

SOPA Site 4B HIS
19 January 2007

Bovis Lend Lease
c/- Ms Fleur Mellor
Project Manager
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Dear Fleur,

**Proposed Part 3A Development
Site 4.B Olympic Boulevard and Herb Elliot Drive
Sydney Olympic Park Homebush
Assessment of Heritage Impact**

Further to our recent discussions and a review of the proposed design, we provide the following assessment of the likely heritage impact of the proposed Part 3A development on Site 4B, adjacent to the historic Abattoir Heritage Precinct, and the relationship of the Brushbox trees affected by the proposal. The proposal is for the construction of a 7-storey office block, with three levels of basement car-parking. The drawings have been prepared by BatesSmart Architects in association with Aspect Studios Pty Ltd, Landscape Architecture and Urban Design. The heritage landscape analysis for the report has been prepared by David Matthew Taylor BLArch, MBEnv (cons), AILA, Registered Landscape Architect, heritage consultant.

1 Background

The Minister for Planning is the consent authority for all land within Sydney Olympic Park. The Department of Planning administers this on behalf of the Minister. The principal statutory planning instrument regulating land-use within Sydney Olympic Park is the Sydney the Sydney Regional Environmental Plan No. 24 – Homebush Bay (SREP 24) (Amendment 2).

The Abattoir Heritage Precinct is defined as a Conservation Area in SREP 24.

The key areas of SREP 24 relevant to heritage conservation include:

- Exempt development provisions in accordance with Schedule 9 of SREP 24;
- The requirement for the Authority to produce a Master Plan to guide detailed precinct planning;
- Clauses 24-30, deal with heritage conservation of heritage items and conservation areas within Sydney Olympic Park, in accordance with NSW Heritage Office best practice;
- Schedule 4 of the SREFP 24 identifies the State Abattoir Heritage Conservation Area; and
- Schedule 5 lists heritage items, including:
 - Item 1 The Vernon Buildings, the Maiden Gardens and the Railway Garden within the Historic Abattoir Administration Precinct, bounded by Herb Elliott Avenue, Showground Road, Dawn Fraser Avenue and the Railway Garden.
 - Item 2 The Avenue of Palms.

Therefore, the heritage management issue is for the impact of development on Site 4B on the listed heritage items in the vicinity.

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Under Clause 29(1) – *Development in the vicinity of a heritage item*, of the heritage provisions of the SREP:

Before granting consent to development in the vicinity of a heritage item, the consent authority must assess the impact of the proposed development on the heritage significance of the heritage item and of any conservation area within which it is situated.

Under Clause 29(3)

The consent authority may refuse to grant any such consent unless it has considered a heritage impact statement that will help it assess the impact of the proposed development on the heritage significance, visual curtilage and setting of the heritage item.

This Heritage Impact Statement (HIS) has been prepared to assist the consent authority in making its determination.

1.1 Site Location

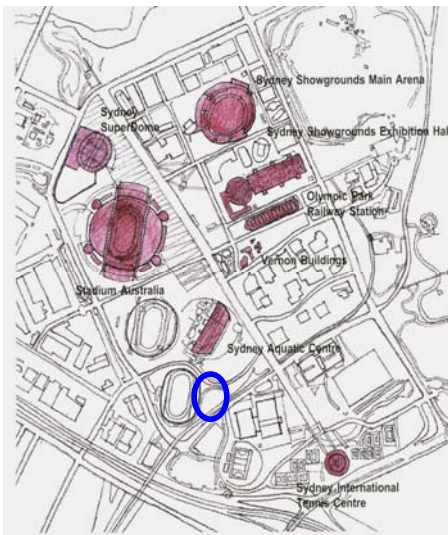


Figure 1

Location of the whole of Site 4 in relation to Significant Buildings at the Sydney Olympic Park

(Master Plan, Figure 5.3.1, page 21)



Figure 2

Location of Site 4B, the development site, in relation to the Abattoir Heritage Precinct. Heritage Precinct outlined in green; Site 4 outlined in blue. The large letter A marks the Town Centre Precinct, which is outlined in red. (Master Plan, Figure 5.3.1, p. 82)

2 Methodology

In order to arrive at an understanding of the level of significance attached to remnant landscape elements within the evolving Town Centre precinct, and the level of impact that the proposed development may have on this significance, a specific method of analysis was adopted. Background reports that were used in order to arrive at justifiable conclusions were the Abattoir Heritage Precinct Conservation Management Plan 2003, the Sydney Olympic Park Master Plan 2002, State Abattoir, Homebush: Administration Precinct Conservation Plan 2001, and the UTM Aboricultural Impact Assessment.

