return to, our tūrangawaewae (Mead, 2003). For the tribes of Te Whanga-nui-a-Tara (Wellington harbour), retaining any place to stand has been a singular challenge.

**Tara’s great harbour and Te Aro pā**

Te Whanga-nui-a-Tara can be translated as ‘Tara’s great harbour’ – linking the place to ancestral tradition, in this case the chief Tara and his people who settled the harbour around the 14th century (Love, 2012c). Over the centuries, a number of iwi settled the area, retaining stories of the harbour’s origins (Waitangi Tribunal, 2003).

British settlers arrived in the north of the North Island from the early 1800s, disrupting Māori society (Ballara, 1990). The area that is now Wellington city became literally unsettled, as tribal groups came and went. By the 1830s, people from a group of allied tribes including Ngāti Mutunga, Te Atiawa, Taranaki, Ngāti Ruanui and Ngāti Tama, had come south in a series of migrations from Taranaki province and settled around the harbour (Ballara, 1990; Waitangi Tribunal, 2003).

Te Aro (a ‘pā’ is a settlement with fortifications) was constructed around 1824 by the Ngāti Mutunga tribe, then handed over to other iwi in 1835. Te Aro was unusual in that its residents were from several different (although connected) iwi. By 1842, its population was recorded by colonial authorities as 128 (Love, 2012b) although as residents moved around to harvest seasonal resources the population may have been higher. The pā covered around five acres (Love, 2012b), from the then shoreline including where Te Raukura now sits, inland through what is now lower Taranaki Street. A ‘pā’ is often thought of by non-Māori as the area within the stockades, but just as a farm is more than its farmhouse, Te Aro pā’s cultivations covered 60 to 80 acres by the 1840s, including gardens, forests, and the Waitangi swamp which provided resources including harakeke (flax), an important trade item for the pā. A public open space, Waitangi Park, now occupies some of the old swampland. The boundaries of the pā would have included the shoreline and sea as sources of kaimoana (seafood). (Love, 2012a) Buildings within the pā were mostly one-story structures of wood and bundled reeds.
The residents of Te Aro pā were still establishing their boundaries when the New Zealand Company, a private colonisation enterprise, arrived in Wellington in 1839. The company signed a ‘deed of sale’ with chiefs of the Wellington harbour area, but the chiefs and people of Te Aro did not sign and continued to assert that the pā was their property (Waitangi Tribunal, 2003). Conflicts followed as surveyors started marking out sections on pā land, including iwi members removing survey pegs, and later armed confrontations (Buchanan, 2011b; Waitangi Tribunal, 2003).

From the late 1840s the history of Te Aro pā is one of successive loss: first, of gardens and resources (Waitangi Tribunal, 2003); then in the 1860s of community, as colonial Native Land Courts ‘individualised’ Māori land title, to break down collective ownership. Te Aro pā was surveyed into 28 allotments, which the Crown granted to particular individuals and small groups.
The photograph in Figure 2 shows the pā and the Waitangi swamp; but also shows settler houses where the gardens had been. Continued expropriation was followed by population loss, as many of the pā’s residents returned to Taranaki or moved around the harbour (Waitangi Tribunal, 2003). The population of the pā went from 186 in 1850 to only 28 in 1881 (Love, 2012b), and continued pressure meant that the last Māori landowner was recorded in 1902 (Love, 2012b). Iwi were not only moved out of Te Aro, but of all the other settlements around Wellington city, resulting in the 2013 Census data finding that in Wellington city, Māori are only about 7% of the city’s population, and iwi manawhenua make up only about 7% of Wellington Māori (Ryks, Waa and Pearson, 2014). Māori are 14.9% of New Zealand’s population (Statistic New Zealand, 2013) so this relative invisibility is noteworthy. Blair (2002, p. 63) describes such losses on iwi as “… a loss not only of lands, but also a loss of an effective kinship system, a system that provided the basis for their identity and hence, sense of place.”

Both earthquakes and harbour reclamation meant that the original shoreline was no longer visible, and by the mid 20th century, only the name ‘Taranaki Street’ was a reminder of the former inhabitants.

**Te Toenga o Te Aro – unearthing the whare**

In November 2005, in the process of excavating foundations of a new apartment building, some of the remains of Te Aro pā were uncovered beneath lower Taranaki Street. One of the archaeologists described to us the moment when, with half a metre of gravel removed, they saw a posthole and an intact whare site started to become visible.

While and archaeological team worked on the site, the New Zealand Historic Places Trust, the developer, the Wellington City Council and the Wellington Tenths Trust (a Māori land trust then acting as the iwi manawhenua for the city) came to an agreement in which, in exchange for additional stories being added to the building, the ground floor and the whare were preserved as a ‘heritage site’ (Heritage New Zealand, 2008). On October 11, 2008, elders led a dawn ceremony to open Te Toenga o te Aro, the remnants of Te Aro (Buchanan, 2011a).
Te Raukura: Keeping the waka warm

We are really trying to turn back the clock on history. Of course you can’t do that in the sense of what’s traditional, but you can in a way that’s modern (Love, 2010).

As the story of Te Aro pā shows, from around 1880 until the 21st century Wellington iwi had no place on the waterfront, or indeed in the central city, to call ‘our own’. The location of Te Raukura on reclaimed land, close to the shoreline of Te Aro pā and by the city’s popular waterfront walk, has both practical and symbolic value.

The original Wellington City Council proposal for a building to house the carved waka (canoe) was for an aluminium Skyline garage. While the council saw the need as simply storage, the iwi followed the late tribal leader Sir Ralph Love’s statement that the building must be capable of housing more than one waka, and that more was needed to ‘keep the waka warm’, (Love, 2010). It took nearly a decade of negotiation before the building we see now could be built (Love, 2010).

Te Raukura deliberately departs from the 20th century carved meeting house. Designed by distinguished New Zealand architect Stuart Gardyne (Harvey, 2015), it is a purposeful contemporary design (Harvey, 2015) that contrasts with its surrounding buildings: late 19th century wooden settler architecture, and 20th century concrete commercial buildings. While the architect is non-Māori, the design was developed with elders and tribal leaders (Love, 2010).

The shape of the house is based on a traditional whare design which uses the human body as the template, so that the roofline is the spine which carries the weight of the building, covered by a folded korowai or cloak, the roof of the building (Figure 4). The design also shows triangles reflecting the sails of waka hourua, sailing vessels used by the Polynesians when voyaging to Aotearoa.
As Brown points out (2005, p.106), modern multipurpose buildings have “virtually no precedent in Māori architectural history.” Te Raukura is three buildings in one; a whare tapere, holding traditional rituals such as pōwhiri (welcomes), gatherings and entertainment; a whare kai (here a cafe and catering service); and the wharewaka - which remains the name often used for the building as a whole - housing several carved waka. Te Raukura’s name comes from the feathers of the albatross worn by Te Atiawa and Taranaki Whānui people, the symbol of Taranaki leaders Te Whiti and Tohu (Buchanan, 2011).

The stories of Te Raukura and Toenga o te Aro

In Stuart’s interviews with members of Wellington iwi on the history and future of Māori participation in Wellington’s urban development, several interviewees offered both Te Raukura and Te Toenga o Te Aro as examples of how future development must be grounded in the Māori history of Wellington, often in ways that evidenced emotional connection or disconnection. It was decided to explore further the extent to which either or both places were developing meanings and values for people of the iwi manawhenua, and if so how those meanings were conceptualised or expressed.

In the process of searching the ‘gray literature’ we found that non-Māori (Wellington residents, tourists, and researchers) were writing, photographing and expressing online their own narratives. We looked at some of these stories, both because they show contrasts and similarities with iwi views, and because Te Raukura and Te Toenga o Te Aro were deliberately designed as places with a public face.

Grounded theory methods (Charmaz, 2006) were used to identify and organise themes from eight interviews carried out by Stuart. The interviewees were selected using ‘snowball sampling’ to gather a range of data, so included people with strong lifelong connections to iwi; others at an early stage of reconnecting, or people who knew they were affiliated to the iwi but had less knowledge and connection. The interviewees were kept anonymous, in accordance with the research’s ethics approval. The analysis was also informed by other data sources including literature (see ‘Conclusions’), and discussions at hui and conferences with iwi members, Māori landscape designers, architects and heritage experts illuminated and contextualised emerging themes.

We discuss iwi stories and understandings, then outline some themes emerging from non-Māori expressions, finally reviewing our conclusions.

Iwi stories and meanings

Iwi members’ comments were characterised by the personal and emotional – feelings of connection, disconnection or isolation, pride, and sometimes a degree of shame connected to disconnection or lack of knowledge about their tribal history resulting from the effects of Wellington’s colonisation. In doing so, all interviewees either explicitly or implicitly saw the past as real and important in the present. It must be noted that not all interviewees had considered the past and present links between Te Raukura and the Te Aro site, and asking about their views of both places may have prompted interviewees to make that connection.
The three underpinning themes that emerged from interviews and discussions were unearthing the layers, becoming visible, and growing the footprint. Almost all interviewees talked about layers – physical and narrative; visibility of place and people; and the idea of a Māori footprint or a place to start from in the contemporary city.

Uncovering or unearthing was a common and powerful theme, both literal when applied to Te Toenga, and metaphorically as ‘layers of stories’. Interviewees talked of how little they knew about their own history, as well as how little the city values its Māori history, with official brochures starting the city’s history in 1839.

Te Aro pā was seen as having many stories, of which interviewees might have only little awareness at present but to which they attached value. Themes within this included loss: “Te Aro pā shows the marginalisation of a people”; and resistance: a theme which referred to iwi pulling out survey markers in 1840. This non-violent action was seen as previewing the peaceful resistance of Taranaki people against land seizure in the 1880s, which is a significant element of pride for Taranaki descendants today (Buchanan, 2009).

Interviewees did not see Te Toenga o Te Aro as ‘heritage’, but more as a taonga or treasure, with one saying “‘Heritage’ is something that’s kept away from people.” The personal relevance become very clear in one interview, with interviewer and interviewee talking of a common and well-known tupuna (ancestor) who lived at Te Aro pā for several years, and the interviewee commenting that “The pā is nice to have as a proof of our existence.”

This quote shows that Becoming visible had some of the same attributes as Unearthing the layers, but was expressed through such ideas as ‘real’, ‘concrete’, ‘public’ and ‘everyday’. To everyone interviewed, Te Raukura was a place where their people were becoming visible in a positive way – a contrast with the negative ways in which Māori are so often portrayed in media and statistics. Visibility was contrasted with the previous invisibility of the iwi, with loss and marginalisation. One author (Stuart) noted in 2014 that:

> Living in Wellington is a daily experience of having powerlessness made visible – through the daily invisibility of Māori; therefore the value of a building [Te Raukura] – [it] pins us to our place.

Normalisation was associated with identification and pride, especially in the context of the small number of Māori living in Wellington and the even smaller number of iwi manawhenua.

> Personally – I like that there is a visible place ... that I walk past every day ... that has our iwi’s name on it ... that is distinctive.

The visibility of Te Raukura’s design was highlighted by some, in such words as “When you see it, you say ‘It’s so cool!’” Other people interviewed focused more on its uses – most had been there for meetings, conferences, meals or iwi events such as the launching of a waka. This day-to-day interaction, which might seem trivial to others, was far from that to interviewees.

Te Toenga o Te Aro was seen as less ‘visible’ in Wellington’s day-to-day living. Not only is the site small, but it is inside the ground floor of a building on a street that pedestrians generally walk through to get to the city or waterfront. As discussed under the following theme, several
interviewees wanted to see the site made more visible – the ‘becoming’. But it was valued as showing the lived reality of Taranaki whānui’s place here and the reality of its peoples’ lives.

**Extending the footprint**

The themes of ‘reclaiming a footprint’ or ‘extending the footprint’ were common, and referred to both Te Raukura and Te Toenga. Reclaiming a cultural footprint was an explicit aim of building Te Raukura (Love, 2010), and we were interested to know how much that had been achieved. Interviewees recognised its value as “a point of opportunity – creating a foundation”, but narratives were more focused on extending the footprint, feeling strongly that more could be done to build on what is there now. Suggestions included Te Raukura being a base for electronic or other resources to help iwi members connect with their heritage and ancestry.

Several interviewees wanted to see more done (eg by the city council) to tell the stories of Te Toenga o te Aro to Wellingtonians, to counteract the lack of Māori narratives in how the city presents itself. One interviewee, considering for the first time the linkage of Te Raukura and Te Toenga, started envisioning how the two sites could be visually linked through art, and how the boundaries of the pā could be represented in Wellington streets:

> What would you [visitors] like to know about it ... when you get a sense of the physical patterns of a plan. When you’re standing in a site, to know how it connects ...

This narrative of a new kind of cultural footprint was reflected by others:

> It’s a conduit to our cultural future. It provides a financial base, but it’s also a showpiece at an international level of us not running round in grass skirts.

**Tauiwi (non-Māori) narratives**

In tauiwi perspectives, Te Raukura and Te Toenga o te Aro were depicted as quite different in role and function. The first story of Te Raukura, almost as soon as the building was completed, was of ‘the wharewaka’ as an architectural object, claiming a strong visual place for itself in a highly used public space. It won a 2012 national ‘Commercial Architecture’ award, with the chief judge describing it as “Prickly and armour-plated” (Tyler, 2012). Its distinctive design, as well as its location, has meant that photo-sharing websites such as Flickr include hundreds of images of Te Raukura. However, few of these expressions locate the building in the city’s history.

Both location and design have made the building, particularly the café, a well-used space. Typical of comments on Trip Advisor and other tourist discussion sites is “a tranquil respite on the edge of the city” (STQRY, undated). An underlying theme is relaxation, comfort, and a connection with the water (a sheltered lagoon), as shown in Figure 4. Alongside this, a common narrative is Te Raukura as a base for ‘authentic’ Māori experiences, with the Trust that manages it running waka (canoe) tours and Māori walking tours which include Te Toenga o Te Aro. This almost daily visibility of waka on the harbour so close to the CBD, and the increasing number of images, illustrates in another way the iwi story of ‘normalising Māori in the city’.
While these stories all locate Te Raukura in the contemporary city looking to the future, by contrast the visible remains of Te Aro pā appear to be seen as a view into the past, a site of heritage. So far there has been relatively little expressed about the pā in tourists’ visual or publicly written narratives. The heritage narrative also identifies some divergent views; for instance, at the time the agreement to preserve the site was made, an anonymous commentator on the ‘WellUrban’ blog said:

So that the public will be able to see some rotted stumps of ponga, outlining the position of whare used at some stage pre 1880. There will no doubt be a glass panel in the floor and wow, you can look down and see mud and some ponga in a vague square. Well excuse me, but that’s just not that interesting. (WellUrban, 2007).

By contrast, a heritage expert interviewed for this research commented that:

History is not just buildings. It makes people aware that history is also about what’s in the ground ... not immediately visible. We should be considering it as important also.

Australian cultural heritage historian Tracy Ireland (2012, 2015), has described Te Toenga as an example of conservation in situ, a site that aims to make visitors feel ‘connected to the past’. Te Toenga also featured in in Sir Tony Robinson’s 2014 series of the TV programme Time Walks.

Conclusion: tūrangawaewae, time and meaning

Durie (2010) argues that there is a Pacific approach to valuing heritage, characterised by fusion of the tangible and intangible; continuity in time; and ecological harmony. Objects and places have mauri, so no creation exists separately from the external world, and indigenous heritage has “a temporal dimension that moves simultaneously in both directions” (2010, p.245). ‘Authenticity’, Durie says, comes not from distance but from a continuing relationship with the present, and indigenous people are not distant bystanders but active participants in shaping a ‘heritage’ place for the future. These themes resounded with our interview data: while Māori interviewees rarely used such terms as ‘mauri’, their narratives in some way reflect Durie’s idea of tangible and intangible fusion, and Te Toenga o te Aro and Te Raukura were both seen as having a place in the past – even if one not yet fully understood by many iwi members – and in the future.

The narratives of iwi interviewed - unearthing the layers, becoming visible and extending the footprint – all speak of the value of tūrangawaewae. Mead (2003:272) asserts that “The global society notwithstanding and despite the stunning technology of the modern world, land will always be an important part of how we define ourselves as people.” It may be argued that a people whose tūrangawaewae was so long invisible may give it a particular value, and we believe that these narratives tell a distinctive story of Wellington iwi.

One of the challenges for the future will be how these narratives and values can be kept and enhanced, as well as negotiated with the values that other Wellington residents and visitors give to place. As Love (2010, p.98) noted while Te Raukura was in construction:

“That’s [the Wellington waterfront] a space that mainstream people of Wellington feel very strongly about, it’s ‘their’ space - so is there a sense that they are going to get
something out of the building? And we’re not just looking at a Wellington audience, but at potentially tourists, particularly from overseas.”

The indications from this research are that ‘mainstream people’ are increasingly getting something from both buildings. They are creating visual and linguistic narratives for international audiences, and have meanings for New Zealanders such as the heritage expert interviewed who described Te Toenga o Te Aro as “visible indigenous knowledge.”

To the external view, Te Aro could be seen as an icon of the past, a touchstone; while Te Raukura could be seen as an icon of the future. We suggest that while, as architect and urbanist Tommy Honey commented “We can’t set out to design icons, it doesn’t work” (Honey, 2015), the meanings that Te Raukura and the Te Aro site have already accumulated indicate they have the potential to become icons over time. Te Aro in particular still has aspects and stories which are yet to be ‘uncovered’ - not only if new parts of the pā are unearthed in the future, but as more of its stories are made ‘real’ to the descendants of its builders and inhabitants. Both places are telling a story that has only begun.

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No Maccas in the Hills!
Locating the planning history of fast food chains

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The rise of the ‘fast food’ concept as it is understood in the 21st century is the result of a series of calibrations enacted over decades by business, society and technology. The expansion of fast food franchising has paralleled social and environmental change, particularly since the middle of the 20th century. Its origins may be seen as modernism’s response to unease with the processing of food under industrial conditions; yet its development as a ‘system’ has mirrored or inspired innovation in service delivery, construction and social expectation over the last century. Many of these are connected to the rise of the automobile and the expansion of low-density suburbia.

Fast food’s planning history has gone largely undocumented. The fast food outlet is so ubiquitous that while critics might decry its products as a negative influence on health, the outlet might nonetheless be said to be hiding in plain sight: in the guise of just one more manifestation of automobile-led change. This paper explores the community effects of fast food chains as a wider built environment phenomena, first in the early 20th century US and then as translated into Australia in from the late 1960s onwards. It considers - in what regard has urban planning evolved to accommodate fast food restaurants; and how have such places impacted on urban form? How have communities responded (including the case of conflict in Tecoma, Victoria) to the local emergence of global fast food outlets, and what can community responses tell us about the history and future of fast food chains?

Keywords:
Introduction

The rise of the ‘fast food’ concept has paralleled – and to a certain extent, initiated – social and environmental change since the middle of the 20th century. Its origins lie with societal unease regarding industrial food (particularly meat) processing; yet its ‘system’ styled development has inspired innovation over the last century. The Ford production line, the Levitt system of house building, and even megabusinesses like Amazon owe a debt to ‘fast food’ styled efficiencies.

Fast food’s planning history is largely undocumented. There is a recent literature around the health impacts of fast food products and social issues of global branding. Nonetheless, so ubiquitous are fast food outlets like the Golden Arches that while critics decry negative health effects, the outlets themselves hide in plain sight, as neutral as traffic lights or petrol stations. This paper explores the community effects of fast food chains as a wider built environment phenomena. It considers the rise of such systems in the United States, then their Australian operation. It then gives examples of community reaction to specific outlets, focusing on a recent conflict in Tecoma, Victoria. It draws on secondary sources – including food histories – to highlight build environment factors in fast food history. For Australian material archived news articles and planning system documentation are used.

The rise of Fast Food Systems: The Jungle to the White Castle

Prepared food outlets are a feature of all urban retail phenomena and a core element of urban and suburban centres. The rise of fast food is aligned – perhaps counterintuitively, considering its notoriously problematic status – with vendor promises of hygiene and conformity.

Frederick Henry Harvey began ‘the first chain of eating houses that could assure customers of quality and service at every unit’ (Hogan, 1997, 11) on the Santa Fe railroad in 1873. The chain was iconic even in the 1940s, the subject of a popular novel and film set fifty years previously. Outlets were still appreciated by hungry travellers in 1951 (Curkeet, 1951), as the company adapted its formula to highway roadhouses.

A second strand to a developing fast food ethos in the USA was the diner. At the turn of the last century, Hogan (1997) tells us, lunch carts at factory gates (15) became permanent outlets when their ‘wheels were taken off’. The creation of recognised fast foods such as hot dogs joined with national drinks – Coca Cola, for instance, a recognised cultural icon from 1886.

Walt Anderson created the White Castle chain a century ago (Hogan 26-7). Anderson’s chain was based on a series of white-washed structures with crenellated walls and turrets, modelled on the Chicago Water Tower - in popular legend the only building to survive Chicago’s great fire. Whilst not franchised – all outlets remain directly owned by the company - White Castle initiated several practices adopted by Ray Kroc at McDonald’s. White Castle appears pioneered its ‘system’ and emphasised cleanliness and consistency through recognisable branding. Cleanliness was promoted through pointedly pristine, white décor and by the visibility of the kitchen from the dining room. A brochure from 1932 assured visitors that:

When you sit at a White Castle, remember that you are one of several thousands; you are sitting on the same kind of stool; you are being served on the same kind of counter; the coffee you drink is made in accordance with a certain formula; the hamburger you
eat is prepared in exactly the same way over a gas flame of the same intensity... (Quoted in Steele 2008, 234)

White Castle’s presentation was not out of context. In Hungry City Carolyn Steel suggests that the promise of clean and safe food was a conscious response to widespread anxiety over mass-produced food, particularly industrially produced meat, during the early 20th century (pp 233-236). Upton Sinclair’s 1906 novel The Jungle was instrumental in this regard. Sinclair’s book was understood as a thinly veiled depiction of Chicago’s meat industry. It planted, in visceral detail, suspicions about cleanliness and quality of low priced meat products technology made possible.

Cronen (1991) describes Chicago’s vast slaughterhouses functioning at this time as a (confronting) tourist attraction. The previously unheard-of scale and efficiency of the process were a source of pride for some, making it “an icon of nineteenth-century progress”. Pride in efficiency nonetheless toed a fine line with discomfort. Rudyard Kipling, for example, was “appalled” by the experience and described with horror the indifference of a young woman visiting the slaughterhouse. Sinclair remarked of the killing floor that:

One could not stand and watch very long without becoming philosophical, without beginning to deal in symbols and similes, and to hear the hog-squeal of the universe (Sinclair 208)

Sinclair’s presented the Chicago meatpacking trade as symbolic of the moral corruption and decay of capitalism: not only callous in its efficiency but, crucially, suspect and contaminated. The efficiency of the modern systems making mass consumption of lower priced food possible was, in this sense, a paradox with which consumers had an unstable relationship. Ground beef was particularly suspicious: Sinclair portrayed an unseen, filthy process by which repulsive items – diseased animals, sawdust, old nails, offal – were packaged into ground beef and bologna, and “would appear to be ordinary, healthy food”. This idea of hidden workings through which feared things could be disguised as consumer items that struck a nerve and influenced public attitudes to food production, and its regulation. Cronen argues that:

Public fears about the health hazards of dressed beef and its by-products did not finally explode until 1906, when Upton Sinclair published his muckraking novel The Jungle and Congress passed the Meat Inspection and Pure Food Acts, which subsequently imposed much stricter inspection standards on the packers and their products (253).

The White Castle ‘system’ repackaged the cheap industrial meat that The Jungle had rendered “grotesque and unsanitary”. Steel suggests that White Castle used branding and design “to persuade diners there was nothing nasty lurking in the kitchen” (233). The purity of the brand – the ‘White’ of the name – was a means to, in the words of co-founder Edgar Ingram, “break down a deep-seated prejudice against chopped beef”. White Castle served the promise of hamburgers that were, if not ‘natural’, reliably edible and clean. These values remain, as food historian Visser argues, a key element of what fast food sells - the promise of removing differences between places and times (1986, 118).

Steele (2008) argues that a key feature of modern food consumption is the freedom to not think about its origin. Systems are invisible in plain sight, providing food cheaply, efficiently, and safely.
Mass food production is however more carefully marketed than other widespread systems: food producers constantly balance assurance of quality control against the fact the system can produce anxiety about whether food is sufficiently natural or appetising. The products demand a dual mentality of knowing, and not wanting to know. It is important that it is easy to believe that hamburgers ‘come from’ the kitchen visible over the counter. Cronen observes wryly that ‘Forgetfulness was among the least noticed and more important of [the meat industry’s] by-products’ (256).

A National Institution

By 1930 White Castle was a ‘national institution’ of 116 restaurants; (Hogan 40) and ‘the buying public seemed to crave standardization and uniformity in the marketplace’ (48). Other, comparable, businesses – such as, for instance, the grocery trade – moved to similarly efficient ‘system’ processes in the 1930s and 40s, with the added advantage of self-service to cut operating costs (Dippman, 1946, 10). Competitors appeared, adhering to a type: ‘Small white buildings with some sort of tower, such as a turret, clock tower, light house, ziggurat, or even a crystal ball’ (Hogan, 48).

