

6.3 Environment audits – timing and reporting

Executive Summary: Quarantine Station Environmental Audit, Graham A Brown and Associates (2011)

ENVIRONMENTAL AUDIT DECEMBER 2011 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Environmental Audit is conducted at a point 5 years from the commencement of the conservation and adaptive reuse project. Capital works commenced on the site in early 2007 and the hotel and associated facilities commenced operation in April 2008.

In September 2006, as part of the development of project documentation, Graham A Brown & Associates (GABA) were commissioned to develop an audit protocol for independent environmental audits of the project which provides a basis for evaluation of the projects compliance with the Conditions of Project Approval (CoA) and with leading practice in environmental management based on the standard AS/NZS ISO 14001. An independent audit of the project based on this protocol was conducted in 2007 by GHD Pty Ltd.

In undertaking this audit, the GABA team are returning to the project after a period of 5 years and have had no involvement with the implementation of the conservation and adaptive reuse project. They are thus in a position to review the environmental aspects of the project with an independent view.

At the time of this audit, virtually all conservation and adaptive works specified in the CoA have been completed, and the hotel and related activities are in full operation.

The five year period also marks the point at which a planned review of the Environmental Management Plan (EMP) developed for the project by NPWS in 2005 and associated Site Wide Management Plans are to be reviewed.

Condition of the Site

The conservation and adaptive reuse project has been conspicuously successful in achieving its environmental and cultural objectives:

- The natural landscape of the site has been restored and managed consistently with the management of surrounding areas of the Sydney Harbour National Park;
- The historic buildings have been stabilised and restored;
- Sensitive adaptations have been made to the historic buildings to allow the operation of a successful modern hotel and heritage tourism operation which focuses on providing guests with an experience based on the history and environmental values of the site; and
- Conservation and interpretive work has been undertaken for the preservation and display of the moveable heritage of the site.

These achievements have helped preserve the Quarantine Station, its cultural and natural environment, increased ease of access and generated community awareness, demonstrating the relevance of the history of the site to current generations of guests, visitors and volunteers.

The Quarantine Station site has become a place which both Sydneysiders and tourists aspire to visit.

Land management activities at the site have provided for the preservation and restoration of large areas of the Eastern Suburbs Banksia Scrub endemic to the site while providing for cleared areas and cultural plantings consistent with the site's historic use. The habitat for local species, particularly the long-nosed bandicoot and little penguin which were considered to be

of particular significance on the site, has been preserved and enhanced.

The operation of the site, particularly following the completion of construction activities, has had a minimal impact on the Manly community. The site is designed to accommodate limited numbers of visitors and parking is provided at the site entrance. Efforts are made to encourage the use of public transport and walking and cycle access to the site. For overnight visitors, the Quarantine Station is normally seen as a “destination resort” where guests remain on site for the duration of their stay, exploring the site and undertaking historical tours. This also limits the traffic impact of the site.

It is recognised that the achievements of the project are dependent on the investment made by Mawland in the site, and its capacity to continue to operate the site as a sustainable business.

Environmental Management System

The principal finding of this audit is that the Environmental Management System established through the 2005 EMP, while operating very effectively through the construction phase of the project, requires significant revision to meet the needs of a continuing operation.

The 2005 EMP is a prescriptive document, based closely on the requirements of the CoA. It provides measures for addressing the environmental aspects of the project as recognised at the time of its commencement. This was appropriate during the construction phase and while hotel operations on the site were being established. The EMP has also provided the framework for a very effective working relationship which has developed between OEH and MQS in terms of site management.

Now that the site has moved into its operational phase, there is a need to move from a static, compliance-based system to a more flexible approach which identifies environmental issues as they emerge and implements a risk-based approach to management. This more dynamic approach would allow the development of a rolling program of environmental improvement to continue through the life of the project. It is consistent with the standards-based approach to environmental management systems set out in AS/NZS ISO 14001.