The methodology employed was as follows:

- The Abattoir Heritage Precinct, and its relationship to the existing Town Centre, was defined
- The Statement of Significance, from the 2003 Conservation Management Plan for the Abattoir Heritage Precinct, was stated to clarify its values and meaning
- The historic layers within the evolving cultural landscape of Sydney Olympic Park were examined through the application of rigorous historic analysis

The examination of the above findings revealed three periods of recent “layering” within the Sydney Olympic Park cultural landscape:

- The Abattoir layer,
- The Sydney 2000 Olympics layer, and
- The current, evolving Sydney Olympic Park commercial centre layer.

Each period represented highly significant stages in Sydney’s infrastructure development, and each marked their specific cultural layer with distinctive landscape patterning.

Therefore, within the current context of the Sydney Olympic Park’s commercial growth, the conclusion was reached that the cultural layer that is now manifesting itself has equal significance with the former layers, representing, as it does, the latest evolution of major Sydney infrastructure within the overall Park site.

3 The Abattoir Precinct Conservation Area

3.1 Definition of the Conservation Area

The construction of Sydney Olympic Park in the 1990s radically changed the context of the precinct. During the Games it became an integral part of the activities at a key location: near the railway station and the main boulevard. Its role was thus enhanced within the Park.

To manage the curtilage and context of the buildings and trees in the post-Olympic period and general redevelopment of the Sydney Olympic Park for a diverse range of new uses, it was necessary to re-define the boundary of the Conservation Area.

The boundary for the Conservation Area was re-defined taking account not only the historical background, but the spatial and visual reality of the situation that evolved in association with the Sydney 2000 Olympic and Paralympic Games program.

The Conservation Area recognizes the spatial and historical context of the group of Abattoir buildings and includes roadways that historically encircled them. These roadways are now called Herb Elliott Avenue, Showground Road and Dawn Fraser Avenue. Each of these roadways, as they border and define the Precinct, is important to the spatial separation of the group from the surrounding development.

There are now a variety of buildings and open spaces that surround the Conservation Area that have been erected as part of the Sydney 2000 Games. The large Novotel hotel building across Showground Road from the Abattoir Heritage Precinct is a product of this era and has become a valid component of the cultural landscape. This reality has to be taken into account with the recognition that the variety of building volumes and open spaces that immediately adjoin and define the Conservation Area are also valid components of the evolving cultural landscape of the immediate vicinity, reflecting, as they do, the role of the surrounding Town Centre as the “urban heart of Sydney Olympic Park”.¹

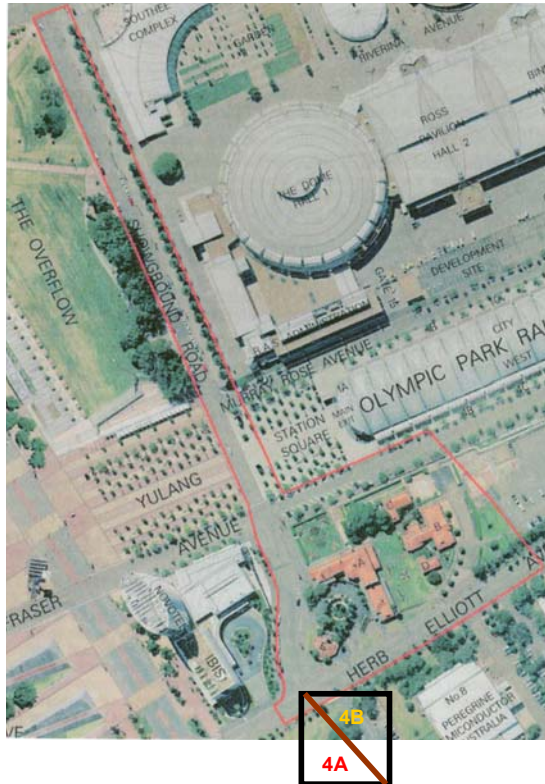


Figure 3

The Conservation Area boundary, as defined in the Abattoir Heritage Precinct CMP, 2003 (p.35) showing the approximate position of Site 4B vis-à-vis the Conservation Area