Soon automobiles were incorporated into the model. White Castle introduced ‘kerb service’ in 1935. Yet the hamburger chains’ rise to prominence was not always on a smooth path, as Hogan observes:

Zoning commissions and city planning departments also presented problems for White Castle. The town of Oak Lawn, Illinois, for example, passed an ordinance prohibiting all hamburger and hot-dog stands within the town limits. White Castle successfully appealed this rule and was eventually granted an exception, but many other chains were excluded for years. Other cities, such as Louisville and Chicago, built new expressways and turnpikes to alleviate the traffic on main thoroughfares but by so doing often ruined the business of the Castles on those particular avenues. Developments that many planning commissions termed urban progress often meant financial disaster for many downtown Castles (121).

Alongside McDonald’s (see below), Florida’s Burger King and Indiana’s Burger Chef, both launched in 1954, were amongst the first nationwide chains, followed by Pizza Hut in 1958. Harland Sanders operated Sanders’ Servistation on US Route 25 between ‘the Midwest and Atlanta and Miami’; when a highway route rationalisation cost him his business in 1955, he sold rights to his ‘secret recipe’ and then began to franchise his Kentucky Fried Chicken, becoming the figurehead (and affecting his ‘Colonel’ persona) for the operation. Glen Bell had almost fifteen years popularising fast Mexican food in Southern California when he established the Taco Bell franchise in 1964 (Hogan 152-3). Wendy’s, the North American burger chain launched in 1969 in Columbus, Ohio, incorporated ‘drive-thru windows’ into its model, effectively inspiring (if not forcing) McDonalds and Burger King to incorporate the same.

The 1970s saw minor changes to the business strategies of most of these organisations, with major expansions as the fast food restaurant aligned with suburban development in western nations, particularly the USA. The urban form of early fast food in the USA was concentrated in pedestrian and public transport oriented areas, typically downtown or in the vicinity of industry. In the post war period, major chains spread to vehicular oriented areas well outside of downtowns.
So successful has McDonald’s been as an operating ‘system’ that the man behind its franchising, Ray Kroc (1902-1984) has become a business icon. Kroc was not the founder of McDonalds, but took the initiative in formulating a replicable version of the original store, amplifying many of its central elements and eliminating others, creating a streamlined ‘restaurant’. Kroc, a salesman of Bohemian stock, writes in his memoir that he:

first became aware of the hamburger patty as an element of food purveying when I was a young man going to dances on Chicago’s West Side. There was a White Castle on the corner of Ogden and Harlem Avenues, where we could go for hamburgers after a dance. (Kroc and Anderson 1977, 73)

Kroc encountered the McDonald brothers’ restaurant in the early 1950s in his capacity as a milkshake mixer salesman. The efficiency and the cleanliness of the restaurant led him to pursue the role of the restaurant’s franchisor. He could have merely produced his own version of the McDonald’s formula: the brothers were, it seems, candid about their procedures and the kitchen of the restaurant was, in any case, open to public view. Yet Kroc was adamant that the McDonald’s name itself was ‘one of those promotable names that would catch the public fancy’ and that he was possessed by ‘a strong intuitive sense that the name McDonald’s was exactly right.’ (Kroc and Anderson 71-2).

Franchising McDonald’s was a bold move, and its success was by no means a foregone conclusion. Yet it was Kroc’s lack of imagination that made his McDonald’s a success. The story Kroc tells himself in his Grinding it Out is of a single-minded hard worker whose major difficulties were to persuade his franchisees of the value of his principles of hard work, honesty, cleanliness and simplicity: that (as John F. Love writes) ‘unauthorised deviation from the basics of the McDonald’s system would never be tolerated.’ (1986, 85). Kroc insisted McDonalds outlets feature no jukeboxes, vending machines or public telephones: ‘All of those things create unproductive traffic in a store and encourage loitering that can disrupt your customers.’ (Kroc and Anderson, 84). Kroc standardised both the product and its point of sale in, as Hogan writes, ‘all aspects of the business, from the kitchen to the bookkeeping to the building construction’ (148). From this we see the derivation of the well-known concept of McDonaldisation, applicable to numerous social and cultural scenarios, and often used interchangeably with the notion of Fordism (Ritzer 1995, Smart 1999, Alfino et al 1998).

Philip Langdon emphasises McDonalds’ model’s utilitarian – deliberately uncomfortable – space, comparing it to a ‘typical shopping center’ of the 1960s:

Retailers, whether in the fast-food business or some other endeavour, focused on delivering their products with utmost efficiency, to the exclusion of any broader vision having to do with encouragement of a more satisfying daily life. Kroc’s dream was the typical capitalist’s dream: to make himself and his associates rich without concerning themselves about whether their restaurants directly enriched the everyday environment. (Langdon, 1986, 107)

There was less room for individuality as the company’s processes became more streamlined and its success grew. McDonald’s identified territories and purchased new land to lease to franchisees, who had first refusal on new franchises nearby. All labelling and menu items were strictly regulated. By
the time McDonald’s (and other similar businesses) crossed the Pacific to Australia, their modus operandi was robust and strategic.

Fast Food in Australia

This paper now turns to fast food as it translated into Australia. This history is traced using archived news articles, and planning system documents as in Taylor (2014). Although broadly recognised as a global phenomena, here we focus on its integration into a particular landscape.

Fast Food franchises arrived in Australia in earnest with three competing American businesses, one of which was almost instantly successful. Beef-a-Roo arrived in Melbourne in 1969 claiming to be the Australian arm of an 85-restaurant-strong American business, though on its collapse at the end of 1972 it was revealed that there were in fact no more than 12 (‘Beef-a-Roo’s’). Another, Red Barn, licensed from its Canadian arm by Spotless Dry Cleaning (‘Marra takeover’, ‘Drive-ins’) – its operators apparently unperturbed by any connection customers may make with its name and the popular play Murder in the Red Barn – would not last much longer, but its locations, when sold to newcomer McDonald’s, would provide a head start for that chain in Victoria in 1973 (‘Cottees Sale’).

Kentucky Fried Chicken (later KFC) also arrived in 1969 (Murphy 1991), and reached an impressive number of stores – 120 – in just four years. The Australian operation’s managing director H. F. Coops (!) explained in a Canberra Times advertorial that ‘planned pioneering’ was key to its rapid success – in effect, market research. He added that outlets were ‘located on sites that were easy for people to reach and provide space for them to park their cars’ (‘Planned Pioneering’). KFC expanded to 186 Australian stores by 1979 – illustrated with an advertisement with photographs of store managers in matching ties, under the title “Just 10 years old and look how our family’s grown” (Australian Women’s Weekly, 1979). The McDonald’s franchise chain arrived in Australia in 1971 (Australian Women’s Weekly, 1971), with Sydney store Yagoona and with the first Victorian McDonald’s store in 1973 in Glen Waverley. KFC, McDonald’s, Red Rooster and Pizza Hut remain amongst the major chains operating in Australia today.

Impacts on Communities

In a Melbourne thesis ‘Spatial Demand of Fast Food Outlets’, Harvey (1980, 20–28) listed ‘major detrimental impacts associated with fast food restaurants’ as ‘traffic, design, litter, noise, hours of operation, loitering, public nuisance’. Such issues continue and despite the obvious popularity of fast food there have been innumerable examples of community resistance to the model, both due to practicalities of siting and design and to a sense of symbolic imposition.

The tarnishing of the Golden Arches (and Colonel Sanders’ aged, welcoming face) in the public consciousness has been a slow process. Certainly by 1995, when McDonald’s announced an ‘Out-Mac’ policy (a play on ‘outback’) to double the number of restaurants in Australia, health authorities professed concerns, as did unions which believed the franchise’s wages were too low (Cooke, 1995).

Yet there has been pushback from local communities against the establishment of fast food outlets for many decades. Fast food outlets – particularly the drive-in model – have altered Australian streetscapes and planning practices over the last 45 years. McDonald’s restaurants are best suited to
roads and strip retailing; outlets such as these require private automobile use, their popularity with (for instance) teenage foot traffic notwithstanding. Constructing this urban form has often triggered formal assessment processes for planning permits, providing a contested if constrained forum for broader community views on fast food. The involvement of heritage streetscapes has been a particular focal point for scrutiny by communities; as has the placement of fast food forms in peri-urban areas anxious to avoid its suburban connotations.

One of the earliest known ‘no Maccas’ cases dates back to 1974; the Washington Post reported that the McDonald’s chain had ‘met an unexpected whopper’ with resident resistance to proposals for the Upper East Side and West Village of Manhattan (Washington Post 1974). In Hampstead, a “leafy” London suburb, residents mounted an articulate campaign in 1980 against a McDonald’s proposed for what they referred to as their ‘village’. McDonald’s was perceived by “an army of middle class activists” as an American invasion; they “took to their tree lined streets to beat back the tide of 20th century eating habits” (‘Big Mac attack pushed back’). After a drawn-out battle of over 15 years, McDonald’s built a form of the Hampstead restaurant in an “acceptably genteel frontage” (Emilsen, 2004).

In 1977 in Ballarat, Victoria, McDonald’s sought to demolish existing buildings and construct a new outlet in Bakery Hill, historically important in the Eureka uprising. The proposal met with resistance from community action groups (and a union ban) calling for heritage preservation. McDonald’s later modified and occupied the existing heritage building. In inner Melbourne suburb Clifton Hill, a 1987 proposal for a McDonald’s sought not to demolish an art deco hotel but to modify it. A protracted series of planning tribunal cases around the Clifton Hill site focused on the heritage impacts of signage and drive-throughs, but, as with an increasing number of conflicts, also mobilized broader community opposition to fast food branding (Taylor 2015).

One of the better-known ‘No Maccas’ planning disputes in Australia was the “Mountains against McDonald’s” campaign by New South Wales Blue Mountains groups against three proposed McDonald’s outlets in the region between 1995 and 2003, spanning hundreds of media reports, through to protests and celebrity endorsements (Emilsen, 2004). The Blue Mountains opposition resulted in local planning design rules to indirectly deflect fast food (‘The Sisters order fast food to go’). Similar peri-urban hills locations in Victoria – Belgrave, and later the adjoining Tecoma - were the sites of campaigns, one successful and one failed, against McDonald’s restaurants in the mid 1990s and in 2012.

**Tecoma: “No Maccas in the Hills”**

A recent example of community reaction to fast food comes from Tecoma, Victoria. Community responses to fast food tell us something of the built environment history of fast food and the pressures on its future growth. In October 2012, despite considerable resistance from not only local residents (on the grounds of health, economic competition, local character, traffic, parking, signage and noise) but also local government, a planning application for a McDonald’s in Tecoma was approved on appeal at the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT).

Tecoma is a peri-urban (‘hills’) area with a population of 2,000; its residents have long regarded it as a village, separate both from the city’s suburbs and from adjoining Belgrave, with which it shares a
populated main road. Its principle resident group, Tecoma Village Action Group (TVAG) was formed some years earlier, to resist a Coles supermarket – which it did. Some months into the campaign a purposeful anti-McDonald’s group, No Maccas in the Hills, took over, in part on the understanding that the McDonald’s campaign was only partly of interest to Tecoma and that McDonald’s saw the settlements of the Dandenongs as dominoes to topple.

In context, the ‘No Maccas’ campaign had a good chance of succeeding. Previous campaigns – such as that of the supermarket proposal for the same site – had been effective and there were precedents in, for instance, neighbouring Belgrave. However, many of the community’s issues were officially irrelevant to the planning process – in part because the state’s planning system had become increasingly standardised to favour ‘convenience restaurants’ (Taylor 2015).

In simple terms, the dichotomy seemed clear: for many in Tecoma the battle was between local ubiquity and global conformity. McDonald’s hoped to place its restaurant on a site occupied by an institution known as the ‘Hippie Haven’, a café and record shop; shades of local community resilience in the face of modernity or corporate greed – as per the 1953 film The Titfield Thunderbolt – may have been coloured by ambivalence to the countercultural element of this institution. However, what was clearly more important in most residents’ minds was the value of Tecoma as the ‘gateway’ to the Dandenongs, a status consolidated by the boundary of the Shire of Sherbrooke, extant as a local government area from 1963-94. Community feeling against McDonald’s was, in any case, keen: the Shire of Yarra Ranges received almost 1200 individually written letters protesting the McDonald’s proposal. David Jewell, of TVAG, said in 2012 that his group’s approach to VCAT regarding the McDonald’s development was ‘primarily around their building proposal being totally out of character’ adding that, aside from one early 1990s building:

There’s no other flat roofed place in Tecoma. There are no other parapet lines that are flat, like they’re proposing. All the parapet lines are either circular or triangular. Their proposal doesn’t fit in with the character. It’s going to be the biggest building – it’s five times bigger than the average street frontage. It’s just going to be so imposing. It’s not hills town character. And that’s the key phrase that’s been used in um...council... in the local planning policy framework and also in previous VCAT hearings. (Jewell 2012)

No-one in the state government was willing to affect the outcome, and associated issues of concern to the community – such as children crossing the road to the McDonald’s from the school close to a sharp bend, or the health implications of the firm’s product – were inapplicable. Nonetheless, the community maintained a protest vigil as the building progressed, and indeed there was additional outrage in the community at both the inability of a ‘village’ to control its streetscape and constituent traders, at council’s inability or unwillingness to contribute to the outcome, and at McDonald’s attitude of fait accompli.

Helmed by software developer Gary Muratore, No Macca’s in the Hills raised money to mount a well-publicised visit to the McDonald’s company headquarters in Chicago to request they vacate the ‘town’ of Tecoma. Other strategic campaign elements – for instance the ‘Burgeroff’ catchphrase, and a range of anti-McDonalds garden gnomes – gave the movement humour, wit and evoked specifically Australian and (arguably) ‘suburban’ aspects.
Conclusions and future

While the Tecoma campaign was not ultimately successful – at least, the restaurant has opened, though reports of its success are varied – Muratore and the No Macca’s movement persist. Indeed, Muratore has been consulted on campaigns in other states such as that in the Perth suburb of Applecross in 2015. Addressing residents, Muratore claimed that while Tecoma may have lost the battle, the Burgeroff movement was ‘winning the war’ and that ‘McDonald’s want to use their might to overturn… democratic voices’ (Holland).

The design and system of fast food in the early 20th century emerged in response to fears - uncertainty, difference, danger, dirt – thought to be associated with urbanisation at the time. The suburban form of fast food created and complemented trends toward auto mobility and suburbanisation. Modern resistance to fast food likewise expresses fears – of loss of local identity, lack of community control, and the mounting health impacts of obesity. The lines defining public health and community concern have shifted considerably since the early 20th century, yet contemporary conflict over fast food can be seen to still draw on similar anxieties over the boundaries between known and unknown, suspect and reassuring. Like the earlier expansion, the new pressures on fast food draw on community narratives of fear, and also take on legal forms. In South Australia for example, legal moves to restrict fast food outlets on health grounds have gained foothold.

Food is a key commodity in globalisation, and thus vulnerable to global contamination (Law & Mol 2008). An exotic American branding was used in the initial marketing of fast food in Australia, as in 1970s advertising for KFC: “until ten years ago, anyone with an appetite for chicken cooked the way only Colonels from America’s deep south could cook it, had to visit America’s deep south” (‘Just ten years old’). Later, nationalism and globalisation became a point of contention and subsequently, Kentucky Fried Chicken and McDonald’s have adopted modified Australian names (“Macca’s ®”). The McDonald’s Australian website showcases customised, localised, and artisanal elements - “what Australia ordered”, with a “create your taste” menu and “barista made coffee”. In response to obesity concerns, fast food brands emphasise (the availability if not popularity of) healthy menu items – in stark contrast to “Hugo and Holly”, the grotesquely obese cartoon children who hankered for “Kentucky Fried” in the back seat of their parents’ car in the 1970s (‘Hugo and Holly’).

With the late 20th century fast food forms and franchises a widespread fixture of Australian urban and suburban areas, recent decades have seen trends in fast food reminiscent – in iconography and design – of earlier American forms. Subway, tending to occupy existing buildings mainly in pedestrian locations, is often festooned with pictures of early 20th century American public transport. Australian chain Lord of the Fries has established in pedestrian-oriented inner areas and, in a twist on the fast food model, revealed its ‘hamburgers’ do not actually contain meat. Mobile ‘Food Trucks’ or ‘Taco Trucks’ are diners reinterpreted in 21st century forms via social media, food tourism and place branding. In some ways these trends invert the dominant fast food model that, as we have discussed, spread from the early 20th century in a way prizing uniformity. In others, they similarly parallel social trends and expectations. The pressures on planning systems to accommodate food trucks (Griffin, 2011), as well as community resistance to global franchises, illustrates how fast food is not placeless but rather, remains an often overlooked built environment phenomenon.
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Force or farce
Community consultation in local government

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Trust and understanding in the community engagement process are considered by many an essential part of a successful urban planning process. Yet these issues have proved problematic for the stakeholders in one New South Wales local government area.

This paper examines a case study of a community engagement process in New South Wales which has involved the re-development of the Camden Town Centre. The paper analyses how a trust deficit has opened up between the local council and the community over a lack of early and meaningful engagement in the decision making process. Many community stakeholders consider the planning proposals compromise the town centre’s heritage values and its historic significance.

The Camden town centre strategy involves a number of urban planning elements including a decked car park, traffic lights and other features. The decked car park is a particularly contentious issue that has risen like a ‘phoenix from the ashes’, after it was defeated a decade ago when it threatened to compromise the town’s sense of place and community identity. In particular the town’s historic St John’s church precinct, with links to the Macarthur family and Australia’s foundation.

While the Camden mayor has vigorously defended the council’s community engagement process, it has generated threats of legal action, a lively debate in the local press and community activism. Is it just a storm in a tea cup or a threat to local democracy?

**Keywords:** Community consultation; participatory planning, local government; urban planning; community activism; cultural heritage icons

**Introduction**

Cultural heritage icons have proved problematic for the participatory planning process on Sydney’s south-western rural-urban interface in one of Australia’s most important historic sites. The community of Camden settled in 1840 on the Nepean River crossing at the entry of the Cowpastures has many stories that are part of the foundational nation building narrative of Australia, particularly
those related to the Macarthur family’s role in the establishment of the wool, wine and dairy industries. The family established the Camden township as a private venture on their pastoral holding of Camden Park based on the idea of an English estate village. Macarthur iconography is found in street names, urban parks, memorials, buildings, and a host of other hard infrastructure in the urban landscape and is the basis of community identity and a sense of place. (Willis, 2004)

The construction of place over the past century has seen the development of a rural aesthetic that emerged as a type of branding or soft infrastructure. It has become embedded in community identity and is based on a notion of an idealised country town and, along with the district’s rural heritage, has been commodified by tourism authorities, land developers, and local businesses, and officially endorsed by Camden Council in the Camden Town Conservation Area (2008). (Willis, 2012)

Urban growth was prompted by the 1973 Three Cities Plan (Abercrombie, 2008) which came out of the 1968 Sydney Region Outline Plan. Eventually these plans put pressure on Camden Council to provide additional parking spaces in the historic Camden town centre and in 1996 the council considered a proposal for a decked car park. Controversy raged on and off over the next decade and in the end community activism saw the proposal defeated in 2006. The discourse around the issue was based on the threat to the rural aesthetic and the town’s historic icons – all part of attachment to place. Participant actors included the chamber of commerce, the council, the historical society and the residents’ action group. The chamber lobbied for the proposal, while the society and residents’ group were opposed. (Willis, 2007)

The aim of this paper is to illustrate the problematic nature of participatory planning processing when it intersects with a sense of place and community identity. I have examined the civic engagement process for the Camden Town Centre Enhancement Strategy - which included a decked car park, traffic lights, additional street lighting, new street furniture, and landscaping, signage and footpath development – between May 2014 and February 2015. The lack of a nuanced response to community concerns by local government have failed to convince the community of the merits of the infrastructure plans despite a formal community engagement process. Citizen anxiety grew around possible threats to the town’s historic iconography and its heritage values, and what resulted was cynicism, community activism and a loss of trust. In the absence of any compromise a bottom-up endeavour by citizen stakeholders resulted in the formation of a community initiated opposition group. A political response of citizen engagement that Crystal Legacy and Ryan van den Nouwelant have called ‘guerrilla governance’. (Legacy & van den Nouwelant, 2015)

Methodology

This case study is a qualitative study using an empirical methodology based on personal observations as a public historian of the civic engagement processes. The analysis builds on my earlier work that examined active citizenship using the lens of the 1996 car park proposal. (Willis, 2007) Attachment to place, as well as heritage and historical factors, have played a role as they did in the earlier planning debate, while parochialism and localism have influenced matters yet again. There are some of the same actors in the current case study although they have changed their political position from 1996 proposals, which illustrates the dynamics of local democratic processes.

This case study is drawn from a variety of local primary and secondary sources including local newspapers, emails, posters, banners, shop displays, flyers and other ephemera as well as informal
interviews with stakeholders. I attended forums, meetings and public rallies, and while being an observer to these processes I have also acted as a change agent. I wrote a discussion paper in late 2014 that was distributed to interested stakeholders and posted a personal reflection of these processes on the Professional Historians’ Association (NSW & ACT) blog. (Willis, 2015c) and my blog Camden History Notes (Willis, 2015a)

The paper is organised into a number of sections beginning with an examination of how the case study is placed in the literature surrounding the issues raised in the paper. The formal planning processes within the town centre strategy are then examined with their officially sanctioned forms of participation. The discussion then moves on to citizen responses and the emergence of citizen activism, and concludes with a discussion of the challenges and implications of these actions.

**Heritage, place making and civic engagement**

The historic nature of this case study needs to be set in the context of research around the development of community activism (Howe, et al., 2014), its colonial origins (Hutton & Connors, 1999), and a recognition that community activism in the Camden area is not a recent event (Hagan, 1972). Heritage and place making are complex and contested concepts with their own broad fields of work. One that crosses the disciplines and provides a useful model here is Jones and Shaw survey of heritage in Australia. (Jones, et al., 2007) Attachment to place and belonging, and its meaning has been explored by Read and others (Harrison, 2004), and in particular Read has examined the meaning of lost places using one example from the Camden District. (Read, 1996)

There is a rich literature covering participatory planning and a useful model to examine the concept of citizen participation has been provided Arnstein’s Ladder of Citizen Participation. (Arnstein, 1969) Further to this position Monno and Khakee maintain that two dominant models of participatory planning have evolved – communicative and radical. (Monno & Khakee, 2012) Legacy and others have provided an examination on civic participation in a neoliberal context (Legacy, 2015) particularly the perception of limited ‘civic participation’ through a political process called ‘guerilla governance’. (Legacy & van den Nouwelant, 2015) There are also studies of attachment to place relative to the participatory planning (Anderson & Schirmer, 2015) and citizen involvement with local government. (Kasymova, 2014)

**Case Study: Camden Town Centre Enhancement Strategy**

The Camden Town Centre Enhancement Strategy was part of a suite of measures that were prompted by the 2012 Camden Council decision to re-locate its head office from the Camden town centre to a Greenfield site at Oran Park, a new land release area in the northern part of the Local Government Area (LGA). In preparation for the council’s departure from Camden the council established an internal committee to develop a range of strategies in mid-2013. (Camden Council, 2014a, pp. 103-105) The council’s reluctance to involve citizen participation in the 2013 planning processes was to cause problems for them in 2014 and contributed to the impression that the project lacked transparency.
The council’s re-location created concerns amongst local business owners about the commercial viability of the town centre, loss of customers and parking. Similar concerns had been expressed a decade earlier when local businesses in the chamber of commerce supported the 1996 decked car park proposal. On that occasion the threats of change proved unwarranted as the Camden town centre has continued to thrive.

The council’s re-location also prompted a review of the Camden town centre infrastructure, an update of the 2008 Camden Town Centre Strategy and an evaluation of traffic movements, car parking, drainage, street lighting, paving and furniture. The council stated that the review would respect the area’s ‘unique history’ and ‘Camden’s country town feel’, and maintained that there would be ‘extensive consultations with all stakeholders’. Only then would work begin on Argyle Street upgrades and construction of a decked carpark. (Camden Council, 2014a, pp. 103-104)

News of the town centre enhancement strategy first appeared in May 2014 when The District Reporter broke a story about the re-emergence of a proposal for decked car park adjacent to a sensitive heritage precinct in the town centre (Abrahams, 2014a, p. 4). What followed was a slanging match between stakeholders in the Macarthur Chronicle Facebook page (Thompson, 2014) and letters to the editor (Dunshea, 2014). Over the following weeks the gap between citizens and council widened with claim and counter claim and the politicisation of the town centre strategy. In June 2014 The District Reporter editorialized the town centre strategy and complained about ‘transparency’ and ‘accountability’ (Abrahams, 2014b). Mayor Symkowiak responded:

I was dismayed to read your article last week on council’s exit from Camden. Your newspaper has a history of these sensationalised council bashing stories where you conveniently do not ask me personally for comment – because the truth may get in the way of a good story. (Symkowiak, 2014a)

The mayor claimed that there had been meetings with the chamber of commerce in February and April 2014 and that the council’s general manager had also been present. The mayor stated that the time-line for the consultation process would begin in mid-2014 and be finalized by mid-2015. She claimed that final reports to council on the strategy elements were only presented to council on 17 June 2014. (Symkowiak, 2014a) Mayor Symkowiak stated in the Macarthur Chronicle that sufficient consultation was a main concern of the process. (Elmerhebe, 2014a)

**Council endorses town centre strategy**

The town centre strategy and supporting documents were officially released for the first time as part of the business papers for the council meeting on 8 July 2014. The council endorsed the proposals in a 6-1 vote. (Camden Council, 2014b, p. 5) The strategy was to be put out for public exhibition later in July and comment in an eight week period (23 July to 17 September 2014).

