

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

The conservation management plan for Fremantle Park has been for the City of Fremantle. The report provides an assessment of the park's heritage significance as a basis for orderly planning, including restoration and upgrade works. The plan has been prepared to ensure that future decisions about the place are carried out with the prime objective of revealing its cultural heritage significance.

The study area for the conservation management plan for Fremantle Park is the whole of the land identified as Lot 1826 or Reserve 24833, the subject of a Crown Grant to the City of Fremantle, dated 6 April 1970. The current site is bounded on the east by Ord Street, the south by Ellen Street, the west by Parry Street and the south by the Fremantle Leisure Centre, Barnett Street and lot 1508 containing the St John Ambulance Association building. The site includes the Fremantle Bowling Club and the Fremantle Lawn Tennis Club, both located on *the western side of the site*.

Fremantle Park was zoned for public use as a recreation and sporting space in 1879 and has been an important public park since that time. Originally occupying the area bounded by East Street, Ellen Street, Parry Street, Stirling Street, the Lunatic Asylum and Grounds and the Skinner Street Cemetery; the park area subsequently contracted to the current site bounded to the east by the extension of Ord Street, carried out in 1969. The former eastern portion of the park was used for activities associated with wartime defenses in World War II and in the 1950s became the site of the John Curtin High School, opened in 1958.

While the site area is limited Lot 1826, the conservation management plan acknowledges that this site cannot be considered in isolation. Fremantle Park has developed in the context of a range of significant adjacent or nearby sites and this report includes specific reference to these. The most significant include *Fremantle Museum and Arts Centre* (RHP No. 0875) located on Reserve 31435, *John Curtin College of the Arts* (RHP 15744), located in Reserve 17035, and Fremantle Leisure Centre located on Reserve 30391.

HERITAGE LISTING

Fremantle Park is not included on any heritage lists or registers. The place has been nominated for inclusion on the City of Fremantle's Municipal Heritage Inventory and is on the Heritage Council of Western Australia (HCWA)'s Assessment Program for inclusion on the Register of Heritage Places. The place has not been classified by the National Trust of Australia (WA).

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Fremantle Park has cultural heritage significance for the following reasons:

together with land east of Ord Street now occupied by John Curtin High School but formerly within the park boundaries, Fremantle Park demonstrates the visual link between the lower lying land of the current park and the limestone escarpment that gives Fremantle its distinctive topography and identity;

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

the park has historic and social associations for Indigenous people within the Fremantle community;

the park is part of a significant area north-east of the Fremantle city centre that contains the Fremantle Arts Centre, John Curtin High School, Fremantle Leisure Centre and nearby residential areas of Shuffrey, Barnett and Ellen Streets that are linked through a common history that is evident in the urban context of the area as it remains today;

the park provides an attractive open parkland area of playing fields, grassed areas, limestone outcrops and trees, close to the Fremantle city centre;

the park is strongly linked to the demographic development of Fremantle from its use for both active and passive recreation from the 1880s to the present;

the place has operated as a park, although with increasingly smaller boundaries, since 1879, when it was granted to Fremantle in exchange for the loss of their former recreation ground, The Green, by the Premier Sir Harry Ord;

the park is of historic and social value as a venue for cricket since 1879, football since the 1880s, tennis and bowling clubs since the 1890s, and various other sporting activities over the period of its history; and

the park has strong associations with the military, particularly the Fremantle Rifle Volunteers.

CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT

The conservation and management policy recommendations include the following:

Conservation of Assessed Significance

The assessed significance of Fremantle Park and the recommendations of the conservation plan, should be adopted as a guiding document for future management of the place.

Future planning proposals that may include the area of Fremantle Park should take account of the significance of the place and the policy recommendations in this conservation plan.

The Burra Charter

The definitions and principles of The Burra Charter should be used to guide all considerations for the future development, conservation, maintenance and interpretation of Fremantle Park elements and site.

Statutory Requirements

The City of Fremantle should consider including Fremantle Park in the Municipal Heritage Inventory and on the Heritage List attached to the Town Planning Scheme in order to recognize and protect the heritage values of the place.