3.3 Significance of the Conservation Area

The overall nature of the heritage significance of the Precinct was summarized in the June 2003 *Conservation Management Plan* for the Abattoir Precinct as follows:

The Abattoir Heritage Precinct is of state significance as the sole remaining physical fabric from the State Abattoir, 1913-1988. It consists of architecturally and aesthetically significant Federation buildings, gardens and landscaping, which illustrate the extent and importance of the Abattoir enterprise to the people of NSW.

The main administrative building, gatehouse and ancillary buildings were designed by Walter Liberty Vernon, and are prominently sited at what was once the main entrance to the Abattoir complex. The picturesque gardens, designed by Joseph Maiden were for the use of the Abattoir employees and they form a distinctive Federation complex with the buildings. The survival of a row of large Canary Island Palms along Showground Road is a significant remnant feature of the historical cultural landscape. The Railway Garden to the northeast was a green buffer between the busy railway branch line into the slaughter houses and the administration buildings. The administration buildings and gardens contribute significantly to understanding the scale and importance of a state enterprise, which is now gone.

The Precinct became an integral part of the activities during the Sydney 2000 Olympic and Paralympic Games providing Sydney Olympic Park with an important link to the history of Homebush and the Abattoirs in particular.

¹ Sydney Olympic Park Master Plan (2002), p. 84.



Figure 4

Abattoir
Heritage
Precinct

(Nov 2003)

4 Historic Evolution of the Landscape and Landscape Elements

4.1 Evidence from Plans and Aerial Photographs

The following maps and aerial photographs illustrate the historic evolution of the development site (in particular the landscape elements associated with Site 4) within its overall context.

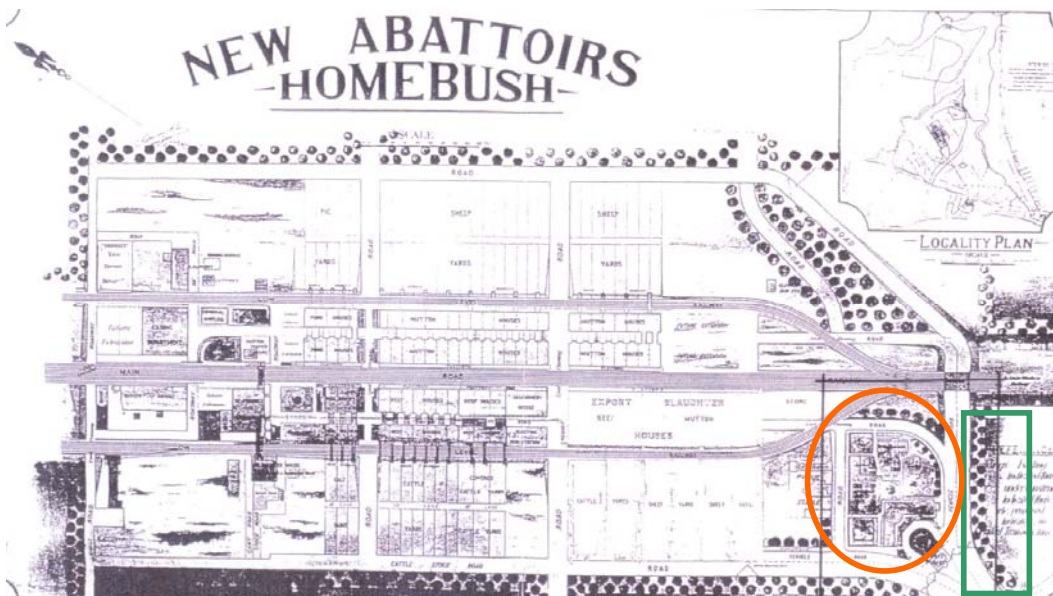


Figure 5

Early site plan for the "New Abattoirs Homebush" (undated, *circa* 1906) Source: 2003 CMP, p. 17.