Chamber of Commerce president Miriam Roberts lamented the lack of ‘transparency’ in the consultation process and stated that the chamber had only received a copy of the strategy report on 7 July 2014, the day before the council considered the proposals. Mayor Symkowiak defended the council’s position and again stated ‘there would be significant community consultation’. (Abrahams, 2014d) The Camden Chamber of Commerce is a key stakeholder and its concerns, according to one
source, have been that the car park development would sterilise the most valuable commercial site in the town centre.

The council proceeded with the announcement of the public exhibition period from July and ‘a package of exciting works for the Camden Town Centre’. The council encouraged members of the community to ‘Have your Say!’ and then outlined three community forums that would be held at the Camden Civic Centre during the consultation period. Plans, samples and information were made available by council at Council Customer Service Centres, libraries and on the council’s website. (Camden Council, 2014c) The council employed a team of consultants specializing in community engagement, distributed comment forms to residents and announced an online survey. The mayor wrote to all businesses in Camden and invited them to register with the council if they wanted regular updates on the strategy development process. The mayor was featured in a series of advertisements in the Camden press outlining elements of the strategy during the consultation period (Camden Council, 2014d) and supporting stories appeared in the Camden press. (Elmerhebe, 2014b)

Community disquiet continued with claim and counter claim in the Camden press. The Camden Chamber of Commerce liaison office Maryann Strickling criticised the council’s decision as ad hoc, stated that in her view ‘when things are put on exhibition they are a fait accompli’ and claimed that the chamber had been trying to ‘engage the council in a dialogue about the future of the Camden town centre for months’. Mayor Symkowiak continued to defend the council’s position and claimed that ‘her leadership team had met with members of the chamber executive to discuss the progress of the work’. She said she was disappointed the chamber had ‘formed such a negative opinion about the package of works before they’ve read the information or looked over the report’. (Armstrong, 2014a) The chamber responded by suggesting that there should be a people panel to ‘help guide Camden Council’ similar to an approach adopted by Melbourne City Council, while the chamber re-stated that it’s principal complaint was the process of consultation and the ‘lack of inclusiveness’ by council. Chamber president Miriam Roberts maintained that it, or another organisation, ‘should have had a seat at the meetings’ in the previous 12 months in the planning process. (Abrahams, 2014e)

The view of these stakeholders puts this part of the consultative process somewhere in the middle of Arnstein’s Ladder of Citizen Participation.

**Formal citizen participation**

There were three formal Camden Council organised community forums that were well attended by citizens. The first forum (29 July 2014) attracted a large crowd with the author counting 148 people with official sources recording 86 community and business organisations. Community participants were seated at tables of eight led by a council paid facilitator. The mayor introduced the evening, a scribe was appointed at each table and the facilitator directed discussion. About 40 minutes of lively discussion followed, which was reported by a table spokesperson. After the forum Mayor Symkowiak summarised the findings of the forum in a letter to all participants (22 August 2014) where the mains issues were listed as town centre improvements, traffic concerns, and the need for a diverse range of businesses. (Symkowiak, 2014b)

The second council forum (27 August 2014) was similarly well attended when over 80 community and business representatives. At the beginning of the proceedings a citizen asked a question from
the floor about the findings of Forum One and why they had not been included in the discussion documents. The chair replied they would be collated towards the end of the public consultation period. The delegate stressed to me in an informal conversation later in the evening that he felt his concerns had been dismissed by the forum organisers. On the evening citizen participants stressed the need for a distinct and vibrant town centre that was accessible to all the community. (JBA Urban Planning Consultants Pty Ltd, 2014) The second forum failed to convince some in the community. Resident Michael O’Brien left the forum with the impression ‘that the council has already made the decision to carry out the work’. (O’Brien, 2014)

The third forum (3 November) attracted fewer participants. The council reported that during the eight week consultation period its representatives had delivered presentations to over 600 residents, received 587 formal submissions and, within these submissions, considered over 3,000 individual comments. (Capaldi, 2014) Mayor Symkowiak felt that the official exhibition period and council forums were sufficient. She was disappointed to hear some people say the council would do ‘whatever it wanted whether the community wanted it or not’ (Armstrong, 2014c)

The Camden Chamber of Commerce felt the council forums lacked credibility. Chamber spokesperson, Ms Maryann Strickling, felt that the council had ‘little vision or understanding’ of the current strength of Camden (Abrahams, 2014c). Consequently the chamber decided to hold its own forum which it called ‘A Viable Enduring Future’. Keynotes speakers were Director of the University of Sydney’s Urban Design Program Associate Professor Rod Simpson, architect John Johannsen from the Lane Cove Alive Leadership Group and urban designer Maryann Strickling. Speakers stressed the ‘good bones’ that the Camden town centre possessed and the need to use the existing structure to encourage the growth of town. They outlined how smart design through a collaborative community approach could deliver quality outcomes and improve the overall town environment. (Abrahams, 2014f) Resident Thiru Nagan was very impressed with the chamber of commerce forum but not those organised by council. (Nagan, 2014)

The mayor agreed to address the September chamber of commerce meeting where a dispute arose over the recording of her presentation. There were accusations of ‘slander’ in the Camden press and the mayor stated she was ‘considering her [legal] options’. In the end the council cancelled its membership of the chamber. (Armstrong, 2014b) Tensions within the chamber of commerce were taking a toll and two executive members resigned. (Armstrong, 2014d)

By September 2014 exasperation had started to creep into community concerns. Resident A Childs felt that ‘the council has already made up its mind on the Camden Town Centre vandalism’ (Childs, 2014) while some took direct aim at the mayor. Sheila Williams felt that the mayor was ‘determined to put the final nail in to the heart of Camden’. (Williams, 2014) Meanwhile word was spreading across Sydney about the level of disharmony the town centre strategy was creating in Camden. A group of North Sydney Probus members stated that their October visit was driven by desire to see the town before the town centre strategy upgrade ‘ruined’ the town centre. (Abrahams, 2014g)

**Tipping point for community activism**

In late November 2014 Camden councillors voted 6-3 to endorse the key infrastructure initiatives in the town centre strategy. (Camden Council, 2014e, p. 4) In response the chamber of commerce
president Miriam Roberts stated that the chamber ‘wasn’t holding its breath that the community consultation regarding the proposed Camden Town Centre plan would have any real sway’. She maintained the members did not believe that the ‘consultative process provided a balanced and broad presentation of the facts or the alternatives’. Roberts felt that planning process ‘showed a lack of any comprehensive strategic vision for the town centre’. More than this Councillor Eva Campbell thought the whole plan was a ‘flawed process and in many respects a “farce”’. She stated that it was an ‘ad hoc series of piecemeal, so-called improvements that lack any underlying vision’. (Abrahams, 2014h)

In early January 2015 resident Pieter Versluis wrote a letter to the Camden press and stated:

If the councillors are so convinced public opinion supports the changes they have approved, Camden Council must release all responses for public viewing. Those of us strongly opposed must not simply accept the council decision. Camden Chamber of Commerce opposes the changes, many residents do; and I suggest, so do most visitors – the current charm is why they come to Camden. The public consultation process has, in other quarters, been labelled a ‘farce’. Oppose the changes with action.

Pieter Versluis, Kirkham. (Versluis, 2015)

Following this letter the Camden Narellan Advertiser reported that ‘Camden residents [were] concerned about the transparency of the public consultation period’ and mentioned that I intended to put up an abstract for consideration about these issues at the 2016 Australasian Urban History Urban Planning Conference. (Armstrong, 2015) The same week The District Reporter published a story exploring the history of the 1996 car park proposal. (Abrahams, 2015b)

At the end of January I posted a personal reflection on the Professional Historians’ Association’s (NSW & ACT) blog maintaining that public historians had a role to play in civic advocacy that encouraged active citizenship and citizen engagement in the democratic process. (Willis, 2015c) At the same time I released a discussion paper on the town centre strategy and posted my conclusions on my history blog stating that a trust deficit had opened up between the community and the council. (Willis, 2015b)

The politicisation of the participatory planning process had reached a disjunction amongst stakeholders just as Crystal Legacy highlighted in her Melbourne case study. (Legacy, 2015) The mayor continued to vigorously defend the council’s decisions stating the consultative process was ‘the most open... process that council [had] embarked upon since I’ve been on council since 2008’. (Abrahams, 2015a) She went further and stated that ‘the cynical and suspicious tone’ as press reports were ‘unfair and unfounded’. (Symkowiak, 2015)

Within a week of these matters being aired in the Camden press seven Camden citizens informally met to form a new organisation, the Camden Community Alliance. Their aim was to campaign around the council’s community consultation campaign and encourage ‘meaningful consultation’ to protect ‘the present character of Camden’. (Camden Community Alliance, 2015) Pieter Versluis was elected president. This level of activism had not been seen in the Camden LGA since the 1970s and the formation of the Camden Residents’ Action Group (Willis, 2012). There was strong support from
some citizens and within a month the organisation had over 70 members. (Abrahams, 2015a). Over the following months the alliance held public rallies and meetings, conducted a social media campaign and gained airtime on Sydney radio.

Funding for the first stage works of the Town Centre Enhancement Strategy was provided as part of the Western Sydney Infrastructure Plan announced by the Abbott Federal Government associated with the plans for Sydney’s second airport at Badgerys Creek in January 2015. (Nutt, 2015) Camden Council commenced the first stage infrastructure works in August 2015 with the removal of a number of Jacaranda trees in the main streets accompanied by community protests. There has been a continuing debate in the Camden press covering hundreds of column centimetres devoted to the town centre strategy with a stream of letters to the editors of all local newspapers. In November 2015 Camden Council approved the next stage of the project and expects to commence work in early 2016.

Conclusion: Challenges and Implications

This paper has argued that the participatory planning process around the Camden Town Enhancement Strategy has been contested. The proposed infrastructure works were in an urban conservation area, one of Australia’s most historic sites. The town centre itself is a Macarthur family icon and any urban planning processes taking place within it were likely to be problematic. Camden citizens remember the direct threat posed to the town’s heritage by the 1996 decked car park proposal and were wary of any new proposal. Rightly or wrongly citizens felt that their emotional attachment to a much loved place was under threat again and might turn into one of Read’s lost places. (Read, 1996) Parochialism and localism have played a part again as they did in the 1996 urban planning proposals.

The Camden media have led the public debate around the town centre strategy, including breaking the story of the 2013 decked car park proposal adjacent to a sensitive heritage area in the town centre. From that point the council’s communication strategy developed a defensive posture of which, despite attempts to the contrary, it seems unable to break free. There has been a constant stream of letters to the editor, extensive reportage of the issues and the chamber of commerce and the Camden Community Alliance have been pro-active in their use of the media. Local newspapers have become a valuable community noticeboard and a constant source of information for stakeholders. All supporting the notion that a strong independent media is necessary for a vibrant democracy. Social media and the internet have also been used extensively by stakeholders in the debate, which is different from the earlier 1996 car park controversy, when electronic media played virtually no role.

Camden Council commenced the planning processes behind closed doors, which did not give the appearance of transparent government. The mayor’s strident defence of the formal participatory planning processes are justified while it is a mystery to some that the council did not commence the consultative process earlier. Best practice examined by the Gratton Institute has called for deep and meaningful engagement in the community consultation processes, which has been lacking in this case study. (Kelly, 2010) Yet it is quite probable that an earlier engagement with citizens by council may have ameliorated community angst, built community confidence and neutralised stakeholder
mistrust. The council has failed to convince stakeholders of the projects merits and citizens have not felt a sense of ownership of the processes.

The paper has provided a useful case study from which comparative generalisations may be made and demonstrated some of the machinations of local democratic processes. The participatory planning processes have elements of both ‘tokenist participation’, the formal community forums, and ‘radical planning’, the Camden Community Alliance, examined by Monno and Khakee. (Monno & Khakee, 2012) Attachment to place and cultural heritage icons on historic sites can be problematic for the planning processes particularly when deeply embedded historic factors are in the mix. When faced with community conservatism participatory planning processes needs a nuanced approach from officials in local government. Cynicism by citizens needs to have a meaningful response from local planning authorities to ameliorate citizen activism and avoid unnecessary opposition to necessary infrastructure works for civic enhancement purposes. This is an ongoing process where increased politicisation of the issues may only be resolved at the 2016 local government elections.

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Assessing the tourism potential of an Australian industrial icon

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In 2015, the remote mining community of Broken Hill became the first Australian city to be inscribed on the National Heritage List. The City Council’s strategic plans reflect an expectation that the inscription will lead to an increase in tourism. A better understanding of the core dimensions of a successful and sustainable cultural heritage tourism product would enhance the effectiveness of this planning process. There are, however, few instruments designed to assess the tourism potential of complex and extensive industrial heritage landscapes like Broken Hill. Building on previous work by McKercher and Ho (2006), this paper identifies five core value dimensions for such an instrument – cultural, physical, product, experience and sustainability. The instrument is then tested on Broken Hill and three comparable industrial World Heritage sites. While Broken Hill’s cultural, physical and sustainability dimensions rate strongly, the product and experience dimensions rate poorly effectively precluding the city from functioning as a viable attraction in its current state. The city’s remoteness and isolation from other attractions, the complexity and deterioration of mining infrastructure, and the lack of a major mining-related tourist attraction exacerbate the weaknesses.

Key words: heritage management; tourism development; assessment tools; National Heritage

Introduction

In 2015, ten years after the initial nomination, the remote mining community of Broken Hill became the first Australian city to be inscribed on the National Heritage List. Along with other industrial areas in Europe and North America, Broken Hill has experienced a steady decrease in population and employment since the 1970s. The city sits in a remote and arid location (Figure 1), and does not conform to the stereotypical image of an aesthetically pleasing heritage landscape (Figure 2). Despite this, the Council’s strategic plans reflect an optimistic, post-mining expectation that
inscription will be followed by an increase in tourism and the stabilisation of what has been a forty-year decline in prosperity. Such a strategy presupposes, of course, that tourists will be attracted in increasing numbers to the iconic characteristics of a city promoted through the heritage listing process. Questions arise, however, about what those iconic characteristics are, how they might be enhanced and whether they will be enough to drive tourism sustainably.

Figure 1. A map of Australia locating Broken Hill 510 km from Adelaide to the southwest and 1,150 km from Sydney to the east. (Map data ©2014 GBRMPA, Google)

Figure 2. An aerial view of Broken Hill showing the surface mine workings that bisect the city, 2013. (Photograph by Author)
The purpose of this paper is, therefore, to identify the iconic characteristics of industrial heritage sites such as Broken Hill. Then, based on this understanding, to develop and apply a conceptual audit instrument to assess the viability of such sites as sustainable tourism attractions. To date, academic studies have shown the impact of industrial heritage promotion on economic regeneration to be largely assumed (Hospers, 2000; Jones & Munday, 2001). Previous studies of governance (Wang & Bramwell, 2012; Wilson & Boyle, 2006), stakeholder participation (Aas et al., 2005; Jamal & Stronza, 2009), strategic planning (Currie & Wesley, 2010; Fonseca & Ramos, 2012; Lo Piccolo et al., 2012) and tourism development (Buckley, 2004; Chhabra, 2009; Fullerton et al., 2010; Pomerling et al., 2011; Vargas-Sánchez et al., 2013) have also shown significant challenges for heritage sites looking to enhance their sustainable management practices. Chief amongst these challenges are the institutional factors governing how heritage is managed (Darlow et al., 2012) and the tension between heritage conservation and commercial viability (Hughes & Carlsen, 2010). Although this literature exploring the management of heritage sites is extensive, studies that specifically consider what makes heritage sites attractive to tourists are limited.

This paper reports on the development of a conceptual assessment instrument to address the problem. Firstly, the iconic characteristics unique to industrial heritage are defined in terms of their impact on tourism potential. Drawing on this understanding and previous exploratory development and empirical work by du Cros (2001) and McKercher and Ho (2006), a five-dimensional instrument for the assessment of industrial heritage sites as sustainable tourist attractions is presented. The paper concludes with a conceptual application of the instrument to the Australian mining city of Broken Hill and three comparable industrial World Heritage Sites in the United Kingdom: Blaenavon Industrial Landscape; Cornwall and West Devon Mining Landscape; and Ironbridge Gorge World Heritage Site.

The iconic character of Broken Hill is largely assumed in this paper based on the city’s inclusion on the Australian National Heritage List. To be inscribed on the National Heritage List, a place must meet at least one of nine thematic criteria and be deemed to be of outstanding significance to the Australian community in comparison to other similar sites (Freestone et al., 2009). Broken Hill was inscribed in 2015 as having met eight of the nine criteria. These relate specifically to the scale and longevity of the ore body, contributions to mineralogical science and mining technology, developments in the Australian labour movement, the physical characteristics of the city, and the resilience of community in a remote location.

**Identifying the iconic characteristics of industrial heritage**

Arguing for the cultural significance of industrial heritage has presented a unique problem for those who recognise the role that industrial culture has played, and continues to play, in the shaping of national identities and economic development. The currency of the memory associated with the industrial past, reinforced through art, literature and physical remains, is one of a variety of factors that have contributed to the problem of a more universal recognition (Lowenthal, 1998). Other factors include the relative ordinariness of industrial heritage, the wealth of evidence still in existence, and the lack of a strong, theoretically supported research agenda (Blockley, 1999; Palmer & Neaverson, 1998). A further exacerbating factor has been the persistence of conservative local management practices and narrow definitions of heritage (Smith, 2006). Taken together, these...
factors have meant slow recognition of the industrial past as a legitimate form of heritage. The questions of relevance to this paper are, however, how is industrial heritage defined and what characteristics determine its significance and establish the iconic status of an industrial site.

A systematic review of the World Heritage List was conducted between 2010 and 2013 to isolate those sites that could be classified as industrial. A definition of industrial heritage was derived from the literature as consisting of those tangible and intangible aspects of culturally significant human systems that have evolved for the intense exploitation of natural resources or production of goods or services, and are considered significant for their aesthetic, economic, historic, political, social and technological values. Further examination of the nomination and evaluation documents for those sites revealed several distinguishing or iconic characteristics unique to industrial heritage sites.

In terms of tangible characteristics, sites tended to be a complex mix of disused or underutilised industrial structures and extensive man-made landscapes. Boundaries blur into the surrounding landscape typically including worker housing and community infrastructure. Many sites are in remote locations and contain hazardous physical features such as disused mine shafts and contaminated waste. The intangible characteristics of industrial heritage include layers of technological innovation and expansion, as well as links to broader regional and international socio-economic and political networks. These networks extend the diversity of stakeholder interest in any given site. Further intangible characteristics include the utilitarian aesthetic of industrial heritage and associations with periods of rapid social change and deprivation (Table 1).

Table 1. The iconic characteristics of industrial heritage

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Heritage values</th>
<th>Defining characteristics</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tangible values</td>
<td>Extensive infrastructure and/or extensive human-made landscapes</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Interlinked industrial, residential and community functions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Indistinct site boundaries</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Geographically or perceptually remote locations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Limited economic and functional options for adaptive re-use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intangible values</td>
<td>Innovative technological, socio-economic and organisation systems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Layers of technical innovation and industrial processes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Links to broader economic, environmental and social networks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Links to multiple and diverse stakeholder groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A utilitarian aesthetic perceived to of limited value</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Author

A detailed content analysis was then conducted on the management plans for six industrial World Heritage Sites in the United Kingdom. The plans revealed that the more immediate effect of these iconic characteristics on tourism related to the cost and complexity of conservation and maintenance work, and the provision of safe visitor access and adequate interpretation. A less obvious impact came from the extensive and varied interest groups who complicated the stakeholder engagement process while the utilitarian aesthetic influenced perceptions of value with a public used to a more visually pleasing heritage. With these characteristics and their effects in mind, of primary concern of the management plans was the ability of such industrial sites,
particularly in remote locations, to generate sufficient income from tourist visitation and other commercial uses such as adaptive re-use to operate sustainably.

**Methodology: Developing a sustainable tourism assessment instrument**

The study involved three stages undertaken between 2010 and 2013. World Heritage sites were selected as the basis for comparative analysis with Broken Hill because they represent the pinnacle of international heritage significance based on criteria that are universally agreed and have evolved steadily over a thirty-five year period (Landorf, 2009). The assessment of significance at the World Heritage level is also subject to independent evaluation by recognised bodies of experts. Best international practice is, therefore, assumed to inform the management of these sites, including the strategies employed to sustain heritage value and develop tourism.

Stage one commenced with a review of the World Heritage List to establish a representative sample of industrial sites that were comparable to Broken Hill in terms of their scale, complexity and governance arrangements. The selected sites were Blaenavon Industrial Landscape inscribed in 2000, Cornwall and West Devon Mining Landscape inscribed in 2006, and Ironbridge Gorge World Heritage Site inscribed in 1986, and all located in the United Kingdom. Documents related to the history and management frameworks at each location were analysed to provide an appreciation of the key features of each site. The documentary evidence, particularly the management plans for each World Heritage site, and City Council strategic plans for Broken Hill, were also used to inform an understanding of the key tourism management and sustainability issues associated with each site.

Stage two involved visits to each site. Visual surveys were used primarily to audit key features and develop a deeper familiarity with the issues identified in the management plans for each site. While subject to a degree of selectivity, the surveys supported a more comprehensive view of each setting than relying on secondary sources alone. The surveys were used to identify the extent of each site, and the nature and condition of the physical fabric and features associated with each site. The surveys were also used to corroborate the key management and sustainability issues identified in stage one. Promotional material, guidebooks, driving and walking tours were sourced at each site and used to conduct self-guided explorations. Photographs recorded significant features and any strategic issues identified in stage one, such as land instability and interpretation. Some experiences were closed for seasonal or maintenance reasons. However, the major visitor experiences promoted at each site were trialled. Each site visit lasted between two and three days.

The final stage used theoretical thematic analysis to evaluate the visual survey data and triangulate the findings against the key issues identified earlier. A previous study by du Cros (2001) had designed a tourism assessment model based on market appeal and cultural heritage asset robustness. This two dimensional quantitative model was developed by McKercher and Ho (2006) into a four dimensional qualitative tool for assessing the potential of cultural heritage assets to be developed into viable tourism attractions. The four dimensions were cultural, physical, product and experiential values. While the tool was theoretically robust, it had been designed for use on smaller heritage attractions and tested in Hong Kong, a densely populated location. The original instrument, therefore, required modification for complex industrial heritage sites.
The original tool used between five and six qualitative criteria in the form of questions to assess each dimension. To increase reliability and illustrate relationships more decisively, these criteria were simplified to two direct questions per dimension. As the aim of this study was to assess the potential of industrial heritage for sustainable tourism, a fifth sustainable development dimension was derived from the literature and added to the instrument (Landorf, 2011) (Table 2). To enable a relative ordering of holistic data, the original tool used an ordinal scale marking system rather than absolute measures based on five categories – ‘low’, ‘low/moderate’, ‘moderate’, ‘moderate/high’ and ‘high’. A similar qualitative framework was also adopted in this study.

Table 2. Industrial heritage assessment dimensions and criteria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimensions</th>
<th>Criteria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cultural values</td>
<td>How current are stakeholder associations with the site (are they within or beyond living memory)?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What is the level of heritage significance at the site (is the site of international, national or local significance)?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical values</td>
<td>What is the level of visitor access and interpretation at the site?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>How authentic and intact are the site’s significant attributes?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Product values</td>
<td>How close is the site to other compatible tourist attractions?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What is the level of heritage tourism appeal?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experience values</td>
<td>What is the level of technological sophistication and educational/cognitive design of the site?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>How involved are visitors in the creation of experiences at the site?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustainability values</td>
<td>How extensive is stakeholder participation in the site (is the site managed by a partnership or through a democratic process)?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What is the level of strategic planning at the site (how rigorous is the process and is it integrated into national goals)?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Author

The cultural values dimension of the modified instrument considered the extent of stakeholder associations with a site and the level of site recognition based on international, national or local significance. This dimension assessed the depth of emotional engagement based on personal associations with a site, and the breadth of recognition amongst potential tourists. The physical values dimension evaluated the level of visitor access and quality of interpretation at each site, and the extent of historical authenticity and integrity. This dimension needed to determine the accessibility and physical quality of a site in terms of interpretation, intactness and state of repair. The product values dimension assessed the extent of compatible tourism experiences in close proximity to each site, and the market appeal of the experiences offered. This dimension ascertained each site’s relationship to other tourism nodes and its capacity to attract and retain visitors. The experience values dimension measured the technological sophistication and educational design of tourist experiences at each site, and the extent of visitor participation in and co-creation of those experiences. This dimension needed to establish the depth of cognitive engagement at each site and whether the available breadth of engagement experiences would lead to lengthy or multiple visits.
The fifth and final sustainable development dimension examined the use of a long term and holistic approach to tourism planning, and the extent of stakeholder participation in that planning process. Strategic planning and stakeholder participation were identified in the literature as contributing to sustainable development. A formal planning process promotes a circular model of future oriented causality while multiple stakeholder participation in the process enhances accountability and commitment to sustainable outcomes. Finally, the visual survey descriptions were synthesised into categories of heritage visitor experiences and used to inform the assessment of physical, product and experience values dimensions.