The main features of this approach are:

- An EMS planning process based on the MQS Sustainability Policy which provides for identification of significant environmental aspects of the site's operations, having regard to and legal and regulatory requirements, and assesses and manages the environmental risks;
- Development of an annual Environmental Improvement Plan which sets out a specific program of work to maintain and enhance the environmental values of the site;
- Improved coordination of the operating procedures of OEH, MQS and the hotel operator to assist in the smooth implementation of the work program;
- Continued use of IMAMS as a management information system to monitor site operations and identify issues requiring action;
- A more structured program of internal audits and inspections; and
- More frequent and comprehensive management reviews of the EMS and its implementation.

Properly implemented, this approach has the capacity to provide a simpler approach to regulation of the site, reducing cost and complexity for both Mawland and OEH, and to responding flexibly to emerging issues. It would provide for a management system much more consistent with those used by other organisations whose operations have significant environmental impacts.

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This approach to revising the EMP would be assisted by a review of the CoA. It is important that the CoA continue to set out in clear terms the principles on which the site it to be managed and the obligations of the operator. However, the CoA now contains a significant number of provisions which relate to capital works and other site activities which have been completed and are no longer applicable. There are also a number of detailed requirements which could be effectively, and more flexibly, addressed through Site Wide Management Plans.

Other Issues Identified in the Audit

The audit also makes recommendations in relation to a number of more detailed management issues including:

- A focus on the Sustainability Policy as the basis for environmental management on site;
- Staff training;
- Resolution of requirements for habitat regeneration works to offset habitat loss;
- Further measures to reduce car traffic to the site;
- Energy management; and
- Revisions to operating procedures to improve work flows and incident management.

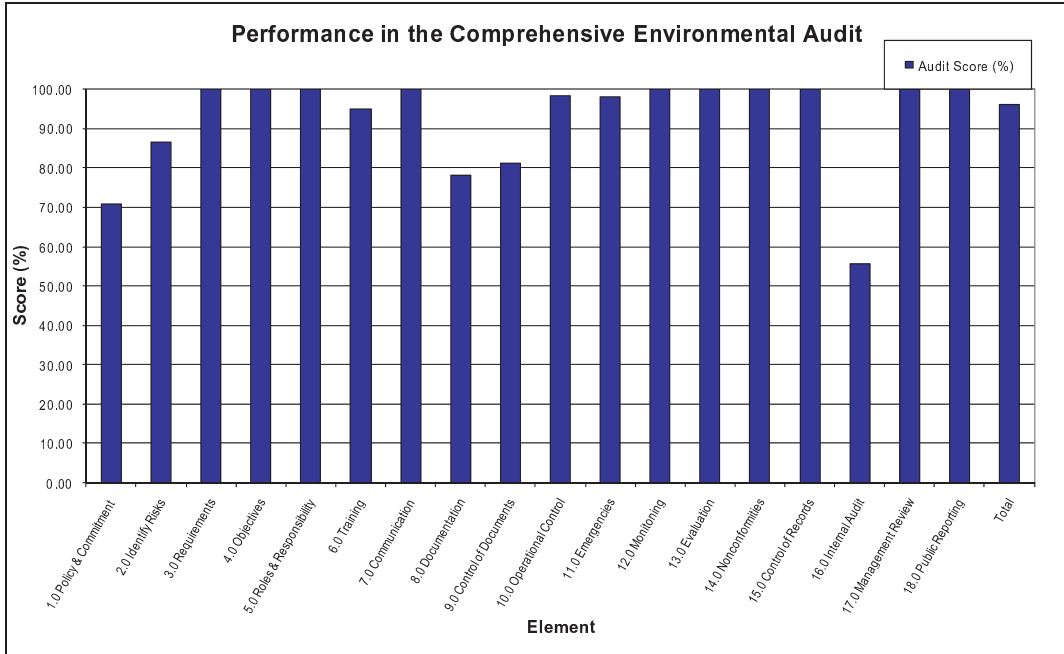
Detailed recommendations are set out in Table 1 below.

Audit Scores and Ratings

The audit protocol includes a scoring system which provides a general guide to performance of the site in terms of environmental compliance, management and performance. The overall score for the audit was 96%, which higher than the score of 92% achieved in the 2007 Audit by GHD. In comparing the scores, however, it should be noted that progress on the project, and particularly the move from the construction to the operational phase, have meant that different issues are now relevant in a number of areas. Both scores reflect the very high standard of environmental management that has been maintained throughout the project.