The present day Abattoir Heritage Precinct in the above image is circled. The double row of Brush Box is evident to the right.

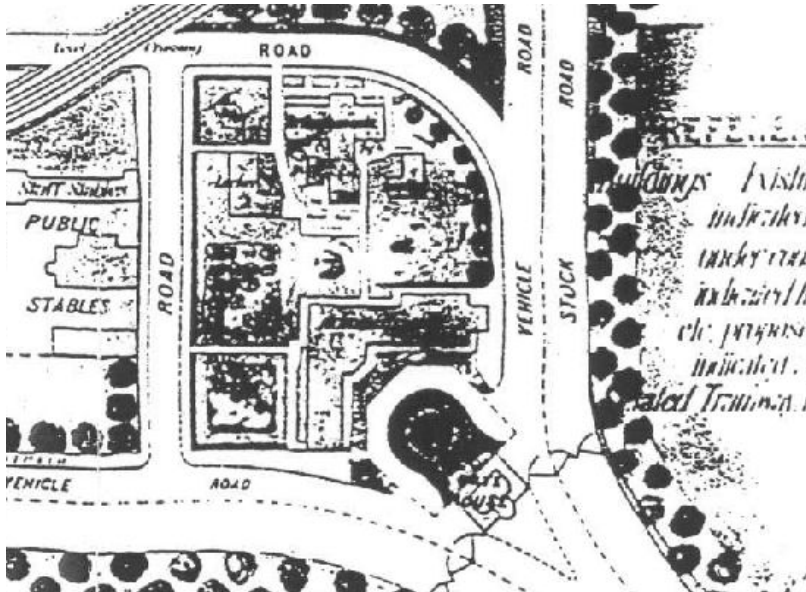


Figure 6

Detail of the above plan, (Figure 5) showing the Brush Box defining the entry road



The roadway passing to the south (the right side of the image) of the abattoir buildings was divided, with "stock road" written on the right side of the road on the plan above, and "vehicle road", on the left side. Brush Box trees formed a strong defining edge along the perimeter roadways of the overall abattoir site.

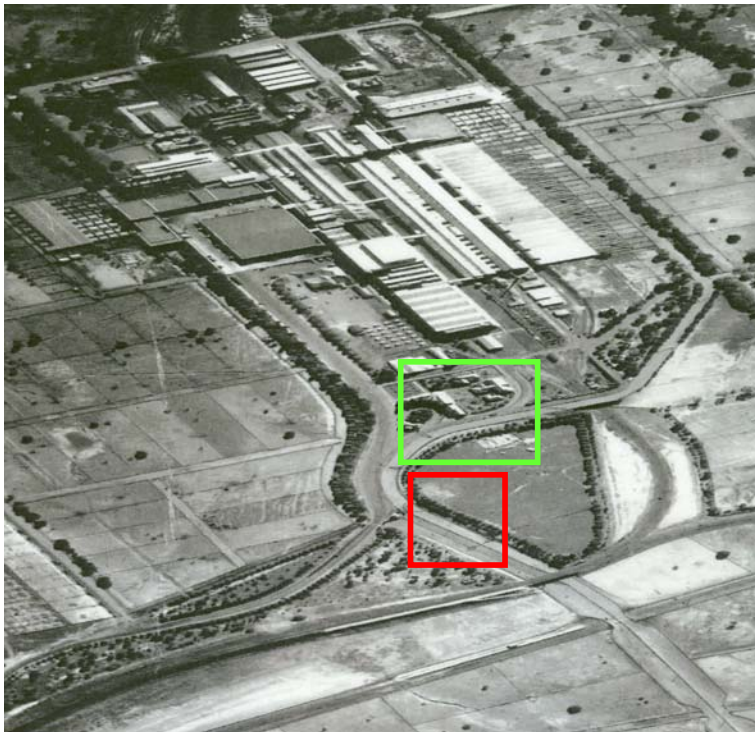


Figure 7

1943 oblique aerial photograph of Homebush, with the Abattoir buildings to the north of the large paddock. Note the continuous double row of Brush Box. (Source: *From the Skies – Sydney in 1943*, RTA CD)

The subject site in the above aerial photograph is outlined in red in the above photograph, while the heritage precinct, or the suite of former Abattoir buildings, is outlined in green. The configuration of the landscape is skewed as the result of the angle from which the photographer has taken the shot.