**Results: Applying a sustainable tourism assessment instrument**

Visual survey results

Ironbridge Gorge offered the most comprehensive collection of interpretive information together with a coordinated passport system of entry to the ten museums at the site. Blaenavon offered a well-coordinated graphic style and comprehensive collection of brochures for the site’s various heritage assets. A series of walking trails had been developed and included in a suite of interpretive materials. As the newest and most extensive site, interpretive information at Cornwall and West Devon was fragmented and lacked graphical coordination. Broken Hill offered a series of clearly signposted and informative walking and driving trails but published material lacked the graphic sophistication and coordination found at Ironbridge Gorge and Blaenavon. In terms of more elaborate visitor experiences, a phenomenological definition of ‘experience’ as an event that has some personal relevance, novelty, surprise, learning, and engagement, was adopted as a framework for the categorisation of experience types (Poulsson & Kale, 2004). Six different experiences were defined on the basis of increasing levels of visitor interaction and technological support (Table 3).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of experience</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self-guided tours</td>
<td>Self-guided walk or drive tours supported by maps, signage and interpretive information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Static interpretation</td>
<td>Static interpretive representations of historic information and traditional practices using costumed dummies and reproduction and/or original props</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Costumed interpretation</td>
<td>Interactive interpretive representations of historic information and traditional practices using live costumed staff and reproduction and/or original props</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi-media interpretation</td>
<td>Non-interactive interpretive representations of historic information and traditional practices using live actors recorded in visual or audio performances</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interactive physical experience</td>
<td>Interactive interpretive representations of historic information and traditional practices that physically engage the visitor in a directed learning experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interactive multi-media immersion</td>
<td>Interactive interpretive representations of historic information and traditional practices that physically engage the visitor in a self-directed multi-media learning experience</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Author
The visual surveys revealed that visitors at all four sites could access at least one type of experience on a permanent basis. The extent of the experiences varied from self-guided tours and interpretive signage at all sites, through static interpretive representations, to major interactive physical and multi-media visitor experiences. Ironbridge Gorge and Blaenavon offered the most extensive range of experiences (Table 4).

Table 4. Visitor experiences offered at each site

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of experience</th>
<th>Industrial Heritage Site</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Blaenavon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-guided tours</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Static interpretation</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Costumed interpretation</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi-media interpretation</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interactive physical experience</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interactive multi-media immersion</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Author

In addition, Ironbridge Gorge utilised historic buildings as retail facilities, commercial premises and accommodation. While not actively interpreting heritage significance, the physical character of the buildings added to the experience at the site. Some sites also supported periodic events such as Blaenavon’s Walking Festival, the Brass Band Festival at Ironbridge Gorge and World Heritage Day celebrations at all three World Heritage sites. Broken Hill is associated with a particular school of artists known as ‘The Brushman of the Bush’ and the annual St Patricks racing carnival, but there are no specific cultural festivals or events that regularly draw tourists to the city.

Applying the assessment instrument

Following the visual survey, the five dimensional assessment instrument was applied at a conceptual level to each site to reveal a range of strategic or ‘fatal’ flaws in the tourist offerings, particularly at Broken Hill. The cultural values dimension considered the stakeholder associations and heritage significance. As World Heritage sites, Blaenavon, Cornwall and West Devon, and Ironbridge Gorge all rated more strongly on the heritage significance criteria than Broken Hill. However, due to the currency of its working heritage value and contributions to economic development and labour relations in Australia, Broken Hill rated more strongly in terms of stakeholder associations.

The physical values dimension evaluated the level access and interpretation and the authenticity and integrity. With a high level of mining infrastructure remaining in place and some still operational, Broken Hill rated more strongly in terms of the authenticity and integrity of the built environment (Figure 3). The three World Heritage sites rated more strongly in terms of site access and interpretation with Ironbridge Gorge rating highly while the fragmented nature of Cornwall and West Devon resulted in a low/moderate rating.
Figure 3. Historic Broken Hill mining infrastructure and civic buildings, 2010. L to R: Civic buildings along Argent Street. Browne’s Shaft and Headframe. (Photographs by Author)

The *product values dimension* assessed market appeal and proximity to compatible attractions. The three World Heritage sites rated more highly than Broken Hill on both values. Ironbridge Gorge is closer than Blaenavon and Cornwall West Devon to major population centres and has a variety of other tourist attractions in close proximity. Blaenavon is a compact and well-presented site but with fewer active attractions and accommodation options. The market appeal of Cornwall and West Devon is affected by the site’s complexity. While there are few active experiences in close proximity, the Cornwall and West Devon area is a recognised holiday destination for reasons other than heritage tourism. Broken Hill is 510km from Adelaide, the nearest major city. Although appealing as an outback destination, the complexity of the site means maintenance and presentation are problematic. More significantly, there are no major interactive physical or multi-media immersion experiences currently in operation at Broken Hill. Ironbridge Gorge, by comparison, includes ten major museums offering varying visitor experiences. The Big Pit National Coal Museum in Blaenavon and Geevor Tin Mine in Cornwall and West Devon both offer authentic and unique underground and surface works tours.

The *experience value dimension* established the technological sophistication and educational design of visitor experiences, and the degree of experience co-creation at each site. The three World Heritage sites rated more strongly on both dimensions than Broken Hill. Ironbridge Gorge operates a number of technologically sophisticated interactive experiences that utilise a wide variety of interpretation and presentation techniques. Blaenavon and Cornwall and West Devon include fewer interactive experiences but both offer unique interactive attractions in the Big Pit National Museum.
and Geevor Tin Mine. As previously mentioned, there is currently no major interactive visitor experience at Broken Hill (Figure 4).

Figure 4. A view of the Broken Hill surface mine workings toward the former Zinc Corporation mine, 2010. (Photographs by Author)

The final sustainability value dimension examined the planning process at each site and the extent of stakeholder participation in that process. All four sites utilised a strong strategic planning process. However, Broken Hill rated more highly on both dimensions. The primary managing organisation for the city of Broken Hill is the democratically elected local council. Local councils are subject to state environmental legislation and integrated into national governance and sustainability frameworks. As elected bodies, local councils are also subject to public standards of accountability, legitimacy and effectiveness. While local governments have a significant involvement at the World Heritage Sites, all three utilise partnership structures of varying sizes and complexities.

The conceptual application of the assessment instrument reveals Broken Hill to have relatively high ratings for its cultural, physical and sustainability values. There are, however, deficiencies along the product and experience value dimensions. While Broken Hill offers a unique and holistic experience, the city’s remoteness from major population centres and transportation routes, and isolation from other compatible tourist attractions are significant flaws. The scale and complexity of the site and deteriorating heritage infrastructure suggests that, even with the addition of a major mining-related interactive tourist attraction, there is insufficient market appeal and associative value to overcome these locational weaknesses (Table 5).
Table 5. Assessment of tourism potential at each site

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimensions of heritage tourism</th>
<th>Blaenavon</th>
<th>Cornwall/West Devon</th>
<th>Ironbridge Gorge</th>
<th>Broken Hill</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cultural values:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• heritage significance</td>
<td>high</td>
<td>high</td>
<td>high</td>
<td>moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• stakeholder association</td>
<td>moderate</td>
<td>moderate</td>
<td>low/mod</td>
<td>mod/high</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Physical values:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• authenticity and integrity</td>
<td>mod/high</td>
<td>mod/high</td>
<td>moderate</td>
<td>high</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• access and interpretation</td>
<td>mod/high</td>
<td>low/mod</td>
<td>high</td>
<td>low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Product values:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• market appeal</td>
<td>mod/high</td>
<td>moderate</td>
<td>high</td>
<td>low/mod</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• compatible proximity</td>
<td>low/mod</td>
<td>moderate</td>
<td>high</td>
<td>low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Experience values:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• experience co-creation</td>
<td>mod/high</td>
<td>moderate</td>
<td>high</td>
<td>low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• technology and education</td>
<td>mod/high</td>
<td>moderate</td>
<td>high</td>
<td>low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sustainability values:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• strategic planning</td>
<td>mod/high</td>
<td>mod/high</td>
<td>mod/high</td>
<td>high</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• stakeholder participation</td>
<td>moderate</td>
<td>low/mod</td>
<td>moderate</td>
<td>high</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Author

**Conclusion**

The current *Broken Hill Strategic Tourism Plan* refers to the city’s National Heritage List nomination as something that will ‘position Broken Hill as the only Australian City to be awarded National Heritage Listing and, therefore, recognition (sic) as a significant heritage tourism destination within Australia’ (Wray, 2010). This sentiment is echoed in the City Council’s *Management Plan 2009/2014* where tourism is linked to the listing of the city and both heritage listing and tourism are noted as major factors influencing the achievement of social and economic objectives (BHCC, 2009). Interrogating these two documents reveals that the nomination process has led to a more targeted approach to the management, development and marketing of Broken Hill as a tourist destination. However, the effects of heritage listing on tourism remain ambiguous due to the complex bundle of interdependent factors that make up any given heritage attraction.

Like other complex industrial sites, Broken Hill anticipates that inscription will have a positive impact on the city’s economy. While the cultural values associated with Broken Hill are more contemporary the breadth of recognition is weaker in comparison to the World Heritage sites. On its own, this could be addressed with targeted marketing strategies. Likewise, as the more recently operational of the four sites, Broken Hill rates more highly in terms of authenticity and integrity but this is weighted against poorer access and interpretation across the site. This could also be addressed with more targeted site development and management strategies. In terms of sustainability, Broken Hill rates highly by comparison based on the long-term, holistic and participatory governance arrangements currently in place for the site.
However, unlike Blaenavon, Cornwall and West Devon, Broken Hill does not currently have a significant mining related interactive visitor attraction and, unlike Ironbridge Gorge, it does not offer a variety of complimentary experiences. The closure of an underground tourist operation at Delprat’s Mine in 2007 is noted in the BHCC Tourism Plan as having ‘left a significant gap in the visitor experience’ (Wray, 2010). This practical but strategic issue could also be addressed with targeted development. However, together with the city’s remote location, isolation from other complementary tourist attractions, and fragile and extensive mining infrastructure, this suggests a strategic flaw in the longer-term sustainability of heritage tourism for the city, even with inscription on the National Heritage List.

The instrument developed and tested in this study builds a sustainable development dimension into a previously tested model. This ties the feasibility of a tourism asset into the longer-term, holistic and participatory planning process necessary for sustainable development. The multi-dimensional nature of the instrument, along cultural, physical, product, experience and sustainability value dimensions, provides a balanced perspective allowing a more focussed targeting of critical weaknesses. Finally, the comparative and qualitative nature of the instrument allows it to be deployed with relative ease by non-experts as part of a consensus decision-making process, a key contributor to sustainable development.

As the conceptual application of the five-dimensional framework suggested in this study has shown, iconic status is the product of a variety of characteristics unique to a given historic site. While inscription on a National Heritage List might establish the iconic value of a place such as Broken Hill, a closer reading of the unique characteristics of the site exposes several strategic flaws that will be difficult to address from a sustainable management and tourism development perspective.

References


Urban Parks, Urban Icons?
The case of Bicentennial Park in Sydney

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This paper explores the question of how urban parks function as urban icons. It examines Bicentennial Park in Homebush Bay, 12 km west of the Sydney Central Business District (CBD) as a case study. Bicentennial Park was planned and designed between 1983 and 1988, a time when Australia, and its cities in particular, grappled with tensions between celebrating achievements of two hundred years of European settlement and redressing the cultural and ecological harm wrought by those achievements. The research focuses on a review of material related to the design and promotion of the park, and early reviews of the park. The discussion explores the influence of specific ideas about the city and ecology on the transformations of use, materiality, and physical form of the land that became Bicentennial Park. Findings reveal that Bicentennial Park at Homebush Bay was conceived as an awkwardly scripted design, which in turn reflects a convergence of urban planning initiatives, intensifying environmental awareness and ideological tensions within the then nascent Australian-based profession of landscape architecture. The findings also reveal that, in this case, aesthetic innovation is not the basis of iconicity; more significant are the ways in which the form and materiality of a park design conveys shifts in ideas about the city and its relationship to ‘nature,’ and for landscape architecture, ways of practicing design.

Key Words: urban parks; urban icons; Bicentennial Park; Australian landscape architecture

Introduction

“Linear parks are urban icons!” A clear enough pronouncement by a delegate at the 2015 Australian Institute of Landscape Architects conference, but on reflection, I realised that it was more problematic than it seemed. While it is true that the particular linear parks this delegate referred to, the High Line in New York City and the Goods Line in Sydney, quickly have gained iconic status, not all parks become icons, or iconic. Why not? How does any park become iconic, and why? Why does it matter that parks become iconic at all? In part, it matters because parks are more than design projects: they are cultural expressions, specific to time and place. Great urban parks—think Central Park, think High Line—can be considered iconic because their designs capture a social and
political need for public space not yet known or articulated by the general public, and in doing so resonate and project social values in powerful spatial and visual terms. Iconic parks are places where new social values are on display, through their materiality and spatial form as well as the modes of social activity these parks encourage and/or allow. This nexus of spatial form and social activity can elevate both the park and its host city to inclusion in a broader “global urban narrative” (Ethington and Schwartz, 2006), and it is in this context that parks may become iconic.

Urban parks are influenced by myriad factors: social values and practices; political will and ideology; economic regimes; environmental attributes; and the technological capacity to fix environmental, social, economic and structural problems. Urban parks thus play important roles as cities reconceptualise and reorder their physical and social fabric, a role they undertake primarily in spatial and visual terms. This primacy of the visual and spatiality of parks renders them ideal candidates for iconic roles in their cities, particularly during periods of significant urban transitions. The form and fabric of parks can inflect and project shifting cultural values and meaning in ways that are readily accessible to the public, and accelerate changes in social practice. Careful reading of the visual culture, that is the form and fabric of parks, as well as representations of these parks, can extend our appreciation of urban parks as agents of spatial and social change within the broad texture of urban fabric and culture.

This paper explores the iconic role of urban parks, with particular attention to the question of why and how parks or aspects/elements of parks come to represent a city at large and its culture, and how, in the process, parks become iconic (or not). The research presented here focuses on a case study of Bicentennial Park in Homebush Bay, 12 km west of the Sydney Central Business District (CBD). Since the 1980s, park making in Sydney has played a critical role as the state of New South Wales has jostled to elevate and sustain Sydney’s status as a global city. One particular catalyst for this was the lead-up to the 1988 Bicentennial Celebrations in Australia, which provided incentive for a range of public domain projects. Many Bicentennial projects, including parks, were implemented across Australian cities and towns, supported by special Bicentennial funds provided by the Australian state and commonwealth governments. A few Bicentennial projects in NSW, notably Darling Harbour in Sydney and Bicentennial Park at Homebush Bay, have become iconic reminders of this era—for different reasons. Both received funding from state and federal governments, and although quite distinct in program, both were intended as urban revitalisation projects. While Darling Harbour is now in the midst of an extensive overhaul, Bicentennial Park has endured, for the most part retaining, if not in fact amplifying, the initial intentions for its role in the city.

The research focuses on a review of material related to the early design and promotion of the park, and early reviews of the park. The discussion explores the influence of specific ideas about the city and nature on the outcomes at the park, specifically the transformations of use, materiality, and form. Findings reveal that Bicentennial Park at Homebush Bay was conceived as a tightly scripted design, which in turn reflects a convergence of urban planning initiatives, intensifying environmental awareness and ideological tensions within the then nascent Australian-based profession of landscape architecture, all specific to both time and place. The paper concludes with observations on the park as an icon which mobilised particular ideas about the city and nature, at a specific point in the history of both Sydney and the profession of landscape architecture in Australia.
Historical Background

Bicentennial Park is located in Homebush Bay, a large estuary on the south edge of the Parramatta River, which is fed by Haslam’s Creek and Powell’s Creek. In the late 18th and 19th centuries Homebush Bay was settled by Europeans who farmed the area. From the late 19thc to the mid-20thc, several state industrial and defense operations occupied the area, including a naval armaments depot, the NSW Abattoir, and the NSW State Brick Works. From the mid-20thc, much of Homebush Bay was reclaimed to accommodate expanding industrial and manufacturing businesses. (Sydney Olympic Park Authority, 2015) By the 1970s, as Sydney expanded more densely and westward from the central business district towards Parramatta, Homebush Bay was highly a degraded landscape, polluted with toxic soils and water.

Bicentennial Park emerged from a series of NSW government initiatives focused on transforming Homebush Bay from a degraded industrial area into an economic hub. The first of these was a 1978 decision to construct a sports stadium and recreational facility at Homebush Bay. A 1980 review of this proposal had two major outcomes: the conversion of the stadium to an indoor sports centre and the excision of 50 hectares of wetlands and a 30 hectare rubbish tip from the proposed sports facility. The NSW State Sport Centre was completed in 1984, and was followed by the development of the Australian Business Centre. The 80 hectares of excised lands — wetlands and tip—was designated Bicentennial Park in 1983, and in 2001 the three projects were integrated into the broader mosaic of Sydney Olympic Park, which today comprises 440 hectares, and includes the Olympic urban core and surrounding parklands. Collectively, the three 1980s urban projects reflect distinct shifts in the understanding of Sydney as a city: firstly, Homebush and Parramatta as both the geographic and demographic centre of the Sydney metropolitan region; secondly, a growing recognition of the importance of ecology and ‘nature’ to the city; and thirdly, the expanding role of government in urban rejuvenation projects.

Beyond these broad factors, Bicentennial Park also had a specific motivating force—a 1978 study undertaken by students at the newly established Environmental Studies Centre at Macquarie University, titled ‘A Bicentennial Park for Sydney, Homebush Bay: a report.’ Under guidance from the NSW Planning and Environment Commission, the study focused on remnant wetlands and bird habitat. (Crosweller et al, p. 173) The study concluded that the potential of the site lay in its ecological significance, specifically the extent and rarity of the mangrove wetland and its potential to provide recreational facilities for the region. (Eskell et al, 1978) Supported by the local councils adjacent to the proposed park, Auburn, Strathfield and Concord, the park was approved and funded jointly by Commonwealth and State governments in 1983 as a Bicentennial project. The main direction of the 1978 report—that redevelopment of the Homebush Bay area presented an opportunity to conserve ecologically significant habitats and species—was a cornerstone of the Homebush Bay Regional Environmental Plan (SREP 24) which was gazetted in September 1993, in tandem with the processing of the bid to host the 2000 Olympics. This is significant in that SREP 24 established a framework for coordinated development across the area, and thus was an instrument for integrating ecological, social and economic concerns.

The intended significance of the park was reflected in a number of ways in its early years of planning and development. The opening of the park was designated as the site of the first ceremonial event on 1 January 1988, opening the Bicentennial year celebrations, with the Prime Minister Bob Hawke
The construction process, which started in 1983, involved myriad state level agencies: it was led by the Landscape Section of the NSW Public Works Department in conjunction with an Interim Management Committee, which included the NSW Premier’s Department; the Royal Botanic Gardens; Centennial Park; the NSW Department of Environment and Planning; a geographic ecologist from Macquarie University; and representatives from the three adjacent local councils: Auburn; Strathfield and Concord. (Anon, 1985) Cost was another indicator of significance: initially estimated at $8 million, costs finished at approximately $12.5 million. Finally, the Bicentennial Park Act, gazetted in 1988, led to the formation of the Bicentennial Park Trust, whose first strategic plan for the park spelled out the international significance of the park, stating that, “…the worldwide significance of estuarine and wetlands means the Trust’s responsibility goes beyond the park boundaries,” and went on to focus on global outcomes of decisions, and the opportunity to contribute research to a global network. (Bicentennial Park Trust 1992, p. 2)

In addition to the specific historical context of the park itself and its role in the Bicentennial Celebrations, broader social and political developments had a significant influence on the park. A full discussion of these factors is beyond the scope of this paper, but noteworthy are the contemporaneous formation of the Australian Institute of Landscape Architects (1966), the establish of a bachelor’s landscape architecture program at UNSW in 1974, and associated early efforts to establish professional practice. Other significant factors include the rise of tourism as a significant pillar for the Australian economy, the expanded environmental legislation and the rise of ecology in Australia, especially urban ecology, and its role in mapping and communicating urban environmental conditions.

Placing Urban Icons in Urban History

In their introduction to the Urban Icon Atlas project, Philip Ethington and Vanessa Swchartz refer to urban icons as a “conceptual grid for studying the intersection of visual culture and urban history.” (Ethington and Schwartz, 2006 p.1) Central to their atlas project is the role of icons in the history of cities, particularly the ways in which urban icons have the capacity to project their cities into a global urban discourse. (Ethington and Schwartz, 2006, p. 6) Thus scholarship focused on urban icons explores questions about the formation and role of urban identity through the study of specific visual elements—that is, icons-- especially those which have played a critical role in urban history. This approach opens opportunities for developing a more visually oriented urban history (Ethington and Schwartz, 2006, p. 8), and parallels the growing importance of a spatial orientation within urban history. It has great relevance to the scholarship of urban parks, in as far as it helps to contextualise parks within their specific urban location and culture. (Ethington and Schwartz, 2006, p.11)

Bicentennial Park as a Spatial Fix

Proponents described the park as a “unique project,” which would “enhance the urban environment, providing much needed parkland in this region of Sydney as well as conserving an ecologically important natural environment and educational resource.” (Anon, 1985) Three distinct aims are embedded here: first, an overarching intent to provide a significant urban park in Sydney’s west; second the intention to re-form degraded land, and thirdly, the need to conserve significant wetlands for both intrinsic and extrinsic values. Each of these related to broader campaigns then
current in Sydney. The first, provision of parkland, was a response to the increasingly evident need to alleviate the chronic political and socio-economic tension between the Sydney CBD and the western suburbs, with the Sydney CBD consistently viewed as attracting more than its fair share of resources. The second was recognition of the obligation to remediate the physical and ecological degradation caused by urban industrial activity, activated in large part by the NSW Environmental Planning and Assessment Act, passed in 1979. The third was related to the growing awareness of the both need and opportunity to protect biodiversity and ecosystems, within and beyond the urban area. That the park embodies these three concerns in concept, form and materiality demonstrates that the creation of Bicentennial Park was much more than a stage for celebrations and recreation, but rather a complex device of socio-spatial, economic and environmental urban transformation.

Looked at this way, Bicentennial Park was in effect a spatial fix, (Harvey 2006), in that it emerged out of a suite of considered and related state government initiatives, to result in changes to the spatial form, fabric, ecological functioning and social use of the land at Homebush Bay. Spatial fixes have several dimensions, economic being foremost, (Harvey, 2006) but realising the economic benefits of a spatial fix relies on a matrix of closely related social, visual, physical changes. A key role for Bicentennial Park was the recalibration of the allocation of resources across the metropolitan region, to tip the balance westward and in doing so mark the true centre of Sydney. This theme of social justice –interpreted here as the equitable distribution and access of park land—recurred throughout promotions and reviews of the park. For example, Lorna Harrison, the landscape architect for Bicentennial Park, wrote in 1986 that the Bicentennial Park project was intended “to give to that region of Sydney, indeed to all of Sydney, a grand Bicentennial Park ...” (author’s emphasis, Harrison, 1986, p. 17). The journey to achieving this role was reviewed by and advocated for in various media. As the park took shape, alongside other Bicentennial Projects, reviews in the Sydney Morning Herald highlighted persistent regional inequities, with titles such as “An instant garden in the city, a long wait in the west,” and “Darling Harbour the Government’s pet gets $200m” (Aubin, 1987 a; Aubin 1987b). Aubin portrayed the imbalance in visual and quantitative language: Bicentennial Park received 55,000 small and 90 percent native trees in 1987; while Darling Harbour received 850 large trees (one large enough to be personified as Fred the Fig), painting an image of a garden of mature trees, ready-made for instant enjoyment, and the garden of neglect in the west, an icon of inequity.

