

PART 8: CONSERVATION POLICY

8.1 INTRODUCTION AND CONSERVATION OBJECTIVES

The purpose of the conservation policies set out in this Part is to provide guidance to the conservation

This Part utilises definitions from the *Australia ICOMOS Charter for the Conservation of Places of Cultural Significance* (the Burra Charter).

Policy statements are provided in italics and should be read with the associated text to aid interpretation.

8.2 GENERAL POLICY STATEMENT

The following general principles will guide the formulation of policies for future heritage management and conservation of the site and its component parts. Many of the same principles apply as for the core buildings, however the outer areas require attention to issues which do not apply to the core buildings:

General Principles

- The School of Artillery as a total entity, including all elements of the central core and outer areas should be retained and conserved in accordance with the Burra Charter of Australia ICOMOS and its associated guidelines, except where otherwise indicated by this Conservation Management Plan.
- The School of Artillery should be retained in public ownership and managed as a single entity. The primary objective should be to enhance the military heritage of the site by explaining the history and significance of the site, supported by interpretive displays which demonstrate the functioning of individual components.
- Management of the School of Artillery should have primary regard for physical conservation and interpretation. The site should become financially self supporting however it should not be required to yield a return on funds invested. The outer areas have greater opportunity for redevelopment in certain areas to create and lease assets to commercial operators, to assist in the support and management of the site as a whole.
- All actions affecting buildings, structures and landscape elements in the core precinct should be in accordance with the policies of the Plan, guided by Implementation Strategy outlined in Part 9.
- Significant views to and from the School of Artillery should be maintained and opportunities should be taken to enhance them, and prevent the loss of views by the encroachment of surrounding bushland.
- The fabric of built elements recommended for conservation should be maintained and, where necessary, preserved and restored. Stabilization of elements which are under threat should be the major priority. Missing elements of fabric which are considered to be significant may be reconstructed but no hypothetical reconstruction should occur.
- Adaptation may occur to assist in interpretation of the operation of the place. Intervention in significant fabric should be minimal and reversible wherever possible.

- Public access to the School of Artillery is essential for its proper conservation. The School of Artillery should be interpreted in a manner which presents its significant attributes.
- New development may be permitted only as outlined by this plan. Spaces may be made available for operational purposes or for concessional use, provided it can be demonstrated that their use will have no detrimental impact on significant elements.
- New structures for support facilities and adaptive reuse of existing structures may be permitted in the outer areas, strictly in accordance with the policies of this Plan, and minimal impact on significant elements should arise.
- As a general management principle, proposals and work that have potential to result in physical change to significant elements and precincts, must be preceded by a detailed archival recording, (in accordance with NSW Heritage Office guidelines). This should take the form of measured drawings and photographic record of existing conditions and configuration of physical fabric, before and after the work is carried out.
- This Conservation Management Plan should be lodged with the Australian Heritage Council for endorsement prior to distribution and enactment in the field. A copy of this CMP should be held on site and made available to interested parties, the SHFT and Commonwealth Archives.
- This CMP should be reviewed and updated whenever there are other major changes to the circumstances of the place, such as changes in ownership or leasing. The conservation policies outlined in this Conservation Management Plan should only be varied following a formal review undertaken at the request of the authority or organisation responsible for the place. Otherwise the CMP should be reviewed every five years.

9.3 SPECIFIC POLICIES

Future Conservation and Upgrade Policies

Work should be carried out in accordance with the following Policies:

Policy 1.1: *The future conservation of the School of Artillery outer precincts indicated on the Significant Curtilage Plan (hereinafter referred to as 'the place') should be directed towards maintaining and interpreting its heritage significance in accordance with the principles of the Australia ICOMOS Charter for the Conservation of Places of Cultural Significance (the Burra Charter).*

Policy 1.2: *The significance of the place should be made clearly evident to the observer and the means of interpretation should be compatible with the retention of that significance.*

Policy 1.3: *The Statement of Significance together with recommendations for specific items contained in this Part should be accepted as the basis for future conservation.*

Policy 1.4: *The conservation of all elements of a high degree of significance should be a combination of both preservation and restoration. Accurate reconstruction may be permitted in instances where the integrity of fabric is compromised by deteriorating elements.*

Policy 1.5: *The conservation of elements with some significance should include preservation, restoration, reconstruction, and adaptation.*

Policy 1.6: *In some specific instances, limited adaptation and reconstruction may be allowed in accordance with the Burra Charter to allow and assist interpretation.*

Policy 1.7: *In some instances, elements of compromised significance may be reinstated to their original form and condition.*

Policy 1.8: *Intrusive elements should be removed, and replaced with sympathetic alternatives where required for operational purposes.*

A program for conservation of the building fabric should identify necessary upgrading works. Such work should not compromise effective and appropriate conservation in accordance with the Statement of Significance.