The overall layout of the site, including the strong element of trees bordering the roads and marking out specific areas within the site, indicates that the design intent illustrated in the original site plan (Figure 17 above) was indeed executed.

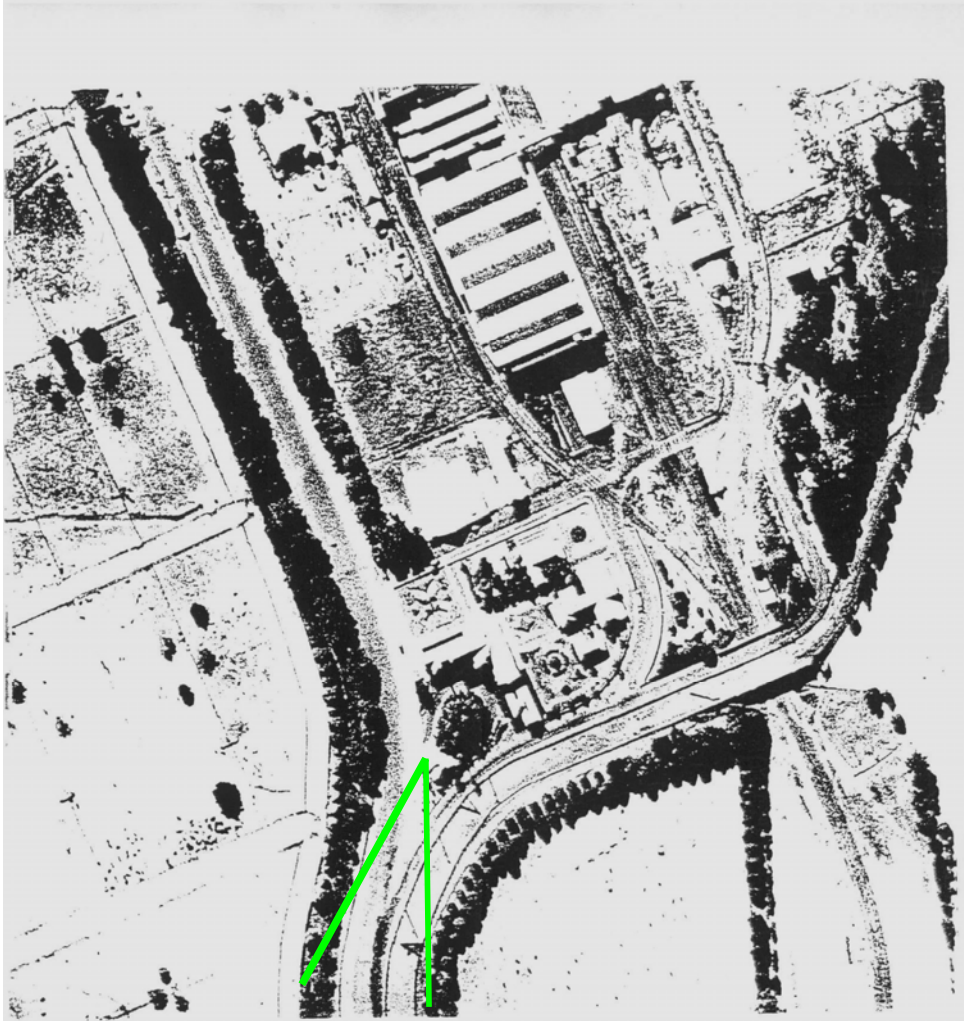


Figure 8

May 1951 Aerial, showing the strong line of Brushbox along the perimeter of the stock route². The view cone through to the Administrative Buildings, flanked by the Brushbox on either side of the roadway, is marked in green.