Any proposal for substantial development or change to Fremantle Park, should be referred to the Heritage Council of WA for comment as the place is adjacent to two places that are included in HCWA's Register of Heritage Places. These are *John Curtin College of the Arts* (RHP 0875) and *Fremantle Museum and Arts Centre* (RHP 15744).

Conservation of the Site

Generally, Fremantle Park should be retained and conserved as an area of green open space near the Fremantle city centre that is available for use by the local Fremantle community for a range of active and passive recreational purposes.

The aesthetic quality of Fremantle Park, achieved by the retention of mature trees around the edge of an area of open playing fields should be retained.

Retain land uses to recreational, community and tourism based activities. Public open space to semi-public (Tennis and Bowling club) area percentages should be retained at current levels.

Conservation of the Tennis and Bowling Clubs

Retain the overall spatial configuration of the bowling greens and tennis. Within this arrangement however; the number of greens, courts or other elements of detailed design may be adapted to suit the requirements of the clubs.

The Samson Pavilion (1958) and the tennis club pavilion (1956) are of some historic significance. They are not of aesthetic or architectural significance and could be altered or replaced with new pavilions on the basis of the requirements of the clubs.

Policy Recommendations for Future Use and Development

Any major future development or change of use should only occur following broad community and stakeholder engagement to inform the establishment of a site wide master plan for Fremantle Park. The master plan should take into account the heritage significance of the place.

The continued use of the football oval/ cricket pitch for community and school sporting clubs is appropriate and should continue. The enclosure of the park for use by one sporting club or organization to the exclusion of the local community is not supported.

Integrate informal recreation facilities with sporting facilities, eg trees, seating, pathways and picnic settings around the sporting grounds, so that these areas are more appealing for informal use when not in use for sport.

New buildings, other than as required to facilitate the sporting activities of the park are not appropriate however; consideration could be given to small pavilion like structure erected for community use such as a small community café, or exhibition space etc.

Interpretation

An interpretive strategy should be prepared and implemented with any future proposed development of Fremantle Park.

Introduce interpretive material and/or signage within the Reserve to celebrate both European and Aboriginal History of the site.

Ensure that interpretive material displayed is relevant to the history of Fremantle Park, historically accurate, culturally appropriate and prepared within a context of consultation with the users of the place and the Fremantle community.

Implementation

The City of Fremantle should adopt the conservation management plan for Fremantle Park as a guiding document for future conservation, management and development of the place.

In the event that any items of potential historical significance are un-earthed during construction works at Fremantle Park, work should cease until a qualified historical

archaeologist has examined the site and made recommendations regarding the material. All contracts for works within the park should include a clause including an archaeological watching brief for this purpose. It is the responsibility of the City of Fremantle to ensure that this occurs.

The City of Fremantle should consult with the South West Aboriginal Land and Sea Council to determine any traditional values and incorporate these into the history of the reserve. In the event that an Aboriginal site, artefacts or other material is uncovered during earthworks, cease work immediately and inform the Department of Indigenous Affairs.

The conservation management plan for Fremantle Park should be reviewed and updated every five years by appropriately qualified heritage consultants. The review should involve checking any works that have been carried out against the plan, and updating the information accordingly. Complete rewriting of the document is not intended or appropriate.

SCHEDULE OF CONSERVATION WORKS

Short Term – Two Year Timeframe

The following works to ensure the conservation of heritage significance of Fremantle Park, and to upgrade the community facilities and amenity of the place should be commenced within a two year timeframe.