Policy 1.9: *The proposed work shall include upgrade works as required to meet current occupational health and safety standards with respect to public buildings, staff amenities, and services.*

Feasible Uses

Policy 2.1: *Individual buildings, structures and spaces in outer areas at the School of Artillery site should be available for lease or occupation for purposes which have low impact on the significance of individual elements and the heritage significance of the site as a whole. The School of Artillery should be recognised as a place of cultural significance, available for visitation, enjoyment and interpretation by the public.*

Policy 2.2: *The site may be used for functions, conventions, conferences, weddings and other formal occasions. Community use of the site should be encouraged, utilising opportunities of the unique scenic qualities and the heritage character of the site.*

Policy 2.3: *Spaces assessed with a significance rating of 1 or 2 (exceptional or high) should be restricted to activities which have no impact on significant fabric or spaces. No such activity shall be allowed to obscure or prevent the interpretation of significant elements. Such activity need not exclude commercial leasing providing such occupation is conditional on the above objectives.*

Policy 2.4: *Spaces assessed with a significance ranking of 3 or 4 (medium or low) may be available for commercial leasing, site concessions, essential management and operational purposes, providing impact on significant elements and fabric is low and reversible.*

Policy 2.5: *Spaces assessed with a significance ranking of 4 or 5 (low or none) may be used for management, interpretation, concession or storage purposes.*

Policy 2.6: *Spaces and intrusive elements with a significance ranking of 6 (intrusive) should be removed, or be replaced with sympathetic alternatives.*

Ownership and Management

Policy 3.1: *The School of Artillery should remain in public ownership under the control of an authority with skills and experience in the management of heritage sites.*

Policy 3.2: *The day to day operation of the place should be the responsibility of the SHFT appointed site manager in consultation with an advisory committee and specialist consultants.*

Policy 3.3: *Notwithstanding legislative requirements, decisions affecting policy and major initiatives should be decided by SHFT as owner of the site, in consultation with the*

advisory committee. This process should follow liaison with the Australian Heritage Council and other state or national stakeholders.

New development in the outer areas

New development or activity in the School of Artillery outer areas should only be permitted in accordance with the following policies, as for the core area. Harbour Trust and the proposed Advisory Committee should have a consultative role in the determination of appropriate new activity.

Policy 4.1: *new development will not be permitted in areas impacting on any buildings, structures and landscape elements which are assessed with significance grading of 1 or 2*

Policy 4.2: *New development will be permitted within certain areas of the outer areas as indicated in Part 9, Implementation Strategy. Any new development or adaptive reuse will be carried out strictly in accordance with this CMP.*

Policy 4.2: *Essential external works affecting significant elements shall be strictly controlled to ensure compatible and appropriate design to minimise impacts on the fabric and integrity of the structures.*

Redevelopment of existing structures and adaptive reuse

The SHFT Management Plan⁷ for the School of Artillery advocates the establishment of North Head as a Sanctuary, commencing with the School of Artillery. It is envisaged as a place for research in areas of natural science, the impact of humans and urbanisation on ecosystems, environmental science and for the conservation and management of natural heritage of the local area.

The SHFT states that “... *Buildings will be adaptively re-used in ways that will complement the proposed sanctuary.....the buildings located within the former School of Artillery will need to be adaptively reused and occupied to facilitate their conservation and public access and use of the site.*”

Principles which follow from the above objectives which are supported by SHFT in terms of selection of uses in the precinct, include the following:

Policy 5.1: *Uses should support or are complementary with the establishment of North Head as a sanctuary.*

Policy 5.2: *Uses should be compatible with the heritage values and conservation objectives of the place.*

Policy 5.3: *Where buildings will be subject to adaptive reused within the Sanctuary, their original purpose should be interpreted and their integrity retained within an appropriate setting.*

Compatible Uses

The SHFT Management Plan outlines recommended feasible uses applicable to the outer areas, as follows:

These buildings may be suitable for a wide range of supporting uses such as workshops, offices, small scale art and craft studios, meeting rooms, educational or training facilities, scientific research facilities, community uses, storage and ‘back of house activities’ related to the operation of the sanctuary. Due to the proximity of those buildings to sensitive bushland of the surrounding area, some of the buildings

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may be removed. Issues such as noise, light spillage, bushfire management and traffic generation will be important considerations in the retention of structures and selection of appropriate uses.