The following graphs show scores by element. The elements with lower scores are those which have generally given rise to audit recommendations.

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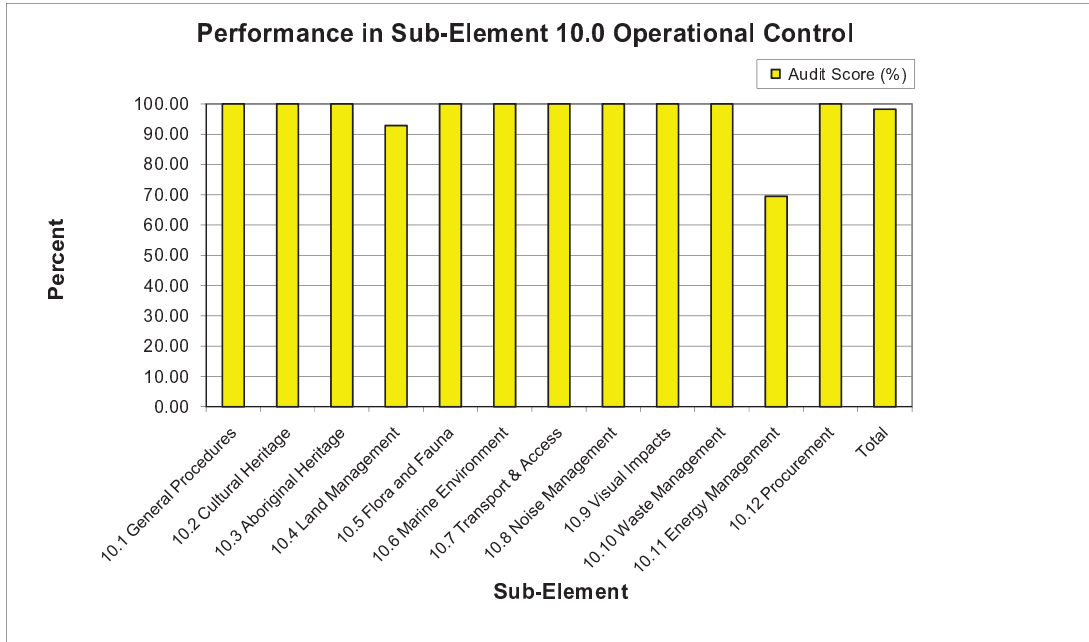


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6.4 Umbrellas

Report on the Provision of additional umbrella shade structures at Q Station – Paul Davies Pty Ltd (2015)

Q Station

Provision of Additional Umbrella Shade Structures

Paul Davies Pty Ltd

February 2015

Background

A modification request is being prepared for works at the Q Station and one of the modifications being sought is the provision of several additional shade structures in public areas. The public seating and dining areas around the Wharf Precinct are exposed to sun and hot and difficult to use in warm weather, particularly with the ever increasing focus on minimizing impacts of sun on patrons.

Approval has been given to erect three large fixed umbrellas adjacent to A6 and they have worked well without any visual impacts. Other smaller umbrellas have been used both in this location and adjacent to A14 again to provide shade for patrons.

This analysis supports the addition of fixed umbrellas in preference to providing smaller umbrellas that are harder to manage.

However, in summer it would be reasonable to have small beach type umbrellas available for use on the lawn and beach areas for the use of guests. These would not be fixed or permanent but would be used by guests by screwing them into the sand (as beach umbrellas are intended) and would come and go.

The following photos, drawings and analysis discusses any visual impacts of locating elements.

We conclude that the locations selected provide for good sun protection without impacting any heritage values or consent conditions.

Seating area outside A6

The paved area adjacent to A6 accommodates most of the external dining in the precinct. It is to the side of the building and well back from the waterfront. There are presently three 4.5 metre square umbrellas installed (with approval) and the proposal is to provide one additional umbrella to match the existing ones. It would be located to complete a 9 x 9 metre covered area.

The location for the new umbrella has little if any visual impact and creates a significant additional shaded area.

The attached drawings and photos are annotated to provide commentary.