- Commence a process for amending the City of Fremantle's Municipal Heritage Inventory to include Fremantle Park as a place of cultural heritage significance.
- Commence a process for amending the City of Fremantle's Municipal Heritage Inventory to include Fremantle Leisure Centre as a place of cultural heritage significance.
- Commence a process for amending the City of Fremantle's Municipal Heritage Inventory to include the St John Ambulance building as a place of cultural heritage significance.
- Commence work on a Masterplan for Fremantle Park to include consideration of the identified heritage values of the place together with the feasibility of ongoing community use.
- Review site parking and consider current and long term requirements as part of the master planning process for the park.
- Initiate a programme of regular, ongoing inspection of all mature significant trees by a qualified arboriculturist with experience in the management of heritage landscapes, to obtain advice on maintaining the health of the trees and public safety with the minimum degree of intervention.
- Implement annual weed managements using ecologically sound practices.
- Prepare a detailed audit of concrete pathways, their edge conditions and pavements at park entries/exits to provide at minimum a basic level of safety and ensure that they meet requirements for universal access.
- Provide an improved crossing point from Fremantle Park to the eastern side of Ord Street for pedestrians and cyclists.
- Install meters on bores in order to monitor groundwater volume and quality.
- Re-surface the internal road from Parry Street using a stable but permeable surface material such as crushed limestone.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Commission an interpretive plan for Fremantle Park to complement the proposals outlined in the Masterplan and to integrate the significance of the place with future planning proposals.
- Commission the design of new entry statements and signs for Fremantle Park to be located at the corners of Ord and Ellen Streets and Parry and Ellen Streets. These should reflect the heritage significance of the park as well as its role providing a sense of place and an important recreational facility for the Fremantle community. The signs should be high quality contemporary installations.

Medium Term – Five Year Timeframe

The following works to ensure the conservation of heritage significance of Fremantle Park, and to upgrade the community facilities and amenity of the place should be commenced within a five year timeframe.

- Provide clearer pathways and pedestrian networks within Fremantle Park to facilitate passive recreational use of the park. For example an internal loop path.
- Consider the development of a new regional level children's playground to be located in an area where it is afforded improved access and surveillance.
- Improve opportunities for passive recreational use of the park by providing picnic areas and improved seating. For example construct tiered seating along the limestone ridge on the eastern side of the park.
- Consider replacing or adapting the existing pavilion, in order to improve indoor / outdoor linkages.
- Carry out a review of all fencing associated with Fremantle Park and replace with consistent fencing types for various use categories. Fencing styles should be appropriate to the heritage significance of the place. Timber fencing should be used for the tennis and lawn bowling clubs. All other areas should have visually permeable fencing styles in order to protect view corridors and ensure passive surveillance.
- Review all site furniture to provide for a higher quality level of furnishings such as bicycle parking, bins, seating, lighting and the like.
- Based on previous monitoring of groundwater sources, balance groundwater extraction to ensure a sustainable groundwater resource.
- Review existing site drainage and consider re-instating a biologically functioning swale.
- Review the existing planting within Fremantle Park and consider opportunities to re-instate indigenous vegetation to enhance ecological and heritage values. In particular this should be considered for the eastern perimeter of the park to provide a more consistent transition with the limestone ridge that continues on the eastern side of Parry Street on the John Curtin High School site.
- Rationalise watering practices for Fremantle Park and implement a programme of progressive reduction of water use through Water Sensitive Urban Design Techniques and replacement of areas of turf with native planting where appropriate.
- Replace outdated signage with new directional, interpretative and general information based signage as recommended on the masterplan and the interpretive plan for Fremantle Park.
- Consider ways to interpret the former alignment of Barnett Street on the northern side of Fremantle Park.

Longer Term – Ten Year Timeframe

The following works to ensure the conservation of heritage significance of Fremantle Park, and to upgrade the community facilities and amenity of the place should be commenced within a ten year timeframe.

- Based on appropriate feasibility studies implement a programme to rationalize the use of the bowling and tennis club facilities. Consideration should be given to replacing the existing club pavilions with a new community sports building. This should be located within the area of Fremantle Park currently occupied by the tennis and bowling clubs. A new building should be of high quality contemporary architectural design. Consideration should be given to locating the building to Parry Street as a means of improving the urban linkages with existing significant buildings.
- Consider the construction of a small community café or exhibition space.
- Consider incorporating the land on the south-eastern side of the Fremantle Leisure Centre into the public open space of Fremantle Park.
- Review retaining walls for structural integrity and general appearance.
- Consider better integration of Fremantle Park with open space east of Ord Street to enhance recreational opportunities and to establish a 'swale – ridge' ecological connection.
- If future development occurs adjacent to Fremantle Park consideration should be given as to how that development addresses the park. Building orientation, passive surveillance through over viewing and visually permeable boundary fencing should be some considerations.