After the opening of the park, the discourse took a positive stance as it shifted to film as a medium to promote the Homebush Bay area as Sydney’s urban centre. Again, visual language was a key to advocating for the new iconic role of the new park. Video productions commissioned by the Bicentennial Park Trust in 1993 –the year Sydney won the bid for the 2000 Olympics, and the year SREP 24 was gazetted, described the park as a “Fitting choice ...In the heart of metropolitan Sydney . . . Bicentennial Park has become a magnificent sanctuary in our city,” with the term ‘city’ open ended enough to be interpreted as Sydney urban region. (Pearman, 1993) Indeed, eight years later, when Bicentennial Park had been incorporated into Sydney Olympic Park, Bicentennial Park was described as the “Heartland of Sydney,” “Golden West,” and “a meeting place for all people of Australia.” (Bisset et al, 2001)

If Bicentennial Park was to be a central sanctuary for a more mature, 200 year old Sydney, it was done so in established, artistic terms, and the re-formation of degraded land at Bicentennial Park had a distinct focus on visual and spatial culture. Lorna Harrison, the lead landscape architect, was
emphatic about the need to create “a grand Bicentennial Park ... in the grand urban tradition of Centennial Park.” (Harrison, 1986, p. 17) This ideological intent was echoed in a 1984 review of the park in *Australian Natural History* which made specific comparisons to Centennial Park, noting that Centennial Park was conceived in part to provide a place for the people of Sydney to recreate—to promenade and to play. (O’Brien and Thorman, 1984, p. 295) This statement acknowledged that Centennial Park was a landscape sculpted in specific ways, to encourage desirable spatial practices and appropriate behaviours, and implied that Bicentennial Park—as Sydney’s second grand urban park—would play the same role in the city. Both Harrison and Ron Powell, the project manager, highlighted design principles employed in the park which linked it to the ‘grand tradition,’ namely, geometry, focal points and axes, (Harrison, 1986; Crosweller, 1990, p174) but neither emphasised the more specific design devices employed to articulate the role of the new park in relation to the city. At Centennial Park, which was designed as a respite from the city, and a distinct contrast to the experience of the surrounding city, design devices included a grand drive with stately avenues of trees, a landscape cleared to open expanses of sky, lawn and water, and a grand all-encompassing fence, punctuated with imposing gates. The main design device of Bicentennial Park was the *internal* contrast, specifically between the 50 ha of ‘natural’ wetlands and the developed park, constructed over 30 hectares of land fill; second in importance to this were two axes. An east/west axis, featured a canal of 200 jets of water, and culminated at its high point in a treillage. Both the treillage and the fountain became important visual registers for this portion of the park, centring and connecting the park in relation to its surrounds, especially the new Sports Centre just to the southwest and Concord station to the southeast. A north/south axis, planted with an avenue of trees, served the ‘mangrove vista,’ a means of focusing attention from afar on the wetlands. (Harrison, 1986)

Ideological tensions also underpinned and motivated the design aims and devices of the park. The aspiration to emulate grand urban traditions was more than a design statement; Harrison was taking aim at what she referred to as “Bib and Bub and the Bad Banksia Man”:

...the Bicentennial Park does seek to re-establish the great landscape traditions established in history and in the early years of Australia. Traditions which have been rejected emphatically by the Sydney School of Landscape Design and which have resulted in poor representations of Australian bushland located inappropriately within the urban fabric; a lack of reference to an historical continuum which has led to design solutions which pay little heed to the articulation of external space and the planning and design of landscape for artistic effect. (Harrison, 1986, p. 14)

Harrison turned to visual and spatial terms to project and to establish the new park both in defiance of the then emergent Sydney School of Landscape Design (sometimes referred to as the “Nuts and Berries School,”) and within the established—and global—artistic canon of park-making. Harrison was not alone in this campaign for insuring the artistic reputation of landscape design: the day Bicentennial Park opened, 1 January, 1988, John Haskell echoed this theme in the *Sydney Morning Herald*. He noted the distinction between this park and recent parks, and emphasised the fact that Bicentennial Park referenced great traditions of park making. Haskell also explained that “All buildings have a deliberately inflated monumental quality, adopting post-modern design features, a no less legitimate device today than the classical conceits...” (Haskell, 1988) Two years later, the Australian Institute of Landscape Architects extended this campaign in volume 12 of their journal,
Landscape Australia; featuring the fountain of Bicentennial Park on the cover, and placing the article about the new park alongside articles about India, with a photograph of the Taj Mahal offering an explicit visual link between old and new canal and fountains as key design devices. The same issue also featured articles about remediation of brownfields in Hong Kong, and Parc de la Villette, which had just opened on the outskirts of Paris.

Ecology, Identity and a New Type of Park

In her explanation of the park design, Harrison pointed to the opportunity “to create an exciting and unique contrast between man-made [sic] and natural landscape within the framework of an urban park.” (Harrison, 1986, p. 14) The contrast that emerged, between the 50ha of dense mangrove wetland and a more traditional park constructed on landfill, has become one the park’s key distinctive qualities—so much so that reviewers identified it as a new type of park in Sydney. This fact was foreshadowed by O’Brien and Thorman, who in their 1984 article in Australian Natural History, explained: “Bicentennial Park will differ from the old in that much of it will be managed for conservation rather than the sole purpose of providing public recreation.” (1984, p. 291) After opening, a review in Australian Society described the park as “a different type,” and the park elements as whimsical. (McConville, 1988, 49) This acknowledged, if lightly, changes to cultural value and social needs over the 100 years between two celebrations of European settlement in Australia, but omitted any reference to the value of this area to Aboriginal culture. Nonetheless, it marked an important shift, a shift influenced greatly by the direction set by the 1987 report by Eskell, which stated,

It cannot be emphasised too strongly that the Homebush Bay Area is, in many ways, unique in the variety and combination of natural resources it contains. If such resources are to be fully utilized without their continued survival being endangered, then human use—whether of an educational or recreational nature—needs to be balanced very carefully against ecological considerations, with the latter being the overriding factor. (Eskell et al, 1978, p. 10)

As a result, the focus on ecological habitat dominated portrayals of the value and importance of the new park. For example, the 1993 promotional video produced by the Bicentennial Trust spelled out the ways in which Bicentennial Park was more than a recreation area: with 60% ‘natural’ areas, it was hailed as an oasis, a sanctuary; with the role of the wetlands in the economy and global research highlighted. This “mangrove mania” became the mantra for the park: in 2001, the second video produced by the Trust, described the park as a locus dedication and expertise of conservation, and stating that “world survival depends” on this “natural wonderland.” (Bisset, 2001) Other park promotional material also focused on the wetlands, using bold and engaging woodcut images of the mangrove fauna the primary images used on the website. This imagery, repeated across print and digital, assisted with the cultural construction of the mangroves—and by association, Bicentennial Park—as an icon of conservation in an urban context.

Conclusion

Bicentennial Park is a complex urban icon, which took shape in a web of political, economic and cultural shifts underway in the 1980s in Sydney. The Park is an icon of a specific urban moment: the
expanding environmental movement; of specific (and contested) national commemorations, and a specific intention to catalyse a broader spatial fix. The struggle for recognition of Sydney’s new westward centre, expressed through repeated references to underfunding for the park at Homebush, and demonstrated in the favouritism displayed for Darling Harbour through more money and more mature trees, makes it somewhat ironic, that in the end, Darling Harbour has been the difficult child, and requiring rehabilitation, while Bicentennial Park remained a seed for what is now Sydney Olympic Park.

It has been shown elsewhere that environmental studies and ecologists who prepare them can promote new framing of cities, and in doing so convert ecological conservation projects to political projects. (Lachmund 2011, p. 206) At Bicentennial Park, the form and design devices in the park were material expressions of the argument for an artistic and historically grounded approach to urban landscape design, in effect attempts to articulate and reassert traditional cultural values in visual and artistic terms. More importantly, nature was framed in specific ways to achieve specific aims. The pairing of rarity and uniqueness with the role of the park as an international habitat asserted a global role for the park, as well as its makers and its managers. Thus Bicentennial Park is iconic in as far as it symbolises the integration of the ecological fix with the spatial fix, at a specific moment in history and in a specific place.

Finally, Bicentennial park played a specific and significant role in demonstrating how this integration of wetland conservation could be achieved as a ‘grand urban tradition’, a role made image-able by both the extent of mangroves in the park and the wetland based imagery used in promotional films and on the park’s website and brochures. Characterised by bold and simple contrast between ‘natural’ and ‘constructed’ landscapes, with axes connecting the park to its surrounds, the form of the park suggested, if crudely, changing ideas of the city—specifically that urban and the natural could co-exist, and that an urban park could be a place of ecological conservation and in doing so, contribute to global survival. This aligns with what Ethington and Schwartz refer to as the role of “distinctive cultures of destruction or preservation on a city’s visual history.” (Ethington and Schwartz, 2006, p.11) In as far as Bicentennial Park helped to establish ecological conservation as a cultural driver for urban park-making in Australia, a permanent legacy of the Bicentennial Park at Homebush Bay is the expanded value placed on ecological conservation as the basis of urban parks in Australia. This dimension of iconicity for Bicentennial Park has particular resonance for the Australian profession of landscape architecture: as Andrew Saniga notes in his survey of the landscape projects undertaken by government departments in the 1970s and 1980s—like Bicentennial Park—established foundations for both the role of landscape architects and approaches to sustainable design. (Saniga 2012, 201-214)

At the same however, the park presented limited inventiveness in terms of design; rather, it relied on an awkward and unresolved relationship between environmental problem solving, ecological conservation and landscape design. Frustration with this instrumental approach, typical of landscape architecture of the time, became the basis of calls for more creative, alternate approaches to landscape, approaches which would integrate ecology and creativity in more meaningful and innovative ways. (Corner, J. 1997. 40)

Is Bicentennial Park iconic? Yes, in as far as its form and materiality endure as temporally specific and awkward expression of an attempt to resolve in design terms the tension between nature and
city. It is also iconic as a reminder of specific urban challenges of the 1980s, and specific political and cultural responses—responses which were not aesthetically innovative, but which initiated and registered significant shifts in ideas about the city.

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Open space as icon
The making of local open space systems in Adelaide, 1950-2003

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Adelaide’s planning history is replete with examples of the adoption and adaptation of iconic urban open space ideas. The making of urban open spaces, beginning with the Adelaide parklands, is a direct result of the diverse roles attributed to those spaces and the values placed on them by the public and by design professionals responsible for their provision. The emergence of the garden city idea and the concepts of the neighbourhood unit, pedestrian oriented design, the British New Towns and social and environmental planning in the twentieth century contributed to the reconceptualization of open space as a system that underpinned the structure of the urban environment. Contrary to nineteenth century practice, increasingly through the second half of the twentieth century, the social, environmental, aesthetic, health and marketing benefits of open spaces, combined with detailed site analysis, determined the development of local open space systems at the beginning of the planning process. Using an interpretive-historical methodology and combined methods that draw on interpretive-historical, qualitative and case study techniques the paper examines how the benefits attributed to open spaces resulted in the evolution of local open space systems in Adelaide in the second half of the twentieth century. The discussion focuses on three sites: Elizabeth (1954-1966), Noarlunga (1960-1985) and Golden Grove (1974-2003).

Keywords Open space system; Elizabeth; Noarlunga; Golden Grove, Open space benefits

Introduction

Adelaide’s planning history has many examples of the adoption and adaptation of iconic urban open space ideas. The making of open spaces in Adelaide is a direct result of the roles attributed to the open spaces and the values placed on them by the public and by the design professionals responsible for their provision. Broadly, those roles and values are categorised as social, health, amenity, marketing and environmental benefits. As a result, many open spaces were created in Adelaide during the nineteenth century. In particular, two sites - the Adelaide parklands (Jones 2006,
pp.128-140) and the Belair National Park (Cordes 1983, pp.21-40) - were icons of early open space ideas.

Open space systems were initially proposed by Frederick law Olmsted Sr. in the late nineteenth century and were formed in the urban environment retrospectively by linking existing and proposed parks. Olmsted’s park systems were composed from a hierarchy of park types and sizes that were connected by parkways to form “a complete system of physically connected open spaces for a city” (Peterson 2003, p. 42). In North America the retrospective planning and application of city park systems was as Sonja Duempelmann (2009, p. 147) argued a “major preoccupation” in the first three decades of the twentieth century and influenced town plans internationally.

The emergence of town planning in the twentieth century led to the development of a number of influential planning concepts, presented in Table 1 that guided the ongoing development of metropolitan Adelaide (Hutchings 2007, pp. 61-83), (Forster and McCaskill 2007, pp. 85-107), Hamnett and Hutchings 2007, pp.117-120). Through those concepts model open space ideas were proposed and promoted for use in Adelaide including the greenbelt - an icon of twentieth century planning - as well as open space hierarchies, linear parks that facilitated non-vehicular movement and open space systems.
Table 1. Selected town planning concepts that influenced the development of metropolitan Adelaide in the twentieth century.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Planning Concept &amp; Iconic Examples</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Originator/Designer</th>
<th>Main Themes</th>
<th>Model/Iconic Open Space Ideas</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Garden City &amp; Garden Suburb (UK)</td>
<td>1890s</td>
<td>Ebenezer Howard</td>
<td>Devised as a means of ameliorating degraded urban conditions by combining the advantages of town and country living in size and population limited satellite cities. The open spaces were viewed as the 'lungs' of the site and were integral in creating a healthy, convenient and beautiful environment. In addition they were seen as sites where community interaction and cooperation could take place between the residents leading to community formation.</td>
<td>Open space hierarchy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letchworth Garden City (UK)</td>
<td>1903</td>
<td>Raymond Unwin &amp; Barry Parker</td>
<td></td>
<td>Greenbelt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hampstead Garden Suburb (UK)</td>
<td>1907</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighbourhood Unit (USA)</td>
<td>1920s</td>
<td>Clarence Perry</td>
<td>Influenced by garden city ideas the neighbourhood unit was devised as a “Family-Life Community’. The main principles of the model include “size”, “boundaries”, “open space”, “institutional sites”, “local shops” and, an “internal street system”. The open spaces were viewed as providing sites for both play and community interaction.</td>
<td>Hierarchy of local open spaces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedestrian Oriented Design</td>
<td>1928</td>
<td>Clarence Stein &amp; Henry Wright</td>
<td>Described as the “garden city for the motor age” Radburn was an evolution of the neighbourhood unit. The Radburn plan aimed to establish a model to create ‘better communities … for the average family’ and was based on five key elements “the superblock”, “specialised roads”, “complete separation of pedestrian and automobile”, “houses turned around” to face the open spaces and, “park as backbone”.</td>
<td>Linear open space network</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>British Mark 1 New Towns (UK)</td>
<td>1946-1955</td>
<td>British Government Development Corporation</td>
<td>A response to war time bombing that aimed to decentralise the population. The New Towns are based on garden city, neighbourhood unit and Radburn ideas. In addition the Labour Government’s social policy of class integration, specifically of the working and middle classes, is embedded into the new town policy.</td>
<td>Greenbelt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stevenage (UK)</td>
<td>1946</td>
<td>Stevenage Development Corporation</td>
<td></td>
<td>Green wedges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harlow (UK)</td>
<td>1947</td>
<td>Harlow Development Corporation/ Frederick Gibberd</td>
<td></td>
<td>Open space networks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social and Environmental Planning</td>
<td>1960s onwards</td>
<td>Ian McHarg, Christopher Alexander Constantinos Doxiadis</td>
<td>Viewed open spaces as a connected social and ecological system that structured the urban environment.</td>
<td>Open space systems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>British Mark 3 New Town - Milton Keynes (UK)</td>
<td>1967</td>
<td>Milton Keynes Development Corporation/ Lord Llewellyn-Davis</td>
<td>An evolution of the earlier New Towns that reflected the improved social and economic circumstances of the British people. Planning goals were “opportunity”, “freedom of choice”, “easy movement and access”, “an attractive city”, “public awareness and participation”, and “efficient and imaginative use of resources”.</td>
<td>Green infrastructure</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As detailed by Alan Hutchings (2007, pp. 71-72) and Robert Freestone (2000, pp. 310-316) open space system ideas were explored in Australia in the first decades of the twentieth century in the metropolitan plans for Adelaide (1917), Melbourne (1929) and Perth (1931). In the second half of the twentieth century the social, environmental, amenity, health and marketing benefits of open spaces, combined with detailed site analysis, determined the development of local open space systems at the beginning of the planning process. Open space systems were used to structure the urban environment (Freestone 2010, pp. 145-159, 270-272) (Kambites and Owen 2006, pp. 483-484).

The paper examines how the set of open space benefits (roles and values) defined in Table 2 were attributed to open spaces resulting in the evolution of local open space systems in Adelaide in the second half of the twentieth century. The benefits relate specifically to metropolitan Adelaide during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and illustrate an accumulative understanding, by selected design professionals, of the importance of open spaces. The discussion focuses on three sites. Elizabeth (1954-1966) was built by the South Australian Housing Trust (SAHT) in-line with British New Town ideas and contains a nascent local open space system. Noarlunga (1960-1985) was developed by two government agencies the South Australian Housing Trust (SAHT) and the South Australian Land Commission (SALC) and through private speculation. Both the SAHT and SALC created local open space systems at Noarlunga. Golden Grove’s (1974-2003) local open space system, developed through a public-private joint venture partnership between the Government of South Australia and Delfin Pty Ltd, was the culmination of the ideas explored at Elizabeth and Noarlunga. The research follows an interpretive-historical methodology but combines interpretive-historical, qualitative (field work and interviews) and case study methods.

Table 2. The nature, roles and values (benefits) of open space in South Australia in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social</th>
<th>Health</th>
<th>Amenity</th>
<th>Marketing</th>
<th>Environment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social reform through the controlled use of space.</td>
<td>Urban lungs.</td>
<td>Urban amelioration to create good living and working environments.</td>
<td>Has been consistently about selling allotments.</td>
<td>Protection of native plants and animals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rational recreation.</td>
<td>Contact with nature to improve mental, physical and spiritual wellbeing.</td>
<td>High quality design that considers aesthetics.</td>
<td>Over time the methods used have become increasingly sophisticated.</td>
<td>Revegetation with native plant species.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community development.</td>
<td>Provision of sites for approved passive and active recreational activities.</td>
<td>Provision of services and facilities.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Revegetation with indigenous plant species.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community identification.</td>
<td>Passive and active recreation sites.</td>
<td>Timely provision of services and facilities.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Protection of ecosystems.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural concerns like the preservation of heritage sites.</td>
<td>Mental Health.</td>
<td>Sometimes aesthetic considerations only.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Elizabeth (1954-1966)

Elizabeth was a critical town planning model in South Australia (Forster and McCaskill 2007, p. 87). Its planning was based on the British Mark One New Towns, particularly Stevenage and Harlow, to suit local understanding of garden city and neighbourhood unit ideas. It is located 25km north of the Adelaide CBD and covers about 2070 hectares. Elizabeth was developed by the SAHT between 1954 and 1966 to support Premier Thomas Playford’s industrialisation strategy for South Australia. It was designed by a small in-house team of architects led by Henry P Smith and was the SAHT’s first large scale comprehensively planned development (Marsden 1986, pp. 275-282) (Peel 1995, p. 38).

Elizabeth is an icon of 1950s and 1960s planning in South Australia (Foster and McCaskill 2007, pp. 86-87). It was at Elizabeth that the idea of local open space systems was introduced to the Adelaide landscape and would subsequently go on to inform local open space planning in metropolitan Adelaide.

The SAHT included an open space hierarchy, based on familiar spatial patterns, to structure the site and to achieve their social, health, amenity, environmental and marketing aims for Elizabeth as well as the political agenda that Elizabeth succeed (Smith 1965, pp. 5-9, 12-17). In the process they created a nascent local open space system. The components of the open space hierarchy included: a parkland greenbelt as opposed to an agricultural greenbelt, neighbourhood unit greenbelts, a town common sited adjacent to the town centre, village greens in selected neighbourhood centres, a number of pocket parks sited strategically throughout each neighbourhood unit, public gardens in the town and neighbourhood unit shopping centres, and road reserves (SAHT, GRS8094/2/22). Site revegetation was also a stated aim (Ramsay 1957, p. 10).

Community building and creating a sense of community identity were the SAHT’s fundamental social objectives at Elizabeth (Peel 1995, pp. 15, 23-31, 39-56). The parkland greenbelt and particularly the neighbourhood unit greenbelts were the mainstay of its approach (Figure 1). The SAHT used the greenbelts unswervingly to separate and define the new town and each neighbourhood unit to create both new town and neighbourhood unit identities. The spaces were designed to include opportunities for a range of active and passive, formal and informal activities to support community building. In particular, the SAHT used organised sports as a means of bringing people together (Allery 1996, pp. 97-99, 101-104, 138-139) but also created landscaped spaces in the town and neighbourhood centres that offered settings for potential informal social activities (SAHT, GRS8094/2/22).

Elizabeth’s pocket parks supported community building aims at the local level by providing sites within easy walking distances from homes where social interactions could take place. Each neighbourhood unit contained a number of pocket parks that were the focus of the smaller residential subsets that were clustered around them (SAHT, GRS8094/2/22). Frederic Gibberd (1947, pp. 12-13) had used a similar technique at Harlow and it anticipated emerging concerns that neighbourhood units of 5000-10000 people were too large for residents to identify as a community (Benko and Lloyd 1949, p. 8.), (Goss 1961, pp. 69-70). At some of the pocket parks local residents worked together to secure playground equipment and additional plantings (Galbreath and Pearson 1982, pp. 50, 52,-55, 74-75, 78-79).
Contact with nature was an integral part of Howard’s (1965, pp. 45-69) open space strategy for the garden city. Additionally, Unwin (1919, p. 278) recognised the value of landscaping not only for its amenity value but as a means to connect residents with the site and to identify specific locations within it. Smith’s (1955, p. 6.) design strategy for Elizabeth relied on “backgrounds of trees and landscape features” to “create beauty and dignity” as the “imposing structures of the past [were] no longer practical”. The revegetation of Elizabeth was led by horticulturist John Dwight who headed the SAHT’s newly established Parks and Gardens Department. Dwight believed in using site appropriate plantings resulting in his extensive use of Australian native plants placing him at the forefront of a burgeoning national movement for the wider used of native plants (Jones 2003, pp. 39-43).

Site revegetation assisted the SAHT’s creation of an attractive and liveable environment and supported community building agendas by framing spaces and suggesting potential uses. Native trees were also used to symbolise the bringing together of people of many nationalities as one community (Russell, GRS8094/2/14). Elizabeth was transformed from a farming landscape into a literal garden city by the scale of the replanting (Galbreath and Pearson 1982, pp. 7, 21). In turn the amenity and health values of the open spaces, specifically landscaped parks and the plethora of sporting opportunities were utilised by the SAHT to market Elizabeth to prospective immigrants (Peel 1995, p. 91).

**Noarlunga (1960-1985)**

Noarlunga was developed extensively between 1960 and 1985 using an amalgam of ideas and by a number of developers, turning a small rural community into the major southern regional centre for metropolitan Adelaide. Noarlunga is located 28km south of the Adelaide CBD and encompasses
approximately 2950 hectares (Towler 1986). About half of Noarlunga was developed as a result of private speculation controlled by the weak provisions of the Town Planning Act 1929. The remaining area was developed as broad acres by two government agencies – initially by the SAHT and later the SALC, both solely and in collaboration (Watchman 1977, p. 10). As at Elizabeth garden city, neighbourhood unit and Mark One New Town ideas influenced the SAHT’s early Noarlunga developments.

From the 1970s the SAHT’s and SALC’s developments were influenced by the British Mark Three New Town of Milton Keynes and the work of architect planners Constantinos Doxiadis and Christopher Alexander. The change in approach was a direct result of the re-emergence of social and environmental planning as state government priorities to mitigate the inherent inequality of urban fringe developments (Forster and McCaskill 2007, pp. 93-97). Local open space systems were created to address those priorities. Milton Keynes influence came directly via the Monarto Development Commission’s (MDC) planning for Adelaide’s unrealised second new town at Monarto located 80km southeast of Adelaide (Harwich 1984, p. 140). Doxiadis influenced local architect Newell Platten who worked for Doxiadis before being employed as a consultant for and then the SAHT’s chief design architect and who was responsible for designing the Noarlunga Regional Centre (Platten 2012). The SAHT premised the design of its last three neighbourhood units at Noarlunga on Alexander’s pattern language (Noarlunga Urban Area Planning Team 1974, p. 1). The planning of Milton Keynes and both Doxiadis’ and Alexander’s theories viewed open spaces as connected systems.

The SAHT viewed its Noarlunga development as a second new town and planned and built its first three neighbourhood units – Christies Beach, O’Sullivan Beach and Christie Downs – contemporarily with Elizabeth (SAHT 1958, p. 4). As at Elizabeth, the SAHT valued the open spaces it provided for their social, health, amenity, marketing and to a lesser extent environmental roles creating an open space hierarchy that illustrated its growing understanding of pedestrian oriented design. Unlike at Elizabeth the SAHT did not use the open spaces unswervingly to define and separate the neighbourhood units but arranged them in a manner that created three open space corridors albeit with two disjointed (SAHT, GRS8094/2/20).