Howard writes in the 1991 Conservation Plan:

The arrangement of the gardens, pathways and associated plantings around the group of five buildings is remarkably similar to that indicated on very early plans.³

² *State Abattoir, Homebush: Administration Precinct Conservation Plan*, prepared for Property Services Group by Rod Howard in association with Craig Burton, June 1991.

In this context, reference to the early site plan in (Figure 17 above, page 8) shows this comment to be equally valid in relation to the curved line of trees to the south and south east.

The above aerial photograph has the subject site (Site 4) outlined in red, and the Abattoir Heritage Precinct outlined in green.

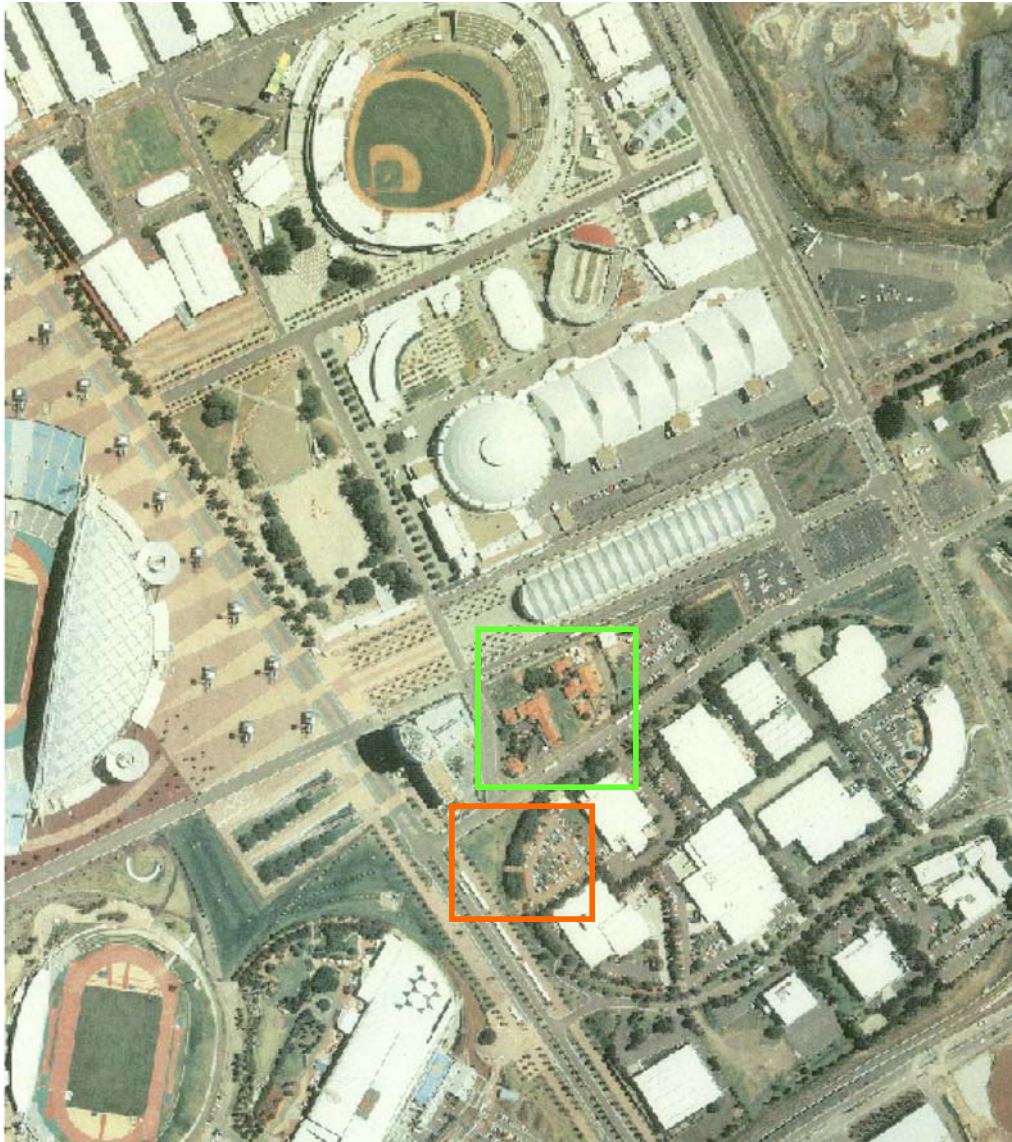


Figure 9

Circa 2000 aerial photograph of the Olympic site, showing the heritage precinct and Site 4

The aerial photograph above shows the number of Brush Box still extant *circa* 2000, with the subject site outlined in red, and the present day Abattoir Heritage Precinct outlined in green.