The water tower presents an opportunity to provide a viewing platform in an unobtrusive way.

A number of buildings at the periphery of the School of artillery (12, 35, 36, 50 and 74) are considered to be important historical structures related to their wartime function, such as the plotting room or miniature range. Due to their small scale and purpose built nature, they will be mostly suited to repair and conservation for interpretation purposes.

Design outcomes

The SHFT Management Plan for the School of Artillery (page 51) outlines design principles applicable to the outer areas, as follows:

- Adaptive reuse of buildings B41 and B34 (ARMCO shed) in such a way that their scale, form, and industrial qualities are maintained and their construction system is expressed
- Potential to adaptively reuse or remove from the site, the large sheds, B34A, 34B, 61, 64,65,67,27,28,32,33,48, 40,42, and 68
- Conserve and interpret the gun park and Hamel gun mounts
- Remove invasive species and replace with new species that continue to reflect the transition between the encroaching bushland and the cultural landscape qualities of the central core.
- Conserve and interpret the peripheral structures that were fundamental to the operation of the Battery and the Sydney Fire Command. This includes two plotting rooms, two battery observation posts and shelters, RAAF Radio room B50 and the Miniature Range, B 35 and B36.
- Controlled public access will be provided for interpretation where these items are to be adaptively reused.
- Conserve the Avenue of Honour and the North Fort Gate access
- Interpret artillery school training facilities, including obstacle courses, hockey field, tennis courts, oval, anti-armour range and the Nicoh range observation post.
- Retain the form of the oval, and edge of bushland. Retain associated structures including shelter sheds and tennis courts.
- Retain institutional domestic character of the houses and gardens.

Client consultation and management

Members of stakeholder organisations and other interest groups should have some means of contributing to the ongoing use and management of the place within the constraints of this Plan and client user requirements.

Policy 6.1: *Relevant stakeholders should be able to contribute to decisions regarding the use and conservation management of the place.*

Public access, traffic management and security

Policy 7.1: *The proposed form of security should not, in itself, detract from the significance of the site and should allow effective control and supervision.*

Policy 7.2: *Provision should be made to allow disabled access into public and working areas on a controlled basis, providing this can be achieved with minimal intervention into significant fabric.*

Parking

Provision of adequate on-site parking for visitors and staff will increasingly impact on the outer areas with potential to detract from views to and from the site, and assume visual prominence within the site affecting internal vistas.

Policy 8.1: *Parking shall be managed in a manner which has minimal impact on significant elements of the central core and outer precincts.*

Policy 8.2: *Parking will be permitted only in designated areas and shall not be permitted on landscaped areas.*

Services and Amenities

Policy 9.1: *Upgraded amenities and associated services should be provided in a manner which does not adversely impact on items of heritage significance.*

Hazardous materials

Hazardous materials and substances are known to have existed or potentially remain on the site, including the following:

- Asbestos cement wall linings
- Lead in paint finishes
- Chemicals such as mercury, lead and copper
- Discarded military ordnance and ammunition

Policy 10.1: *All areas of the building group and surrounding curtilage shall be tested by accredited environmental consultants to determine the extent of hazardous substances, prior to personnel occupation or public visitation.*

Interpretation of the Precinct

Methods of interpretation should explain the function and role of the School of Artillery and as the national artillery training centre, and the vital role of the site in the defence of Sydney during WW2.

Individual interpretation measures are included in the inventory sheets for individual elements.

Policy 11.1: *The significance of the place should be clearly evident to the observer and the means of interpretation should be compatible with the retention of heritage significance.*

Cultural Landscape

Throughout the non-core areas there are various cultural landscape attributes that contribute to an understanding of the history and uses of the place and in view of their significance within the former School of Artillery site, they need to be conserved.