The planning of the Noarlunga Regional Centre (NRC) was a critical step in the SAHT’s change in direction and was guided by the vision of the Noarlunga Regional Advisory committee for a connected and pedestrian oriented Noarlunga. The committee proposed ternary level connections that linked residential streets to neighbourhood centres, neighbourhood unit to neighbourhood unit, and the neighbourhood units to the NRC and the proposed and existing open spaces along the Onkaparinga River and the coast (SAHT, GRS4714/1/15). An interdisciplinary planning team was assembled by the SAHT to develop a model for residential developments adjacent to the NRC at Morphett Vale, Hackham West and Noarlunga Downs and also ultimately in collaboration with the SALC for the land it owned at Huntfield Heights and Hackham (SAHT 1976, p. 3).
In-line with the planning for Milton Keynes and Monarto the concepts of diversity, flexibility of choice and equitable access to community facilities and services underpinned their planning decisions and the team devised their model based on Alexander's concept of "patterns" (Noarlunga Urban Area Planning Team 1974). In particular, they focused on the needs of those residents they had identified as being the least mobile - children, home makers and the elderly (Knapman 1973, p. 4). As at Radburn, the team proposed a system of internal linear open spaces as the main open space form (Figure 2).

Environmental concerns also informed the siting and form of the open spaces. The main north-south oriented linear open space that runs from Morphett Vale in the north through Hackham West and to Huntfield Heights in the south was created, in part, to protect the valley floor from a proposed sub-arterial road (Byrne and Hutchison, 1986, pp. 5-6). In addition, and for the first time, addressing environmental concerns was specified as a requirement of development resulting in the SAHT’s preparation of an environmental impact statement (EIS) for Noarlunga Downs. The primary aim of the EIS was to protect the Onkaparinga River and its estuary from development and to keep them separate from the emerging urban environment. One strategy used to protect the adjacent cliff face from residential development was including it in the local open space system (Figure 3) (SAHT, GRS4714/1/20).

The concept of local open space systems was furthered by the SALC at their Morphett Vale East development. A private firm, Hassell Planning Consultants, was engaged in 1976 to plan the triangular site that forms the eastern boundary of urban development at Noarlunga. The neighbourhood unit remained the basis of residential planning. Open spaces were integral to the planning process and were identified through site mapping that considered environmental, social, heritage and aesthetic site features and constraints. The design brief also required Hassell to
specifically consider “informal and passive activities”, children’s needs and pedestrian movement (Hassell 1977, pp. 2-34, 50-52, 79, 120-121).

Figure 3. The local open space system as developed at Morphett Vale, Hackham West, Noarlunga Downs and Huntfield Heights. Key: X(blue) footbridge over the freeway, X (red) pedestrian underpass, PS government primary school, PS* government primary school site subsequently redeveloped for housing. Source: Google Maps.

Hassell (1977, pp. 2-34, 50-52, 79, 120-121) proposed a local open space system based on linear open spaces that incorporated existing open spaces, tracts of remnant vegetation, historic and heritage sites and the seasonal water courses that traversed the site. The linear reserves were oriented predominantly east-west and were used to divide the site into identifiable areas that could assist with community formation. They linked active recreation sites and community facilities and were also regarded as ideal sites for passive recreation.

The creeks were viewed as an economical means upon which to base the areas stormwater management and as a means to attract children away from the roads and to the reserves. The degraded riparian landscapes once improved would “enrich” the open spaces and the mature River Red gums created a sense of identity (Hassell 1977, pp. 2-34, 50-52, 79, 120-121). Improvement was the responsibility of the Noarlunga Council and took place when it had sufficient finances to do so. Delayed development undermined some aspects of the proposed system, notably the north-south oriented pedestrian corridor that did not eventuate.


Planning academics Stephen Hamnett and Alan Hutchings (2007, p.120) view Golden Grove as an example of “state of the art” or iconic suburban development that combined “mainstream environmental, social and design objectives” (Glesson in Freestone 2010, p. 203) to mitigate the failure of urban fringe developments to provide timely access to services and facilities. Golden Grove
is located 20km northeast of the Adelaide CBD and encompasses 1230 hectares. It was developed through a public-private joint venture partnership between the Delfin Property Group Pty Ltd (Delfin) and the South Australian Urban Land Trust (SAULT) between 1985 and 2003 (Bosman 2005, pp.6-7). The SAULT was previously known as the SALT. The creation of the local open space system at Golden Grove was the culmination of the experimentation with open space planning undertaken by the SAHT, MDC and SALT at Elizabeth, Monarto and Noarlunga. Key open space ideas were incorporated into the Golden Grove (Indenture Ratification) Act 1984 and informed the joint venture’s planning for the site.

Initial site analysis and planning was undertaken by private planning consultants, led by Adelaide planning firm Tract Pty Ltd and was directed by the SALT. The overarching objectives for the site were “efficiency, flexibility, freedom of choice, social equality and likely acceptability” (Tract 1975, p. 1). Site analysis was carried out in-line with that proposed by planner and planning academic Ian McHarg that conferred open spaces with multiple benefits including new ecological land use theories to “identify and evaluate (the) land most suitable for metropolitan open space” (1998, p. 108). As a result the open spaces were developed as an ecological and social system that structured the urban environment and is an early example of green infrastructure.

Site analysis, identified the Cobbler and Dry creek networks as undevelopable but recognised the value of their social, environmental, amenity and health benefits. The creek networks were also viewed as an ideal means to base the division of the site into three neighbourhood units and twenty eight villages and for stormwater management (Tract 1975, pp. 1-30, 40-43, 96, 101), (Hamnett and Hutchings 2007, p. 119). Site analysis also identified the creeks’ limited ability to cater for all of Golden Grove’s open space requirements resulting in the development of a better considered open space hierarchy and the creation of a more balanced local open space system than those created at Noarlunga by the SAHT and SALT. The open space hierarchy was composed of the linear open spaces based on the creek networks (Figure 4), the Salisbury East Reserve located outside of but on the western boundary of the site, district centre open spaces, neighbourhood centre open spaces, village and pocket parks, road reserves and entrance statements. A pedestrian and bicycle network known as the hike and bike trail was created to link residents with key services and facilities and was based on the linear open spaces of the creek networks and road reserves (Sabino 2012), (Trimper 2012).

The open spaces supported the key social objectives of community formation and the creation of community identity by providing opportunities for social interaction at village, neighbourhood and development levels. Specifically through the use of pocket or village parks, the sporting facilities and ovals located in the three neighbourhood centres and the network of linear open spaces. These open spaces provided opportunities for passive and active recreation and linked residents with key services and facilities (Sarkissian and Heine 1976), (Sabino 2012), (Trimper 2012). The timely improvement of the open spaces and joint venture sponsored community oriented activities enhanced the community building potential of the sites in the early years of the development (Golden Grove Community Planning Team 1987, pp. 4, 7, 28-30), (Crafter 1990, pp. 35-39, 55).
The creation of community identity was facilitated at Golden Grove in two main ways. The first, like Elizabeth was through the physical division of the site into discrete areas with which residents could more readily identify. At Golden Grove that was the village containing approximately 1000 residents (LMC & Delfin 2003, p. 19). The open spaces were used to create the divisions where it was possible to do so without compromising its other roles. Each village was also provided with a village park or pocket park that acted as its heart (Sabino 2012). Site revegetation and theming strategies were also implemented to create a sense of identity. Native plants (Trimper 2012) and remnant farmscapes linked the new residents with the area’s agricultural past and created a sense of country living in the city. The landscape theming of the Golden Way, the main arterial road through the site and the villages created associations at the general development and village levels (Bosman 2005, pp. 41, 117-118, 129-130), (Sabino 2012).

The environmental aims for the development were based primarily on the creek networks. Most of the existing remanent vegetation and habitat were associated with the creek networks and they were the natural drainage system for much of the site (Tract 1975, pp. 18-23). The creeks and the Para Scarp located on the western boundary of the site were revegetated with site indigenous plants (Trimper 2012). The joint venture based its stormwater management primarily on the approach outlined in the 1970s planning documentation. The impact of runoff on the creeks was minimised by the construction of swales and dams across the site where natural drainage had occurred prior to development (SALC 1979, pp. 193-212, 222-231). The improvement of these areas in a timely manner or their blending with the natural landscape combined environmental roles and values with other benefits (LMC & Delfin Lend Lease 2003, pp. 20, 26).
With financial success a stated aim for Golden Grove, the joint venture based its highly sophisticated marketing strategies around the benefits of the open spaces. In particular, the open spaces were used to market an image of Golden Grove that was based on the site’s rural past as well as garden suburb and garden city ideas (Bosman 2005, pp.128-130). Site amenity was an integral role of the local open space system that also contributed to social, health, environment and marketing benefits. The timely provision of facilities and revegetation created attractive living environments and increased the useability of the open spaces (Sabino 2012). The degree of open space improvements created a level of resident expectation that led them to work together to protect the open spaces from perceived threats to it (Trimper 2012), (Murphy 1993, pp. 8-9, 24-26, 47).

Conclusion

Local open space systems evolved in Adelaide in the second half of the twentieth century through the development of three sites - Elizabeth, Noarlunga and Golden Grove. Open space planning at each site was derived from the adoption and adaptation of model open space concepts, the planners understanding of the roles and values of the open spaces and increasingly in-depth site analysis that identified areas suitable for open spaces. The creation of a local open space system at each site was also a response to general criticism about piecemeal and speculative subdivision at the metropolitan fringe that created social and economic inequality.

Elizabeth was the SAHT’s first attempt at a large scale comprehensively planned development. The political imperative for Elizabeth to succeed led the SAHT to focus on its social agenda of community building and creating community identity. The amenity, health, environmental and marketing benefits of the open spaces became secondary to those social aims resulting in the creation of a nascent local open space system. The nascent system at Elizabeth was based on familiar spatial forms and concentrated on dividing the site and providing opportunities for social interaction.

At Noarlunga, the SAHT’s planners continued to expand their understanding of open space roles and values. In turn that understanding guided their decisions about open space planning leading to the creation of local open space systems as the primary open space type in its developments. Linked linear open spaces that drew on the Radburn model facilitated pedestrian communication, protected site features and the environment of the Onkaparinga River and estuary, provided access to a range of services and facilities and contributed to site amenity. Collaboration between the SAHT and the SALC and with the support of the MDC resulted in the SALC’s adoption of local open space systems. While the SAHT and the SALC aimed to link their developments to the wider community the fragmented nature of their land holdings resulted in the creation of a number of separate local open space systems at Noarlunga. The provision of services and facilities in a timely manner and other open space improvements like revegetation were not considered by the SAHT and SALC to be entirely their responsibility and those aspects of their developments have occurred in a piecemeal manner over time.

Golden Grove’s local open space system is the culmination of the open space ideas and experimentation that occurred at Elizabeth and Noarlunga. The local open space system at Golden Grove is an expression of its planners’ understanding of the social, health, amenity, marketing and environmental roles and values (benefits) of open spaces. Detailed site analysis, at the beginning of the planning process, drew on that understanding and when combined with site constraints and
opportunities identified the areas within the development that were most suitable as open spaces. At Golden Grove, the five thematic open space benefits (roles and values) were considered equitably resulting in a more comprehensive system than at Elizabeth and Noarlunga. As a result Golden Grove’s local open system is an icon of early green infrastructure planning, at the suburban level, in South Australia.

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Iconic Redfern
The creation and disintegration of an urban Aboriginal icon

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While the idea of urban icons might be about producing iconic buildings in terms of form and shape, the specific use of high-end materials, or a particular strategy for the organisation of urban spaces, places often have significant meanings through very different – and often underappreciated – means. Significantly, the people who inhabit them and live in them thus give the place a distinctiveness that contributes to its iconic status.

Considering the above, this paper will look at a particular example of this – The Block in Redfern, Sydney – which is considered to be significant for Indigenous people. Yet while many recognise the contribution of Australia’s Indigenous population toward the making of this iconic place, at the same time other forces – such as gentrification, rental prices, political power struggles, etc. – are actively working against the long-term formalisation of this place. This paper will thus analyse the past, present and prospective future of The Block, and consider how is Redfern and The Block considered to be an iconic place for Indigenous and non-indigenous people? Also significant is the notion that The Block has been demolished, and the majority of its Indigenous population have been forced out or relocated, and that there is a current approved proposal to rebuild The Block with undefined plans to re-house a portion of its previous Indigenous community. Given this, what is the potential future for The Block in terms of retaining its meaning as an Indigenous icon and establishing appropriate community values?

Introduction

While the notion of the urban icon might be about producing iconic buildings in terms of an attractive form or shape, the specific use of high-end materials to create an iconic visual effect, or a particular strategy for the organisation of urban spaces, however, places often have significant meanings through very different – and often underappreciated – means. Significantly, the people who inhabit them thus give the place a distinctive quality that contributes to its iconic status. Redfern in Sydney is a significant example of this where the Indigenous people of Australia have had a long standing involvement with Redfern and have thus imprinted their identity on the place through continuous presence and is therefore considered ‘iconic’ due to this presence. As such Redfern is considered by many to be “…the most famous and iconic Aboriginal place in Australia second only to Uluru” (2014 NIT- pg. 13)

Yet is this the type of icon cities want? Is this kind of icon marketable for cities? Would this type of icon attract people to visit Redfern or the city of Sydney? These are questions that we as planners, historians, architects etc. must think of for ourselves.

While Redfern is important to Australia’s Indigenous people as being one of the only significant or palpable urban Aboriginal sites in Australia, Redfern’s meaning as an urban Aboriginal icon is under threat from disappearing. While many aspects have contributed to the pushing out Redfern’s Aboriginal population, this paper will focus on two main points: the first being the overwhelming forces of gentrification sweeping through the area, and the second being political infighting or jostling between key members of Redfern’s Aboriginal community based around plans for the
proposed redevelopment of The Block, a small piece of land owned by the Aboriginal Housing Company (AHC).

In short, this paper will consider how Redfern constitutes as iconic place for Indigenous as well as non-indigenous people. And lastly, the continuation of Redfern’s iconic status which is under threat.

**An Urban Icon**

First, let us briefly consider what constitutes an urban icon. Examples may come to mind such as Frank Gehry’s Bilbao or Sydney’s own Opera House by Jorn Utzon, both of which has contributed to their cities iconic status and also contribute to the economic value of the city. As Andrew Walker (Pg 2. 2010) notes “The opening of Frank Gehry’s Guggenheim Museum Bilbao in 1997 seemed to transform that city’s cultural status overnight, luring tourists and opening doors to sustainable economic development.”

Here architecture and building serve as a kind of marketing device or advertisement that helps promote or sell the city to the world, and which is perpetuated by the media through the reproduction and distribution of images of these iconic buildings. On this, Peter Eisenman (2005. pg 166) notes that:

“The media's search for fantastic imagery, as well as precedent set by the ‘Bilbao effect’, perpetuate an ever-increasing need for the spectacular. And since the media also demand the continual staging of the new, the ‘famous’ are forced into creating ever-more spectacular and outrageous images - signatures of their success - lest they be consumed and tossed aside like yesterday's news.”

In this way cities today are in a global jostle to receive the next ‘starchitect’ building, with hopes this desired iconic building will provide a rejuvenating effect, or act as an agent in potentially revitalising the city through tourism.

So while this focus above may produce an icon of sorts, and while this notion of the ‘Bilbao effect’ is certainly significant in the way a single building was able to revitalise a stagnant city - however can the urban icon go beyond the visual? Beyond the qualities of its form or shape?

**Iconic Redfern**
At this point Redfern will be introduced as an example of how in some urban locations, the nature of the people and the community that inhabits the location are what constitute its iconic status.

Redfern has had a long standing history of Indigenous occupation, starting with the local Gadigal tribe who inhabited the area for thousands of years. More recent times saw the construction of vast railway lines across Australia, and with it came an influx of Indigenous people coming into Redfern from country or regional areas by rail. By the 1960’s and 70’s as more Indigenous people moved in, Redfern witnessed the creation of key Indigenous related services, such as the Aboriginal legal, medical and housing services - as well as the emergence of sources of employment for Indigenous people, such as the Eveleigh rail yard.

In 1973 a formal submission for federal funding was approved, and the government bought 41 houses on a block of land in Redfern that would become known as ‘The Block’. The Aboriginal Housing Company (AHC) was then created to manage the grant. This was a significant moment for all Australian Aboriginal people as it was to become the first successful land rights claim made by an Aboriginal community. (Pollock, 2007)

Redfern began to formalise as a positive Aboriginal place and, according to Robert Bellear (1976, Pg. 4) founder of the AHC, was a place where Aboriginal people were “able to do their thing without interruption from the so-called normalcy of the dominant culture”.

[2] ‘The Block’ was carefully laid out with individual and community needs in mind. Material from the Gary Foley Collection
With strong foundations in place, Indigenous presence on the site continued into recent times and to this day Redfern has taken on board the ‘flavour’ of these Indigenous people through various forms, such as the mural of the Aboriginal flag on the wall of the Elouera-Tony Mundine Gym which has become a de-facto icon for the Block.

**The Problem of Iconic Redfern**

Yet while many recognise the contribution of Australia’s Indigenous population toward the making of this iconic place, at the same time other forces – such as gentrification, rental prices, political power struggles, pressure from governmental or local organisations with vested interest in Redfern etc. – are actively working against the long-term formalisation of this place as an urban Indigenous location.

Also significant is the fact that as of 2011, The Block has been completely demolished, and all of its Indigenous population have been forced out or relocated. There is a current approved proposal to rebuild The Block with undefined plans to re-house a portion of its previous Indigenous community. Given this, what is the potential future for The Block in terms of retaining its meaning as an Indigenous icon and establishing appropriate community values?

From this paper’s perspective, Redfern’s ability to retain its meaning as an Indigenous iconic place depends on two significant aspects: firstly it depends on how the forces of gentrification formalise within the suburb, and secondly, it depends on how The Block is re-developed.
Gentrification

The first aspect is the issue of widespread gentrifying forces affecting cities today which are actively working against the long-time formation of Redfern as an Aboriginal icon. As the City of Sydney Council website states:

“Redfern and Waterloo’s working class heritage and vibrant Aboriginal community provide strong foundations for this iconic Sydney area. Combined with a flourishing surge of cutting-edge galleries, a buzzing food and bar scene, vibrant local cafes and a string of vintage stores, this area continues to evolve and fascinate.”

Hidden within this glowing report of the suburb are the physical outcomes of gentrification. Along with these vintage stores and buzzing food and bar scene comes higher rent prices, higher property taxes, more demand for accommodation, inflation of prices for goods and services etc. all of which contribute to pushing out the majority of Redfern’s Aboriginal community. Aboriginal elder Les Poletti an ex resident of The Block mentioned “when we were all evicted from the place, we were told by the company (AHC) it was going to be built for Aboriginal housing and we’d get the first OK to get back in there” but “..they’re trying to pretty up that area and not have any Aboriginal people there.” (Karvelis, 2014)

A point substantiated by a 2011 report from the Bureau of Census and Statistics which establishes that Redfern’s Indigenous population constitute a mere 2.4% of the total redfern population of 12,034 - which is equivalent to 288 people. Yet from a historical perspective, in the 1960’s Redfern had a substantially larger Indigenous population which comprised of approximately 12,000 indigenous residents. These statistics effectively contradict Redfern as being an essentially Indigenous community, and yet the fact that the place still is considered an important urban Aboriginal icon is relevant.

The Pemulwuy Project
The second aspect as to whether Redfern will retain its meaning as an Indigenous icon depends on how The Block is developed. Since its creation, the site has been subject to many architectural and planning design proposals through the previous few decades. When the demolition of the final terrace house on The Block occurred in 2011, the current plan to redevelop the land, known as The Pemulwuy project, surfaced with a promise to re-house some of the existing community that was evicted before its demolition, as well as the construction of a significant commercial and student accommodation component.

Yet the timing and staging of the housing component is causing some controversy and disagreement within Redferns Indigenous community. The National Indigenous Times reported on this tension claiming that the main concern was that the Aboriginal housing component of the redevelopment was being quietly dropped from the scheme (Bagnall, 2014). While the CEO of the AHC Mick Mundine denies this is the case, reports have surfaced that the latest version of the plans no longer allow for the establishment of the promised ‘Elders units’ in the redevelopment.

This has prompted claims from a representative of the tent embassy that the hidden agenda “was to clear the land so the AHC could drive out the Aboriginal population and commercially develop the land” (Bagnall, 2014)
These accusations reveal a split within Redfern’s Indigenous community as well as those concerned about this piece of land. On one side the AHC own the land, and have every legal right to develop what they wish on it. On the other, potentially because of Redfern’s iconic status as a significant urban Aboriginal place, there is a group of people, some of whom camped on the vacant land for 15 months in protest, who feel the proposed development is inadequate, insensitive or dismissive towards the needs of the existing Indigenous population, with claims that the lack of any actual housing for Indigenous people on the Block will destroy Redfern as an iconic place for Australia’s Indigenous people. Thus the Indigenous presence that is still palpable today, may fade away.

Many people from the Redfern Tent Embassy are there because they believe the AHC has been hijacked by the current board and members, an allegation Mr Mundine vehemently denies. According to Bagnall (2014), “..there have been allegations in the Redfern community for almost a quarter of a century that the membership rolls were manipulated to purge anyone who opposed Mr Mundine’s leadership.”

This issue came to a boiling point with the supposedly accidental claims made by Deicorp, the builder the AHC has engaged to construct the student accommodation component. Deicorp stated on their company website: “Dei Cota (Deicorp’s subsidiary company) has good rental return and convenient location. The Aboriginals have already moved out, now Redfern is the last virgin suburb close to city, it will have great potential for the capital growth in the near future.”

While the company has since removed the article from their website, and have apologised for any ‘unintended’ racism, many were “..outraged a company would use the removal of Aboriginal people from a suburb as a promotion to sell their properties in that same suburb,” (Karvelis, 2014)

Just how dedicated are Deicorp is to retain this places meaning as an Indigenous icon?
To finish this point, and in fairness, two additional aspects should be noted. First is that the AHC aspires towards an autonomous mode of operation without reliance on government handouts. And second is that the AHC is dedicated to the ‘housing’ of Indigenous people in general and that their aspirations towards this aim may go beyond The Block. As such they are quite rightly concerned with how this piece of land can be used to leverage other locations that might then house more Indigenous people in need. Yet what is lost by conceding this piece of land to commercial development? And would Redfern retain its iconic status as an urban Aboriginal place, in the absence of any actual Aboriginal people living there?

Art Gallery on The Block

The issue of rehousing Indigenous people back onto The Block aside, the second aspect that may help Redfern remain an iconic Indigenous place might depend upon the commercial component of the Pemulwuy project, and more specifically, the proposed gallery and artist spaces planned for the site, which may in itself help contribute to Redfern’s iconic status as an important urban Indigenous place.

Internationally Australian Indigenous art is held in quite high regard, a fact highlighted by recent estimates that the sales of Aboriginal art from Australia is more than $50 million U.S dollars per year, which outstrips that of non-Indigenous Australian artists three to one, an extraordinary statistic given that Aborigines constitute less than 2 percent of the country’s population. (White 2000, Pg. 105)

This international interest is consolidated and formalised through events, such as the use of painting in Jean Neuvells buildings in Paris, and the highly popular 2013 exhibition of Indigenous art displayed at the Australian Embassy in Paris. It should serve that “the scale and prominence of this project is a reflection of the growing interest in contemporary Aboriginal Australian art among museum visitors across Europe and internationally,” (Guivarra, 2013)

This interest in Australian Indigenous art, according to Jane Goodale (1965, Pg. 2) “is achieving a prominence of appreciation among the literate peoples of the world amounting almost to a cult. Partial evidence of this is the exhibition of such art in increasing numbers of art galleries, in the fantastically rising prices in the curio market, and last but not least, in the rapidly increasing numbers of expensively produced art books that deals with such art.”

As such, what if The Block was considered to be part of this serious art notion as regarded in international art circles? What might this mean for Redfern as an icon? While we are yet to see just how the gallery will develop, if it went beyond catering for the tourist market (ie. selling didgeridoos, boomerangs etc.) and was instead a gallery that displayed significant Indigenous art pieces - with perhaps connections to the Nation’s art institutes, such as the NGA and NSWG, then suddenly this would be iconic in itself, as more people might come to Redfern and The Block - Indigenous and nonindigenous - which may raise Redfern’s status as an urban Indigenous place.

Conclusion

In conclusion, and to summarize my argument, I argue that an urban icon can be the living presence of a people, and it’s their continual occupation of an area, that give a place an ‘iconic’ status. From my perspective, I would like to stress the significance of Redfern and The Block as an icon due to three reasons.

First, it is iconic because The Block and Redfern is a significant urban place for all Indigenous people in Australia. It is the center for Indigenous related services, and was the place where campaigns for the rights of First Nations Peoples have often been born. So while we can look at other urban locations that have an Indigenous presence, such as Fitzroy in Melbourne, or Inalla in Brisbane, neither of those are unanimously considered to be as significant a place as Redfern for Australia's Indigenous peoples.

Second, is the iconic nature of Indigenous art and how the proposed art gallery on The Block may raise the notion of Redfern as a serious urban Indigenous place.

Lastly, this paper stresses the iconic nature of Australia's Indigenous peoples themselves. Before the colonists came to Australia in 1788, before our cities were built, they were the first people here. Their history is Australia's history. It is a unique history that belongs only to us, and this in itself is extremely iconic. Yet with the increasing spread of global culture, Aboriginal culture is under threat from diminishing or fading away. Thus retaining Redfern as a unique urban Aboriginal place should be a priority to all Australians. If the Indigenous people on The Block disappear due to the aforementioned forces pushing them out, or if the gallery is not taken seriously etc. then Redfern will lose its iconic status. And while we are all here talking about what makes iconic places and cities, we as planners, architects, historians etc. - should take this notion on board, and consider how different people and communities can make places unique, valuable, or iconic.