³ Ibid, p. 16.

4.2 Historical Evidence: Landscape Design

The following extract, written by Craig Burton, is taken from the 1991 Conservation Plan.⁴ Although it relates more directly to the plantings in the immediate vicinity of the Abattoir Heritage Precinct, the overall intent is clear. This extract serves to fill in some of the knowledge gaps that relate to the “design intent” for the whole of the Abattoir site.

The development of the Abattoir Area at Homebush in the early years of the twentieth century built upon the cleared landscape of the “Homebush” Estate, resumed lands (1887-1906) and existing Saleyards (1882).

A high degree of physical intervention with the natural site conditions was necessary to construct the extensive system of lands, abattoirs, roads and railway communication lines on a rectilinear plan layout. The whole complex was designed to be enclosed with a chain wide (20.1168 metres) belt of trees to act as a wind and dust break. The plantations were planted in 1912 along with the construction of fencing.

In 1913, the Director of the Sydney Botanic Gardens, J H Maiden (1896 – 1924) was consulted regarding an avenue plantation along the road linking the new Abattoir site with Parramatta Road and the layout of suitable trees and shrubs for the Administration Buildings area. This area was integrated into the main road entry for vehicles and stock into the Abattoir area with the corner placement of the entry gatehouse.

The Gatehouse and Administration Block provided a focal point on arrival at the Abattoirs.

The Administration Buildings formed a strongly symmetrical corner composition supported by a collection of single storey buildings and open spaces of a domestic scale to the immediate north and west to form an Administration Precinct defined by road formations and row plantings of Brush Box (*Lophostemon confertus*).

Maiden's design was to be followed with the whole Administrative site enclosed with a park-rail fence and the roadway graveled in front of the main offices.

Mr F Creswick was employed as the gardener and caretaker in 1913 on renewable contract term of three months.

The plants selected by Maiden represented his approaches to planting design which were both practical and romantic. The perimeter and avenue plantations were dominated by the tried and tested tree species of Brush Box, Moreton Bay Fig (*Ficus macrophylla*), Port Jackson Fig (*Ficus rubiginosa*), Monterey Pine (*Pinus radiata*) and Long Leaved Pine (*Pinus roxburghii*). The paddock plantings were Moreton Bay Fig and Port Jackson Fig.

There occur throughout the Homebush Bay area and were a continuation of the practice of planting these species in areas associated with grazing. They were well respected trees for their ability to survive the extremes of flood conditions as well as to provide shade and fodder in times of drought.

4.3 Physical Evidence: landscape⁵

The double of row of Brush Box (*Lophostemon confertus*) on Site 4 formed part of the overall landscape pattern that was established as part of the upgrading of the Homebush Abattoirs.

These trees formed part of the overall landscape masterplan that was prepared by J. H. Maiden, the then director of the Botanic Gardens in Sydney. Maiden was involved in the landscape as the Abattoirs were seen as important infrastructure for Sydney and that a landscape that befitted its importance should be planted. Maiden and other directors of the Botanic Gardens were involved in advice for many major public infrastructure projects, for example plantings for the Sydney Catchment dams south of Sydney and associated open spaces.

⁴ State Abattoir, Homebush: Administration Precinct Conservation Plan, prepared for Property Services Group by Rod Howard in association with Craig Burton, June 1991, Appendix C, Section 3, Cultural Environment.

⁵ This analytical section was prepared by Taylor Brammer Landscape Architects Pty Ltd.