There is no accurate overall site plan, consequently the drawings, while measured on site, do not precisely reflect the interrelationship of the wharf and seating areas. The sketches however, with the photos give an excellent indication of any possible impacts that may arise from site selection.

Possible Impacts

1 Physical

There is no physical impact from fixing the umbrella, it simply bolts to the new ground finish. It can be removed with ease at any time.

2 Penguins

There is no additional impact on penguins as the area already contains seating and has umbrellas both fixed and moveable.

3 Visual

There is no visual impact when viewed from around A6. The existing umbrellas sit comfortably in the area and the new location is behind them. There will be no increase in density of what is seen.

There is no visual impact when viewed from the beach in alignment with the wharf area. The umbrella is out of the view line or if it is seen it would only just be seen. As a visitor moves along the beach the umbrellas can be seen behind and set back from the building, the additional umbrella will add slightly to this but when seen square on there will be no change in what is now seen.

4 The view from the wharf will not change. The corner of the seating area (not under the umbrellas) can be seen from the very end of the wharf but is out of view within a couple of metres of moving towards land.

Ferries unload at either the end of the wharf or on the northern side. Passengers disembarking will not be aware of the umbrellas, however if the ferry swings across the bay a distant view will allow umbrellas to be seen behind the building. This view already exists.

A large pine located at the end of A6 effectively removes any view of the building and the seating area.

Conclusion

We conclude that there is no adverse impact from providing an additional umbrella in this location.

It should match the existing umbrellas, be off white and not contain advertising.

The random use of umbrellas on the lawn or beach is also appropriate, these should also be off white and unbranded. They should not be fixed and would need to be available for use on request rather than provided each day.



View from beach to wharf, this is the reverse view to those following.



View from end of wharf, the umbrella is located behind the tree on the beach.



A telephoto (not actual view seen by eye) image to make clearer the layout of the area. Tables can just be seen to the left of the pine tree but the umbrella is set behind the tree.



A view from the join between concrete and timber wharf sections. There is no view of the area from this location.



A close up of the same view. A small section of lawn and the concrete switchroom can be seen only.



The view to the area from the beach entry. The umbrella on the right is proposed to be replicated and an additional element will be seen extending part way across the right hand green umbrella.



The view from further away on the beach at water's edge. The new umbrella is visible from here along with the existing umbrella. The edge of the rear umbrella can be seen in this photo.



A broad overview from the wharf of both areas.

Seating Outside A14-16

There is a seating area behind A14-16 and several small tables with chairs along the wharf frontage. Small coloured removable umbrellas have been used to provide some shade for patrons as the area is hot and exposed to sun.

Shade should not be provided along the wharf edge, however a shade structure such as an umbrella is appropriate behind the building where the main seating now takes place.

The photos show some umbrellas in place in this location, it is recommended that a single larger umbrella be used as it will create the minimum visual impact, de-clutter the area visually and as it will be fixed in position can be located to keep the openness of the view down the wharf. The sketch shows the preferred location for an umbrella.

The umbrella should be no larger than 4 x 4 metres and should be set back as dimensioned on the sketch. It is also important not to add any barriers around the tables and chairs to delineate them, but rather to create a more open and inclusive setting. Chairs, tables and shade elements should be kept back from the railing to allow visitors to see the inscriptions.

Options of whether seating can be located in existing shade have been examined but this extends seating too far.

Visually, this new element will not be seen from the wharf on approach to the precinct and there will be no visual impact.

The structure will be seen from the central area of the precinct, however, as a single element it will not detract from the setting.

The umbrella should match others in being off-white and without signage.



View from end of wharf to A14-16. The proposed umbrella may just be visible behind the building and trees but will not be discernible.



Closer view. Umbrella is located to be out of this view line.



As the viewer approaches the building the umbrella is further behind the building.



This shows the loose wharf seating and the locations of current umbrellas. The proposed umbrella is to be set further back to allow the cliff face to be seen as visitors approach.



View across the beach. The proposed umbrella is located behind the trees in the middle ground and may be seen in small sections but will not be discernible.



View to building from courtyard> The umbrella will be seen from here. This photo was taken without umbrellas in place, setting the umbrella back allows the building to be seen.