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‘Mundine confronted by Munro as Tent Embassy re-emerges at The Block’


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From Idealistic to Iconic Adelaide
– an enduring nexus between urban plan and social identity

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Reformist ideals underpinned South Australia as a colonial endeavour and manifested from foundation in an enduring nexus between Adelaide’s urban plan and its social identity. During the first half of the nineteenth century Adelaide strove to stand out from a cohort of colonial cities established during a wave of Imperial expansion. It competed with cities in Australia, Canada, America and New Zealand for investment of population and capital from established powers looking to divest and expand.

From the outset two unique plans set Adelaide apart in the competitive colonial arena. Firstly Wakefield’s systematic colonisation theory, adopted by proponents of South Australia, promised a society with the perfect mix of social stability, financial opportunity and individual freedom. Secondly the City’s plan articulated over the appropriated landscape provided familiarity, order, public amenity and an egalitarian division of land. Although Adelaide’s structure echoed other colonial cities whose plans derived from common historical precedent, its carefully considered expression and signature ring of Park Lands immediately set it apart.

This paper will examine how this unique combination of a social and an urban plan transformed reformist ideals into what became an urban planning icon. An historical narrative will be presented based on the lived experience drawing on diverse archival sources and will include a discussion of how Adelaide’s city plan with its distinctive Park Land belt was incorporated into the ethos of a colonial community safeguarding this distinctive urban form beyond the foundation years of the colony.

Keywords Adelaide; Urban History; Park Lands; Wakefield
Adelaide’s plans

Fundamental to the history of South Australia and its capital Adelaide are two plans. A social plan for establishing a new colony and an urban plan from which the colony could grow. In a review of the 2007 National Heritage Listing of the ‘Adelaide Park Lands and City Layout’ David Jones wrote that “Adelaide and SA are iconographically identified by the symbol of the park lands and the plan” (Jones, 2010). Jones goes on to describe how civic activities and publicly expressed opinion continue to enhance perceptions of shared and ideal ‘ownership’ originating, he argues “in the very social democratic thesis that established the colony.” (Jones, 2010)

This paper will discuss concepts of social democracy and urban space in Adelaide and in particular the relationship between democratic thesis and urban plan that has enabled both to endure. Focussing on the early decades of Adelaide this research identifies how the city’s Park Lands sustained the lives early colonists while remaining an ideal of promised social democracy that was finally realised through conscious acts of preservation and protection. These observations focus on the years from proclamation in 1836 until the middle of the 1850s when the promises of public open space for recreation and ‘pleasure grounds’ were finally enacted in the Park Lands and town squares.

Appropriation and use of land in this discussion address a European Colonial perspective. Prior to colonisation, the Kaurna people, the original inhabitants of the Adelaide Plains, had established a complex relationship with this place. Stories of the Kaurna people, are bedded in the topography and urban landscape and the human understanding and relationship that they communicate are enduring. A discussion involving the sale of land in South Australia is contentious in the context of land ownership and the assumption of terra nullius. It is not within the scope of this paper to specifically address the indigenous story of South Australia, concepts of ‘owning’ or ‘belonging to’ country and how the land had previously been divided and understood by its indigenous people (Gara, 1998, Foster and Nettelbeck, 2012, Braithwaite et al., 2011, Edmonds, 2010). It is necessary to acknowledge this absurdly large enigma of appropriation and ownership before discussing the resultant urban landscape.

This paper draws on doctoral research examining the urban development of Adelaide, from the proclamation of South Australia as a British province in 1836, to the publication of a comprehensive survey of Adelaide known as the Smith Survey in 1881. By drawing on archival records of land sales and development, focussing on individual Town Acres and examining their role in the story of Adelaide, this larger project interrogates urban history through macro and micro lenses. By exposing the ‘unique and generic’ in the history of a modern city it is possible to discover the true nature of the urban subject as it engages with broader historical narratives (Murray and Mayne, 2001).

Plans for a new British Colony

In London, on the 15th August 1834 An Act to empower His Majesty to erect South Australia into a British Province or Provinces and to provide for the Colonisation and Government thereof (The South Australian Act) passed through both Houses of British Parliament allowing for the foundation of a new British Colony extending from the south coast of the continent of Australia to the Tropic of
Capricorn, between the 132$^{nd}$ and 141$^{st}$ degree of east longitude (Hodder, 1891). The plans and aspirations of many who had been agitating for the colony for over half a decade would finally be actioned (Pike, 1957, Price, 1924).

During the years leading up to the *South Australian Act*, Edward Gibbon Wakefield, social commentator and activist, proposed a system of colonisation that would enable the expansion of the British colonies in southern Australia providing population relief for an overcrowded metropolis, an expanded market for capital growth and access to primary resources, all it was surmised, without becoming a financial burden on Britain’s treasury (Lloyd Prichard, 1968, Pike, 1957). The theory for colonisation was based largely on achieving a balance between land, capital, development and labour. According to Wakefield, the revenue from fixed minimum price land sales could fund assisted emigration and ensure an ongoing supply of able-bodied workers. While the capitalist structure of owners and workers would transpose itself on the new colony it was predicted that the fluidity of a new colonial society would allow advancement and opportunity for all classes (Friends of the Turnbull Library, 1997, Mills, 1968, Pike, 1957).

Wakefield believed that self-funded colonies, should ultimately manage not only their land sales but “all matters pertaining to themselves” (Price, 1929). Unsurprisingly the initial proposal met with opposition from the Colonial Office where, as historian Grenfell Price wrote, the endeavour was objected to on the grounds that the colony was being proposed by “revolutionary dreamers” with motives of self-interest, would become a financial drain on Britain and would “erect within the British monarchy a government purely republican” (Price, 1929). In this spirit of ‘dreamy revolution’ the social character of Adelaide was born.

This colonisation plan fostered not only the idea of self-determination but also of a new beginning, a utopian ideal, a new identity and a new social order (Lloyd Prichard, 1968, Pike, 1957, Price, 1924). The plan appealed not only to the wealthy but to aspirational members of the middle and working classes. Many were drawn to the South Australian project by promotional meetings and publications, organised to garner public support and where collaborative associations were founded prior to 1836 ensuring collective ambition and expectations arrived intact in the new colony (Wakefield, 1838).

At the same time as plans for South Australia were being debated, recommendations for public open space, advocated by barrister and MP John Arthur Roebuck, were being debated in Britain’s Parliament bringing public awareness to new ideals of urban planning (Garnaut, 2008). While it is not apparent from his writing whether Wakefield considered the inclusion of public open space intrinsic to his social thesis, he did express views on the democratic provision of amenity in the form of parks.

Addressing the fear of universal suffrage, Wakefield described the provision of public parks and open space in poorer areas of London as a demonstration of concern for the good of all by what was an unrepresentative parliament (Wakefield, 1834). He saw this as a socially responsible and politically canny planning trend and this became the focus of Adelaide’s promised and realized urban form.
The physical plan

Transposing Adelaide from the numerous and varied imaginings of those invested in the project into a single urban expression on the landscape took imagination, resolve and judgment (Carter, 1996, Johnson and Langmead, 1986, Garnaut, 2006, Bunker, 1998). Wakefield wrote on the enormous task of bringing colonial ventures from social and economic plans into material urban and built forms stating:

...the leaders in planting a colony, not only have generally possessed, but always ought to possess, imagination to conceive, as well as judgement to execute (Wakefield, 1838).

Siting Adelaide was an important decision made by the surveying team and one for which Colonel Light was publicly scrutinized and critiqued but on which he stood firm. Positioned between the coast and the rising hills of the Mt Lofty Ranges, this central location with views in all directions played well into the rhetoric of equality and opportunity. Urban plans located alongside waterfronts or bounded by grand or advantageous topographical features are inevitably compromised between commercial interest and visual amenity (Hamer, 1990). Laid out on either side of the river Torrens and set back from the river to avoid flooding the site and layout all but prescribed a natural greenway reflecting immediately ideals of public space and free access to shared resources (Mugavin, 2004).

Surveyors led by Colonel William Light, tasked with bringing Adelaide into being, faced hardships and controversy with the necessary pragmatic resolve, imagination and foresight prescribed by Wakefield (Brand, 2004). The gridded layout including public squares and a belt of park land around its perimeter remains one of the few intact examples of an historical shift in urban planning ideas that would manifest in the Garden City Movement at the beginning of the 20th century (Garnaut and Round, 2006).

The plan of Adelaide as drawn combined familiar form with new planning ideas in a contained urban environment whose physical boundaries would guarantee capital investment. On paper the plan provided opportunity in every quadrant of the city for views, to parks or squares and the greenway along the river ensured an accessible water supply without the risk of curtailed access or amenity by private investors or government.

Plans and patterns of appropriation

Examining initial land selection shows where early investors and land agents perceived potential in the city’s plan. Prior to 1837 Preliminary Land Orders had been purchased from the Colonial Office in London. These orders entitled each investor to an eighty acre country selection plus one town acre and were purchased at a fixed price. Thus at the commencement of the selection process each acre was, on paper at least, of equal value.
The Ballot for preliminary land order selections and subsequent auctions for remaining town acres were held during March 1837. Over two days holders of Preliminary Land Orders or their agents selected town acres. The order of selection was democratically prescribed by ballot and acres chosen during this first process of land acquisition suggest how those present understood the plan and what they wanted from the future urban landscape (Oldham, 1944, Morphett, 1936).

Figure 1 illustrates the selection of 408 town acres indicating personal preference, intent, perception and desire (Morphett, 1936, Oldham, 1944). Land agents acting for absentee investors (in red) showed a clear preference for the city’s central axes, and for North Terrace as well as acres with park frontage. Resident investors (in yellow) influenced by first-hand knowledge of the landscape and the reality of living with their choices also preferred acres with Park Land or town square frontage. The South Australian Company (in green) consolidated its land holdings and selected conjoined acres which possibly suited its business agendas (Sutherland, 1898).
Evidenced in Figure 1 is the appeal of public open space and how this drew initial selections out across the entire city plan.

The utilitarian park

To imagine that the beautiful squares and Park Lands depicted in early plans of Adelaide actually existed immediately, would be incorrect but evidence suggests that their realistion was a commonly held aspiration, with its origins in the social plan.

In the decades before the Park Lands of Adelaide could be claimed as ‘pleasure grounds’ they went a long way to support the everyday needs of the city’s residents. Building materials, food and water, shelter as people arrived, transitioned, established or passed through the plan was all asked of and provided by the city’s Park Lands (Sumerling, 2011). Surveyors’ camped in the river valley close to the site selected for Adelaide while the survey was in progress. Emigrants, who had arrived too soon after the surveyors, built temporary shelters in the North and West Park Lands (Finlayson, 1903, Morphett, 1936). Colonists’ writings describe shelters of canvas or other fabric, and early paintings suggest the use of earth, reeds or grass thatching, bark and locally available materials.

After the selection and purchase of town acres in 1837, building in Adelaide began in earnest. Sourced from the Park Lands, materials such as mud, reeds and saplings were used to make huts of pisé and wattle and daub construction with thatched roofs. River stones from the Torrens were used for rubble walls, surface lime was burnt for mortar and bricks were also made from the clay found and dug around the Park Lands (Smith et al., 2006, Lewis, 2000, McDougall and Sumerling, 2006). Adelaide Limestone, quarried from the banks of the Torrens River by government run enterprises was used for early projects including Holy Trinity (1838), Adelaide Gaol (1841) and Old Parliament House (1854-55) (Smith et al., 2006).

As early as May 1838, just over twelve months after building began in the city calls to save the Park Lands appeared in local papers. In June 1839 a letter published in The South Australian Register expresses concerns regarding the cost of lime sourced in the Park Lands as well as the cost to the public of reparation illustrating an early perception of the Park Lands as a public resource which should not be used for private profit.

As well as providing shelter the Park Lands also became the settlement’s larder. Some exchange of knowledge regarding indigenous foods and use of native vegetation did occur in early Adelaide (Heuzenroeder, 2006, Hasenohr, 1977) however the introduction of European crops, stock and fences quickly tipped the balance in the favour of European agricultural practices. In 1852 the number of animals agisted on the Park Lands was considerable. Cattle, and in particularly dairy cows numbered at least 700 in the city area and flocks of sheep owned by city butchers were estimated at between 1000 and 2000 head. Butchers employed shepherds to tend their flocks and workers were employed to milk and tend the cows (“Park Lands”,1852). Without the modern convenience of refrigeration the parklands allowed residents of the city access to fresh produce. The South Australian Census of 1851 recorded 30 “shepherds”, 42 “gardeners/farm servants and persons employed in agriculture” and 11 “stockmen and others in the care of cattle” living in the council wards of north and south Adelaide. While some may have been employed in small rural
holdings close to the city others worked in the Park Lands as they continued to supply the city with fresh food and employment for residents (ABS, 1851).

Prior to reticulation much of Adelaide’s water was collected from a large pool behind Government House by water cart operators who delivered supplies to individual households. By 1850 up to 30 carters filled their barrels numerous times a day, entering the river and subsequently damaging the banks of the Torrens and fouling the water. In 1852, after public outcry, pumps were installed in the river to move water into storage tanks thus keeping carts out of the river. (Venus, 2009). Water carting began to diminish in 1860 as a reticulated water supply was established to parts of the city (Shanahan et al., 2010).

**Dreaming of pleasure grounds**

During its first two decades Adelaide’s ideal urban plan was a real and defensible expectation in the minds of residents and officials. In his 1878 then Town Clerk, Thomas Worsnop, describes a transaction enacted by Governor Gawler in 1839 to purchase Adelaide’s parklands on behalf of the Colony’s residents (Worsnop, 1878). In 1883 the Municipal Council of Adelaide instructed Worsnop to investigate the purchase and title of the Park Lands further. Lawyers, Wilkins, Blyth and Dutton, were engaged to conduct a search of Colonial records in London and instructed to put forward an opinion on the legality and implications of the transaction in question (Worsnop, 1885).

The subsequent report notes that Governor Gawler was advised via a dispatch in September 1838 that the Commissioners held grave concerns for the reserve of Park Lands surrounding Adelaide. To protect public open space the Commissioners recommended that the Colonial Government purchase all the land proposed as reserves. In summation Wilkins, Blyth and Dutton discuss a series of promissory notes and financial transactions aimed at safeguarding Park Lands and public squares from being purchased by individuals (Worsnop, 1885). That the Commissioners in London regarded the Park Lands of Adelaide worthy of protection as early as 1839 suggests their value both financially and symbolically to the colonial venture.

**Arguing over the square**

It is not only the Park Land belt but town squares that define Adelaide’s now iconic urban form. Central Victoria Square is a grand planning gesture, a jewel in the crown of the colonial city. Light was instructed to include public open spaces and wide boulevards and his plan echoed many of the colonial city forms from which it is speculated he drew inspiration (Home, 2013). As with the Park Lands the town squares remained neglected as urban parks while the population remained too small for its physical conception. In 1855 municipal authorities began the formal laying out and planting of city squares and some areas of the Park Lands (Jones, 2007). It was during this time that an ongoing dispute for an acre of Victoria Square which had begun in 1849 was eventually resolved.

Published diaries of John Morphett, early colonist and land agent, assert that at a meeting held in March 1837 regarding town land, a vote for a subscription to purchase an acre of the ‘great square’ for a ‘future colonial church’ was carried unanimously (Morphett, 1936). Morphett’s diaries do not allude to this subscription again but recollections of this meeting amongst early
colonists may have fuelled this debate. The dispute began when Governor Robe conveyed an acre of Victoria Square to the Church of England as a site for a cathedral at the request of Anglican Bishop Augustus Short. In 1851 the Corporation rejected the land grant and public discussion and debate around the issue remained heated with letters on the subject published in local newspapers throughout the early 1850s. In March 1855 just as the debate was about to reach its ultimate conclusion the following contribution was printed in the *South Australian Register* expressing again the ideals of equality and opportunity and their place in the urban landscape.

We trust that the result of this agitation will be to establish more fully and to define more accurately the great principles of religious freedom. Perfect religious equality will render this colony a welcome retreat for all who, in other lands, have groaned beneath the burden of spiritual despotism. Substantially, we possess that equality now ("Park Lands", 1855).

In June 1855 the Supreme Court presided over the case and found in favour of the Corporation of Adelaide, “finding specially that the land was set apart originally for the recreation of the inhabitants” ("The Cathedral Acre", 1855). Evidence produced by the Anglican Church included a map drawn by George Strickland Kingston who had been Deputy Surveyor-General in 1837. In court Kingston explained that many maps were in circulation, not all accurate, including the one he had authored for a private client that included a cross on Victoria Square ("Law and Criminal Courts", 1855). This mark may have represented aspirations of Kingston or his client but did not reflect public opinion or original planning intent.

Although the Church of England in South Australia remained dominant in the colony throughout the nineteenth century there has never been an Anglican church in the acres surrounding Victoria Square even though between 1837 and 1881 surveys and council documents record seven churches and a cathedral in this area. Whatever religious zeal drove the assumption of priority in the town’s centre, the ideal of freedom and equality in the urban plan remained paramount.

As Adelaide transitioned from foundation in 1836 to an established urban centre by the late 1850s improved financial standing and stability of the municipal authority and the colonial government, saw the ideal of Adelaide’s urban plan realized into an iconic urban landscape. While the public continued its commentary on the state of the Park Lands through newspapers and other forum, from this time their physical condition gradually improved. An article in the *South Australian Register* in 1887 describes Adelaide’s urban environment expressing a unifying attachment to its urban plan.

The Park Lands encircling Adelaide are the precious possessions of the people, and they properly are most jealously guarded. ("A Peep from the Dome", 1887)

**Conclusion**

This paper has examined the social plan on which the scheme to found the Colony of South Australia was based and the resultant expectations and aspirations of early colonists with particular regard to the Park Lands. It is remarkable that for almost two decades the Park Lands as ‘pleasure grounds’ for public health and recreation, existed more in theory than reality but remained paramount in the minds of the city’s residents. Adelaide’s urban plan and its iconic park lands
symbolised ideas of promise, opportunity and equality and were galvanized by the ideologies of its original social plan and the aspirations of its residents. The parks and people of Adelaide sustained each other at different periods in history and it is this relationship and the sense of communal ‘ownership’ (Jones, 2010) that has ensured the survival of an urban planning icon. The character and ethos of the people of Adelaide described by Peter Moreton as a “peculiar and unpredictable blend of the deeply conservative and the mildly radical” a seemingly duplicitous and bewildering public persona presenting now “as reactionary, now as progressive; now as puritan, now as liberal; now innovative, now stolidly conservative” (Morton, 1996) describes a community of people from varied backgrounds brought together by shared aspirations. Born from the pragmatic ranks nineteenth century reformists this character has enabled a remarkable and sustaining symbiotic relationship between a community and an iconic urban plan.

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'Iconic development'
Is there such a thing?

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By way of definition, dictionaries such as the Oxford Dictionary note that the word ‘icon’ is a noun meaning ‘a person or thing regarded as a representative symbol or as worthy of veneration’ (p. 654). More recently, the phrase ‘iconic development’ has crept into the town planning vernacular making reference to built or planned works that are intended to be an urban ‘benchmark’. However, in terms of planning practice in the State of Victoria, Australia, the meaning of ‘iconic development’ is unclear amongst property development professionals – one only needs to peruse the local newspaper, The Age on any given week and publications by key bodies such as the Planning Institute of Australia, the Victorian Planning and Environment Law Association, the Urban Development Institute of Australia and the Property Council of Australia on their websites and in professional newsletters, to appreciate the different ways the phrase is used in the property development context. This paper reports on key themes arising from interviews with 52 Victorian property development professionals, who were interviewed to determine their perceptions about what constitutes ‘iconic development’ in Victoria. Arising from the interviews, the study confirms that ‘iconic development’ is the new buzz phrase in property development circles, it is no longer just being used as a sales and marketing tool, but has been appropriated by technical professionals and introduced into different planning documents including certain local clauses in the Victorian Planning Provisions. Different professionals in the development industry, such as architects, planners and lawyers ascribe different meanings to this phrase, thereby presenting confusion in the property development industry. By understanding what these different professionals mean by the phrase ‘iconic development’ a more collaborative understanding of the phrase is arrived at to provide the practitioner and public with a more informed understanding to review realised and/or planned ‘iconic development’.

Key words: Iconic Development, Architecture, Design, Landmark site, Urban Planning
Introduction: What is ‘iconic development’?

Iconography and iconic development, whilst subjective, inevitably contributes to the development and identification of the built form in a place. In the interests of clarity, it is accepted that heritage places or objects have heritage value or significance provided to them through definitive criteria afforded through clear legislation and controls. Whilst some heritage places or objects are sometimes referred to as being ‘iconic’ there is no formally clear cut definition or criteria articulated to ‘iconic development’ as there is to heritage. The focus of this study is not on heritage places or objects but rather on development that is referred to as being iconic more broadly. Focusing on Melbourne, Victoria, the term ‘iconic development’ is being used in a planning context at Planning Panels Victoria and at the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal. These cases make reference to certain buildings being ‘iconic’. However, there is no statutory test to determine what the criteria for an iconic building is and therefore no consistency in the use of the term in a professional context. The cases illustrate that there are different views on what is ‘iconic’ and what constitutes ‘iconic development’. Iconography is generally defined as the “…study of images or symbols in visual arts”… “the visual images, symbols, or modes of representation collectively associated with a person, cult, or movement”. The word ‘icon’ is a noun meaning “…a person or thing regarded as a representative symbol or as worthy of veneration”. However, in a town planning context, the meaning of this phrase is unclear.

To better understand the extent of inconsistency with the use of the phrase ‘iconic development’ and how the phrase in being used in the Victorian context, it was determined that it was important to interview different professionals using the term. This paper reports on the key themes arising from interviews with 52 Victorian property development professionals to determine their perceptions about what constitutes ‘iconic development’. The interviews reported in this paper are but one research component that forms part of a broader research study, which investigates the planning process for developments, which are ‘iconic’ in Melbourne, Victoria.

As well as a discussion on the collective meaning and understanding of the phrase ‘iconic development’ noting key examples as articulated by the property development professionals interviewed; five key themes arose. The key themes described the extent to which:

- iconic developments contribute to identity and character of a place.
- planning regulations and policies affect iconic development projects.
- the economic climate influences iconic development.
- value is associated with iconic development; and
- politics influence iconic development.

These themes are discussed in more detail below. However, before going into these themes in detail, it is important to appreciate the literature on the topic and the method used in the interviews component of the research in the context of the broader study.

Literature Review

The term ‘iconic development’ is presently being used to describe the build form environment in the Victorian planning context. Apart from Kevin Lynch,(1960) who includes ‘landmarks’, as one
element in his discussion on the five key elements that make up the ‘image’ of a city; there is generally an absence in planning schools and in the social sciences, of research into the use of the phrase ‘iconic development’ as a descriptor for the built form, not to mention the built form in the Victorian context. There are various authors who discuss the impact of various external factors to the delivery of the built form from a process perspective in Victoria such as Sandercock,(1975) Sandercock discusses the extent to which politics influences the planning process and development in Adelaide, Melbourne and Sydney focusing in the period up to the mid seventies. Buxton, Budge and Goodman collaboratively look at the legislative process under the Planning and Environment Act 1987 (Vic) and the extent to which planning policy and regulation influence development. Aside from his brief discussion in collaboration with Sandercock (2002) on ‘imagining’ Melbourne’s docklands,ovey is more interested in the links to urban design and architecture and the extent to which development contributes to character and identity. Whilst there are many other terms which have similar connotations, such as ‘landmark’, ‘urban renaissance’, ‘gentrification’, ‘modernity’ and ‘tower building’ to name a few; there is no specific reference in the literature that discusses this illusive term ‘iconic development’, despite its common use in the town planning vernacular by various experts in the property development industry in Victoria. Lynch however, takes the view that there does exist ‘a quality in a physical object, which gives it a high probability of evoking a strong image in any given observer’. He calls this ‘imageability’. Using the following overarching elements to describe the physical form of a city; legibility, building the image, structure and identity and imageability; Lynch further breaks down this notion of imageability into five distinct elements; paths, edges, districts, nodes, and landmarks. It is the latter element (landmarks) that is of some relevance to this paper. In his discussion of the city form in the context of this concept of imageability, Lynch states “…landmarks are external. They are a point of reference, usually a rather simple defined physical object; a building, sign, store or mountain. They are frequently used clues of identity… and are relied upon as a journey becomes more familiar.” Lynch suggests that spatial prominence can establish elements as landmarks by making the element visible from many locations or by setting up a contrast with nearby elements. This is confirmed by Gieseking (2014), who quotes and accepts Lynch’s five distinct elements in the context of reading the city. Other scholars such as Gehl(2011) and Kaika(2010) discuss these elements in the context of illustrating good architecture and urban design outcomes. Gehl’s work focuses on spaces between buildings and the activation of street frontages. Kaika discusses ‘icons’ as brands for cities and their influence on surrounding architectural form. Perhaps the phrase is quickly becoming a ‘buzz word’ or even ‘weasel word’ (Watson 2004) in the town planning vernacular. On this basis, it could be said that the term ‘iconic’ is being used to market a development. However, as indicated in the literature above, there are a number of ‘influencing factors’ that determine whether something will be/ is ‘iconic’. Based on the literature, it seems that ‘iconic development’ is a phrase that could be used metaphorically to convey an aspiration in the built form context by exaggeration to convey that the built form being described is and/or will be venerated, and this is indeed how the phrase is being used today.
Research method

The 52 interviews (which form part of a larger body of work) use both quantitative and qualitative research methods. As outlined by Bryman (2008), qualitative and quantitative research constitutes different approaches to social investigation, which carry with them important epistemological and ontological considerations. There are two major types of research models or research paradigms for the collecting of data. The first is the ‘quantitative’ research model (Creswell 2007). Also known as traditional, positivist, experimental, or empiricist; the quantitative data collection method relies on data collection instruments that fit diverse experiences into predetermined response categories. The second, is the ‘qualitative’ research model. (Creswell 2007) Also known as the constructivist, naturalistic, interpretive, post positivist or postmodern perspective; the qualitative method is used where data is collected in forms including words, images and video, which are then analysed and summarised into themes. Usually, only one type of content analysis model is used however, there are occasions, where combining methods can be useful. This is generally referred to as triangulation,(Creswell 2007 & Bryman 2008) where there is a use of multiple methods of data collection and analysis. The use of triangulation, which combines methodologies to study the key data draws on the qualitative and quantitative data collection procedures, (for example ‘statistics’ + ‘survey + in-depth interview’). Hence triangulation was used in this research to achieve results that are cross referenced.