Components of the cultural landscape include those features that predate the military use of the site, such as the Avenue of Honour and the former Quarantine Station walling; gardens and grounds associated with the military staff residences; and the recreational spaces (playing fields) and training spaces (obstacle courses and firing ranges).

In places part of the intrinsic character of the cultural landscape is reinforced by the manner in which the ground plane is manipulated. This includes further examples of the distinctive benching found throughout the central campus, retaining walls and sandstone edging to roadways. These elements also need to be conserved.

Policy 12.1: *The non-core areas of the former School of Artillery that constitute integral parts of its cultural landscape should be conserved. These include structures that pre-date the military use of the site, the grounds of the military staff residences, recreational and training spaces, ground modelling by way of earth benching and retaining walls and the stone edging along roadways.*

Policy 12.2: *Future additional plantings in the vicinity of these cultural landscape elements should only be undertaken where it can be demonstrated that the new plantings are an important part of the setting of the place (such as within the staff residence grounds) and will not become a major nuisance as a weed within adjacent areas of significant indigenous vegetation.*

Policy 12.3: *Significant views such as those from the playing field, the elevated residences and the outer defence emplacements, as well as important internal views including those along the Avenue of Honour, should be conserved.*

Policy 12.4: *The introduction of new landscape structures such fences, paths and signs may be permitted though only if it can be demonstrated that these are essential for operational purposes, are visually recessive and are consistent with the landscape character of the context.*

Policy 12.5: *As part of the conservation of the cultural landscape in the outer areas provision should be made for the interpretation of the structures, places and their uses ideally as part of a walking tour integrated with other features of the site.*

Obstacle Courses

Policy 12.6: *Owing to its importance in the training of military personnel and intactness the c.1964 obstacle course should be conserved.*

Policy 12.7: *Owing to the fragile condition of the temporary c.1994 obstacle course it may be allowed to revert to indigenous vegetation.*

Stone Perimeter Walls

Policy 12.8: *All of the walling that forms part of the former perimeter boundaries to the former Quarantine Station grounds should be conserved.*

Stone Pavement

Policy 12.9: *The stone pavement and associated spatial corridor that now forms the only tangible evidence of the Avenue of Honour should be conserved in its entirety.*

Grounds of Military Staff Residences

Policy 12.10: *The grounds (including older plantings, walls and fences) of staff residences form part of the traditional and characteristic setting for the residence buildings and should*

be conserved. This may entail replacing existing plantings and structures of recent origin with those appropriate to the 1930s-1940s period or can be ascertained as part of the early layout from archival photography.

Policy 12.11: Also associated with the staff residence allotments are scenic views and adjacent features such as road layout, earth benching, Norfolk Island Pines, fencing and dense indigenous vegetation that are considered part of the traditional setting for these places, and should be conserved.

Recreation Fields

Policy 12.12: As the main playing field and the adjacent former hockey field are part of the early military campus layout they should be conserved as areas of open space.

Policy 12.13: The traditional use of the main playing field for active game sports should be maintained while, where it is not feasible to revive the use of the hockey field for this purpose, it could be used as overflow parking in order to maintain its basic area as open space.

NICOH Range

Policy 12.14: While the former NICOH range and associated observation post have some value as part of the artillery training program at North Head, it is not practical to keep such a large area clear of vegetation and, as a consequence, the area should be left as indigenous vegetation.

Policy 12.15: Remaining structures associated with the NICOH range should be retained until no longer intact while making appropriate provisions for public safety.

Indigenous Landscape

In view of the SHFT Management Plan's advocacy for the establishment of North Head as a Sanctuary (including for natural science) it is appropriate that the indigenous vegetation is managed to support this broad cultural objective.

Policy 13.1: Indigenous vegetation throughout the North Head area is recognised at a State level as being of scientific value and should be conserved.

Policy 13.2: Liaise with the Department of Environment and Conservation in order to ensure a consistent and integrated approach to the management of the locally indigenous vegetation and weed incursions.

Policy 13.3: Ensure interpretation of the significance of the locally indigenous vegetation as part of the walking trail system at North Head.

Policy 13.4: Ensure that no cultural plantings are undertaken within areas to be managed as indigenous vegetation.

Policy 13.5: Where the indigenous vegetation has recolonised spaces near outlying structures of significance or landscape features such as the c.1964 obstacle course, ensure its effective control by setting clear limits and removing the vegetation from within these areas.