A combination of the ‘structured’ and ‘semi-structured’ interview was undertaken for each of the 52 participants. The structured and semi-structured interview combination utilised in this study uses a combination of open and closed questions. As indicated in the literature, open questions are where the respondent can answer on their own terms. This method allows unusual responses to be derived. Useful for exploring new areas or ones in which the researcher has limited knowledge, they are useful for generating fixed-choice format answers. In order to reduce variability in the interview technique, each interviewee was emailed a formal pack of information (including the list of questions to be asked in the interview itself) for consideration at least 48 hours before the interview. The questions were asked in the same manner and answers were recorded by hand to ensure interviewees were comfortable with the confidentiality of the interview. Of the 52 professionals interviewed 82% were male, while 18% were female. The interviewees were chosen based on their professional experience, position and individual contribution to the industry as judged by key industry bodies. There were 16 town planners, 7 barristers/lawyers, 9 politicians, 12 architects, 2 urban designers and 2 academics. Not including the 2 academics, 22 experts worked in the public sector, while 25 worked in the private sector and 3 worked across both sectors. All of the interviewees had over 30 years experience in their field of expertise and most had been actively involved in the planning approval process of developments that are considered iconic. Four were retired. Each interviewee signed a declaration during the interview process to ensure they understood how their information would be used in accordance with the ethics requirements for the study.

Having regard to the spectrum of ‘views’ presented by Meinig’s (1979) ‘ten versions of the same scene’ theory, the type of questions asked enabled interviewees to provide not just a quantitative yes or no, or, type specific response, but also more elaborate responses. Meinig’s work is based on the notion that “...any landscape is comprised not only of what lies before our
eyes but what lies within our heads”. As discussed by Bryman, qualitative interviewing is meant to be flexible, it should not be too structured in its application and should allow some flexibility in the asking of questions, which allowed for detailed responses to be provided by the interviewees.

The structured and semi-structured research interview combination resulted in some answers being able to be standardised and others to be analysed and grouped into key themes based on subject matter. When analysing and codifying this qualitative component of the research, the language used by interviewees in their responses was examined using generally two approaches; conversation analysis and discourse analysis, as too were the key themes in the context of the subject matter. The triangulation method provided robust results with the key themes outlining new knowledge and deeper understanding of the subject matter.

In keeping with Bryman’s accepted method, full ethics was adhered to in accordance with the both LaTrobe University and Deakin University’s Human Ethics Committees, the data collected and interviews of participants was conducted in the same style and manner and individually coded to ensure confidentiality.

There are several ways of combining quantitative and qualitative research and of representing mixed methods research. Hammersley’s(1989) classification of approaches to mixed methods research is the basis for the strategic method of this study. As Hammersley outlines, the method provides for a more robust finding because of the overlap between approaches.

Results and Discussion

Many of the experts interviewed, had different opinions on the meaning of the word ‘iconic’. Some said it was “…grossly overused”. There was consistency amongst the interviewees that the use of the phrase did not have common meaning amongst their peers and therefore professionally did not carry a lot of meaning.

In better understanding the meaning of the phrase ‘iconic development’ in the manner it is being used in Melbourne’s property development context, the interviewees were asked; ‘What constitutes an ‘iconic’ development in your opinion? Why? Some interviewees said ‘iconic development’ had come to mean “…a built form structure that shapes a city and captures the imagination.” For other interviewees, truly iconic developments only existed in the international context. The one comparable Australian iconic development according to various interviewees was the Sydney Opera House. This inferred that ‘iconic development’ was significant and known not only by the local community but by the transient tourist.

According to the interviewees, the Opera House is an example of exemplary architecture, its setting adds to its uniqueness and sophistication of design. However, in listening to the interviewee’s responses, the Opera House was much more than that. This is well articulated in various references including a recent documentary, where the structure is presented as a ‘cultural icon’ and the political symbol of change by the Government of the day. Some interviewees suggested that almost anything on the Opera House site would have been iconic given its locale. Terms associated with ‘iconic development’ according to the interviewees might be ‘landmark
development’ as articulated by Lynch earlier or a project of ‘State or Regional Significance’ as defined in the *Planning and Environment Act 1987 (Vic)*, under section 201F. When pushed further to articulate examples of iconic development in Melbourne, some of the experts responded by saying that the City of Melbourne was still young on the international scale. It was noted that whilst ‘landmark’ sites existed, these were usually buildings used as ‘place markers’, a term used by various scholars (Gould 1986 & 2002. Gieseking 2014). For other experts, Melbourne had ample iconic developments. Whilst not all were in the geographical demarcation of the City of Melbourne, the list of examples provided by the interviewees was long and varied. What becomes clearer in the examples cited, is that the definition of ‘iconic development’ is a metaphor. On this basis, it is suggested that if one accepts that ‘iconic development’ is a metaphor in planning terms, one can accept its use as a colloquially used word, which has come to be used as a subjective descriptor or to convey an aspiration about a built form development or space with whom the general public have a bond with akin to veneration. The objective of this study is not a detailed linguistic one or a discussion of heritage places; rather, the paper focuses on the definition of how the phrase ‘iconic development’ comes to be used in reference to built form projects based on the responses from the 52 interviewees. By analysing the collective understanding of what ‘iconic development’ means according to the interviewees, five key themes become clear. These are summarised below.

1. **The extent to which iconic development contributes to the identity and character of a place**

There is no absolute agreement on what constitutes a national icon—that elusive ‘thing’ or concept that is regarded as quintessentially Australian or instantly recognisable as uniquely Australian. Much of the tourism literature, and associated marketing brochures, identify Australia’s national icons as including the Northern Territory’s Uluru in the red centre, the Great Barrier Reef and the Sydney Opera House. The country’s unique kangaroos and koalas also rate a mention. So too does a cricketer named Don Bradman, a mighty racehorse called Phar Lap, a bushranger named Ned Kelly and a hat known as the Akubra, as well as the ‘Aussie’ meat pie, a yeast-based spread called Vegemite, and a square sponge cake dipped in chocolate and coconut known as a ‘lamington’. These icons are all elements of our national identity as taught in the curriculum at many Australian schools(Tudball 1991).

The icons of a city and the identity of the people it represents is intrinsic to people’s association with that city. Identification with a place takes many forms. Often identity can occur by way of a reference to a specific name but also by reference to a specific building or landmark. Focusing on Melbourne, the interviewees drew on various examples both locally and internationally, to illustrate how iconic developments contribute to the identity and character of Melbourne. Almost by definition iconic developments contribute to way finding and the legibility of a city. This evident in the literature and was identified by various interviewees. Described as “landmarks”, “meeting points”, and “mental map locations”, these contribute to the make up of society that different people identify with.

As identified by Meinig, the idea of place brings with it so many reactions and emotions. Iconic development can influence perception after an experience in a place. One interviewee stated “…experiences create cognitive images, which people then use as navigational tools attaching their own meaning to a place based on their own experience.” Through one’s imagination, an experience in a place can be not just physical but sentimental.
This concept is also identified in a broader sense by another academic Thomas Kuhn(1962), who discusses this philosophy of one’s experience through imagination. On this basis, Federation Square is not just a public square, but the ‘people’s square’, the Eureka tower is a sculpture in Melbourne’s skyline that “…like a fireball in summer, lifts the spirit”, and the Shrine of Remembrance is a testament to the memory of our fallen soldiers never to be forgotten. These places stir different emotions for each of us. In the literature, this is reflective of Meinig’s position in the context of place.

When articulating some of the aforementioned examples of iconic developments in Melbourne, the experts indicated they were at the cultural heart of Melbourne’s identity. One interviewee said “Melbourne is distinctive … just like the many facets of its multicultural makeup, there is not just one iconic development that comes to mind immediately when one thinks about Melbourne’s identity – there are many. Melbourne can be identified as a culmination of various parts.” Another interviewee said on the subject of identity “Melbourne has a collective identity made up from the character of all built form”. Put differently, it could be said that identity cannot be separated from character in the built environment. Spaces, which are venerated by the public are places that people identify with as a collective of various characteristic parts. Iconic developments and their surrounding spaces are intrinsic to the identity of cities particularly when these buildings and spaces are ‘owned’ by the people who inhabit the place.

Many of the architects and designers interviewed acknowledged the impact of a brand to the identity of a place. For example, the ‘Guggenheim effect’ and the impact of the Guggenheim brand in different cities. This is consistent with the position of Kaika(2010). Whilst brands are important in the discussion about identity, context, as identified by Gehl,(2011) is also important. One architect said “…this would allow for the brand to grow as a whole.” On the other hand, another interviewee said “…icons can kill character and in turn the identity of a city … if they don’t fit.” On this basis, given Melbourne is notionally a young city in the global context of the built environment whose identity is still growing, the vision for the development of the city’s identity through the built form is important.

2. The impact of planning regulations and policies

Planning policies and regulations should provide a vision, direction and set objectives for development. The key governing documents in Victoria are the Planning and Environment Act 1987 (Vic) and the Victorian Planning Provisions together with their incorporated and referenced documents. Whilst most policy documents are considered important by the planners and other professionals working within the Victorian planning system; policies and regulations often set only minimum standards, therefore presenting limits. According to the interviewees, typically, iconic developments challenge and push the boundaries set in the Victorian Planning Provisions. Many of the architects and designers interviewed were of the view that policy and regulations hinder iconic development. One architect said “…regulations dumb things down, often placing tick box requirements on the design of a development which often lead to constraints. This doesn’t stop development but certainly inhibits any innovation.” According to the lawyers and barristers interviewed however, policy affects the assessment of these developments in a limited way because policy has the elasticity to assist iconic development. One barrister said,
“...if it’s a genuine iconic project then there’s a case for breaking the rules” \textsuperscript{lviii} It was recognised by the interviewees that the process for applications that push boundaries, is inherently different to the process for modest applications. That being said, most development applications are assessed under the standard application procedure under the \textit{Planning and Environment Act 1987 (Vic)}.  

During his time as the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal President (‘VCAT’), and head of the Planning and Environment List at VCAT, Justice Stuart Morris (2006) highlighted that a substantial body of law evolved as to the limits within which an administrative decision-maker must operate when applying a policy in the exercise of discretion.\textsuperscript{lix} Policy and how it is applied is important, particularly in the ‘standard’ process, where proposals come before VCAT. These issues may involve the identification of applicable policy; the interpretation of policy; the lawfulness of policy; the status of policy, which may depend on the author of the policy; the weight to be given to policy; the balancing of competing policies; and the extent to which policy should give way to the circumstances of the case. On this basis, it is important to appreciate the reality and effects policy has at VCAT.

Whilst planning policies and regulations have an impact (particularly for ‘standard’ planning developments), it is evident that they are more of a reference document than a systemic requirement for iconic developments.

3. The impact of the economic climate

Melbourne is a leading financial centre ranked the world’s most livable city since 2010.\textsuperscript{lx} All of the technical experts interviewed confirmed the economy has an impact on the development of iconic developments in Melbourne. From its’ early beginnings when it was declared the capital of the colony of the Port Phillip District in 1851, the growth and development of “marvelous Melbourne”\textsuperscript{lx} was stimulated by the gold rush, an event which had a significant impact on the local economy that saw Melbourne become the richest city in the world.\textsuperscript{lxi} The boom in the economy at the time saw the delivery of many of the city’s surviving institutional buildings such as Parliament House, the State Library and the Supreme Court, Old Melbourne Gaol, the General Post Office, Government House, Melbourne Town Hall, St Paul’s and St Patrick’s cathedrals and the Queen Victoria Market to name a few. Since this time, the peaks and crashes of the economy have continued to impact the delivery of built form development in the City of Melbourne. By the Federation of Australia on 1 January 1901, Melbourne had become the largest city and leading financial centre in Australasia. The first federal parliament was convened on 9 May 1901 in the Royal Exhibition Building in the ‘capital’\textsuperscript{lxii} as it became known until 1927 when it moved to Canberra. In the immediate years after World War II, Melbourne expanded rapidly, its growth boosted by post war immigration primarily from southern Europe and the Mediterranean.\textsuperscript{lxiii} During this time the ‘Paris end’ of Collins Street in Melbourne began the city’s boutique shopping and open air café cultures. In 1958, height limits in the Melbourne CBD were lifted resulting in the construction of ICI House, which transformed the city’s skyline with the introduction of skyscrapers. Australia’s financial and mining booms between 1969 and 1970 resulted in the establishment of many corporate companies (such as BHP Billiton and Rio Tinto) in the city.

Melbourne remained Australia’s main business and financial centre until the late 1970s, when it began to lose this primacy to Sydney. As the centre of Australia’s ‘rust belt’, Melbourne
experienced an economic downturn between 1989 to 1992, following the collapse of several local financial institutions. In 1992, the newly elected Kennett government began a campaign to revive the economy with an aggressive development campaign of public works coupled with the promotion of the city as a tourist destination focusing on major events and sports tourism, which saw the Australian Grand Prix move to Melbourne. Major projects included the construction of the Melbourne Museum, Federation Square, the Melbourne Exhibition and Convention Centre, Crown Casino and the City Link toll way. Other strategies to combat the downturn in the economy included the privatisation of Melbourne’s power and public transport and a reduction in funding to public services such as health, education and public transport infrastructure. Since the mid-1990s, Melbourne has maintained significant population and employment growth. There has been substantial international investment in the city’s industries and property market. Major inner city urban renewal has occurred in Southbank, Port Melbourne, Melbourne Docklands, South Wharf and more recently Fisherman’s Bend. Today, Melbourne’s central business district hosts some of the nation’s tallest buildings like the Eureka Tower and the Rialto, with reports of further projections of growth according to the Australian Bureau of Statistics. On this basis, whilst it is suggested there may be some minor ebbs and flows in the local economy, it is expected that the economy will maintain this momentum in the immediate future.

Exemplified through history, and confirmed by the interviewees; in buoyant times, we are more likely to see the delivery of significant developments in Melbourne. Many experts said “…iconic projects are built during boom periods”. One economist observed “…privately funded buildings are often more affected by the economic cycle compared to public projects”. Iconic projects are underpinned by their economic feasibility. In tougher economic times the private sector is more risk averse and prudent. During these times therefore it is virtually impossible to deliver an iconic development, there is too much risk. One architect said “...when we are in a time of prosperity it’s often a prickly process to get a development approval. During a time of recession, decision makers are not as choosy”. Many of the decision makers interviewed confirmed that it was generally easier to obtain approvals in tougher times.

According to the interviewees, in tougher times, good Governments fill the void and seek to deliver iconic development. This was particularly evident in the Kennett era. Kennett himself confirmed this at a public address in 2014, where he said “…the economic climate has an impact on how we plan our cities”. He said, “political will was just as important as the economic climate.” Canes-Wrone(2001) economic theory supports these comments. According to Cane-Wrone, in down times governments open the public purse reflective of the genesis of economics being able to stimulate the economy. This was confirmed by interviewee.

4. The actual and perceived value of iconic development

Melbourne has been awarded the world’s most livable city, an award it has won four years in a row from 2010 to now. Whilst one could say that economically the award lifts the status of Melbourne a dollar figure cannot be placed on it. Arguably, it is invaluable. What people value differs. Therefore, what is considered valuable may be different for different people. There are different considerations when assessing value. The economists interviewed indicated that when
assessing value, there were four types of value; (i) tourism value, (ii) business, commercial or economic value, (iii) aesthetic value and (iv) personal value. These value types were reflected in the interviews.

For many interviewees, the value of iconic development was not quantifiable. Metaphorically, the value for the interviewees was the contribution the development brings to the people who ‘use’ or experience it. For developers, often the value is that of a commercial return in dollar figures. One of the expert economists interviewed said “…we can undertake an economic assessment based on both the quantitative and qualitative values of a development - where there is a quantifiable dollar value you can clearly demonstrate a return, where there is a non quantifiable dollar value (more of a qualitative value) then it is more difficult to demonstrate a return in today’s economic terms.”

So where there's a non quantifiable value, it becomes more of an investment ‘for the people’ particularly if its contribution will be venerated. Whilst this lends itself to better positioning from a marketing and commercial perspective, it is suggested that this value is unique. One interviewee said “…there is an enormous value in giving people a sense of pride for their city which is what iconic developments do”. One key example highlighted in the interviews, was the Sydney Opera House. The Opera House has both a very tangible value associated with the number of locals and tourists who view shows there and an intangible value associated with the number of people who don’t necessarily spend money there but value it as part of the Sydney Harbor landscape. This is known as the ‘postcard effect’. One planner stated “When a structure acts as a ‘philipp’ to a place, (ie. the way that the Opera House does to Sydney), it encourages other things to happen there.” This type of value is not quantifiable according to the economists that were interviewed – it is invaluable.

5. The influence of politics

It is commonly accepted that politics do influence development. This has been illustrated in the satirical comedy *Utopia*, which is a good representation of the current state of play in the Melbourne development industry. As outlined earlier, the process for ‘iconic’ developments as opposed to ‘standard’ developments is inevitably different and often involves Members of Parliament notably the Premier, the Minister for Planning, and to a lesser degree, the local member as key decision makers. This is particularly the case for projects in Melbourne’s CBD greater than 25,000 square meters. One barrister said, “…before technical experts have an opportunity to comment on a significant project, politicians have often already made up their minds”. Politics and politicians have significant influence on the delivery of significant, often ‘iconic’ projects. Key examples as noted by the experts interviewed were; Federation Square, City Link, the East/ West link, the Shrine of Remembrance, the Queen Victoria Hospital redevelopment, the Windsor Hotel, Southern Cross Station, Grollo’s proposal to build the world’s tallest tower in the Docklands, the Melbourne Museum, the Carlton Gardens, the Dome at Parliament, the National Tennis Centre, the Rialto Towers and the Eureka Tower. As the examples above illustrate, politics can influence the approval and delivery of these projects.

The interviewees said “…the process is inherently political”. Politics are a catalyst for change. One planner noted “…when there’s a change of government… the incoming Government wants to leave an imprint on the landscape”. Others said “…politicians have an interest in leaving a built form legacy”. A retired planning minister confirmed this stating “…you try to resist but
you’re not always successful... sometimes for the better, sometimes for the worse.” lxxxii Another retired politician said “...when a political party gets a project on the ground, they get political capital... politicians often turn political capital into votes/ power rather than just money.” lxxxiii The interviewees generally observed that there was no difference between the major parties, both want that illusive built form plaque. One decision maker said “...because of the limited duration of a political term, if a politician wants a project to be delivered during their term then they will have a rapid approval delivery.” lxxxiv Politicians live for ‘turning of the sod’ launches and red ribbon cutting ceremonies. The 52 interviewees unanimously confirmed that iconic development in Melbourne is heavily influenced by politics. Based on the responses in the interviews it is suggested that politics have a significant influence on the approval and delivery of iconic development.

There are numerous calls to “de-politicise” strategic land use and infrastructure decisions by putting them at arm’s length from state and local government politicians however, the likelihood of this occurring according to the interviewees was low.

Conclusion

The phrase ‘iconic development’ has rightfully or wrongfully crept into the town planning vernacular. One could say it is the new buzz or weasel word (Watson 2004) lxxxv much in the same way that works like ‘landmark’ have been used in the past to have similar connotations. The specific meaning of the phrase is varied as outlined in the interviews that were undertaken as part of this study and used differently by different professionals. What is considered iconic for one person, may not be for another.

What is clear on the evidence however, is that this phrase is colloquial and has come to be used as a subjective descriptor to convey an aspiration about a built form development or place with whom people have a bond, akin with veneration. The way different people deploy ideas of built form being ‘iconic’ in order to have it approved or built, often in the face of community opposition is a key finding and thereby explains the reason for its use.

It was clear in the interviews that what is or becomes considered to be iconic development is impacted or influenced by five key factors in Melbourne. These are; the extent to which they contribute to identity and character of a place, the impact of planning regulations and policies and the economic climate in which they are approved and developed. The actual and perceived value is associated with iconic development, and the politics of the day. On this basis, it is suggested that these key factors may inform key criteria to determine what is ‘iconic’ and what is not in the context of how the phrase is being used today.
Endnotes


ii Planning Scheme Amendment C172 (15 June 2015), where a proposed development was referred to as the “iconic” podium tower development; Planning Scheme Amendment C107 (5 May 2015), where reference was made to St Kilda Road as a nationally recognised “iconic” boulevard; Planning Scheme Amendment C106 (25 June 2013), where reference was made to the St Kilda Triangle as an “iconic” asset within the St Kilda foreshore.

iii Metropol Planning Solutions Ltd v Knox CC & Ors [2013] VCAT 359 (25 March 2013) where the site in this case was considered not to be “iconic”. Melbourne City Council v the Minister for Planning [2010] VCAT 1459 (30 August 2010), where it was debated whether the city of Melbourne could accommodate more than one “iconic” building. It was submitted in this case that the Planning Scheme does not require buildings to be “iconic” rather it encourages exemplary architecture and innovative building design. Adspace Pty Ltd v Melbourne City Council & Ors [2003] VCAT 1057 (30 July 2003) where the Arts Centre precinct was described as have “iconic” cultural status.


Bryman, A. (2008) *Social Research Methods.* Oxford University Press. New York. p492-512 According to Bryman, these two approaches take the position that language is itself a focus of interest and not just a medium through which research participants communicate with researchers.


I Interviewees 37, 15 & 29.

I Interviewees 11 & 35.

I Interviewees 47, 11, 10, 14, 34, 24, 3 & 48.

I Interviewees 47, 11, 10, 14, 34, 24, 3 & 48.

I Autopsy On a Dream – the making of the Sydney Opera House. [FILM] directed by John Weiley with the remastered film produced by John Maynard for Felix Media with the support of the BBC, Screen Australian and ABC Arts. It was screened on Australian television, Sunday October 20 2014 at 9.25 pm, ABC1

I Under section 201F of the Planning and Environment Act 1987 (Vic), the Planning Minister may, by notice published in the Government Gazette, declare a development or proposed development to be of State or Regional Significance.


I Interviewees 37, 51, 33, 16, 39, & 35.

I Interviewee 32.

I Interviewee 35.

I Interviewee 16.

I Interviewee 52.


I Interviewee 39.

I Interviewee 13.

I Interviewee 8.

I Interviewee 15.

I Interviewee 13.

I Interviewee 51.

I Interviewee 19.

I Morris, Justice Stuart. Tribunals and Policy. Centre for International & Public Law Conference. Australian National University. 5 April 2006 Canberra, Australia. Quoting the case *O’Connell Street Developments Pty Ltd v Yarra City Council,[2003]* VCAT 448. 30 April 2003, the principal authority on the application of policy at VCAT.


I Button, James. (10 January 2004) “He came, he saw, he marveled”. *The Age.* Fairfax. Retrieved 7 July 2012. During a visit in 1885 English journalist George Augustus Henry Sala coined the phrase "Marvelous Melbourne", which stuck long into the twentieth century and is still used today by Melburnians


Interviewees 39, 45, 53, 42, 49 & 16.

Interviewees 39, 11, & 40.

Interviewee 35.

Interviewee 33.


Melbourne again world’s most livable city’ AAP 19 August 2014. Melbourne obtained an overall rating of 97.5 out of 100 in the Economist Intelligence Unit’s annual livability survey.

Interviewee 35.

Interviewee 52.

Interviewee 48.

Interviewee 33.


Interviewee 6.

Interviewees 28 & 16.

Interviewee 24.

Interviewees 8 & 33.

Interviewee 12.

Interviewee 3.

Interviewee 40.