The trees in question are located adjacent to the main administration building and planted as a double row formed a curving landscape element, along with the planting to the south west, when approaching the building from the south east along a broad road that functioned as part of the circulation path for vehicles and animal in the abattoirs. The planting formed part of an informal 'round' that defined a portion of the land to the east of the administration building which may have been an informal holding paddock for animals.

To the south east there occurred further planting that curved away from the administration building with the two rows of trees forming a deliberate focus to the administration building, the building highlighted by a variety of palms, notably American Cotton Palm, *Washingtonia robusta* chosen for its form and contrast to the surrounding vegetation and open rolling topography. This administration building was to be seen from afar as the important centre of the abattoir, with the planting of rows of trees supplementing this form. To the west of the administration building a formal line of Canary Island date Palms, *Phoenix canariensis* were planted highlighting the minor ridge that runs through the site. (see Figure 7 above)

With the cessation of Abattoir activities, subsequent development of the site was undertaken, most noticeably to the east of the administration building. An 'Office Park' was created with a series of low rise office and warehousing facilities that formed a new precinct. Much of the 'round' of the brush box planting was removed to the east with a new road cutting through this landscape form and a new landscape layer being created within the former holding area. However, the area in question was still relatively intact with the curve of the road, associated planting and the hierarchy of planting still clearly evident.

With the advent of the Sydney Olympics for 2000, a new master plan was instigated over the site. This master plan recognized a number of the landscape elements across the site including the line of Canary Island Date Palms and the planting around the administration building, that now forms a 'heritage precinct' within the overall master planned site.

Much of the visual appreciation and physical relationship of the Brush Box planting to the administration building has been obscured by the subsequent master planning. The relatively new landscape instigated as part of the Sydney Olympics forms a new a deliberate central open linear space that obscures the administration building and its relationship with the site. This linear open space is highlighted by parallel planting of signature trees, Hoop Pine (*Araucaria cunninghamina*) that form a deliberate landscape element to the substantial building infrastructure put in place for the Olympics. The relationship of the administration building has been marginalized by both this planting and the major new building forms, particularly the Novotel hotel adjacent which has its main service area facing the front of the former administration building. The curve of the Brush Box trees and the palms has been partially obscured by subsequent plantings of Eucalypt trees and the line of Hoop Pines.



Figure 10

View from Olympic
Boulevard across
Site 4A towards the
Abattoir Heritage
Precinct



Figure 11

View west, with Site 4 immediately to the right of the image



Figure 12

View west on Olympic Boulevard showing the strong defining line of Hoop Pines, infrastructure introduced for the 2000 Olympic Games



Figure 13

Looking from the corner of the Abattoir Heritage Precinct towards Site 4A, building site for the Sofitel Hotel, with young Eucalypts and the curved line of Brush Box to the left of the image

5 Description of the Development Site

The development site, namely Site 4B, is located on the southeastern corner of Herb Elliott Avenue and Olympic Boulevard, at the westernmost part of the Town Centre Precinct. (see Figure 2, p. 2)

The Town Centre is bound by Olympic Boulevard, Herb Elliott Avenue, Murray Rose Avenue, and Showground Road. It includes the Novotel and Ibis Hotels, the Vernon Buildings and Maiden Gardens of the former State Abattoir, the railway station and plaza, Jacaranda Square, Site 2 to the east of Australia Avenue, and Site 4 on the south east corner of Herb Elliott Avenue and Olympic Boulevard, as stated above.

The Town Centre is characterized by two-storey buildings set in a verdant landscape. A curving, double row of Brush Box trees intersects the corner block of land known as Site 4. The larger part of the site, namely Site 4B, is presently used as a carpark, while the triangular-shaped corner portion is currently a building site for the Sofitel Hotel. Rows of trees, planted as part of the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games program, border the site along both street frontages. Due to its central location and slightly elevated position, the site provides extensive views to and from the north, east and west, including the heritage precinct.

The area to the north across Herb Elliott Avenue includes a major high-rise building, the Novotel Hotel, with a four-storey podium wing facing Showground Road. The adjacent Ibis Hotel presents its service access driveways, loading dock and bus bays to Showground Road. To the north-east, beyond the Abattoir Heritage Precinct, are high rise commercial structures.



Figure 14

Looking due north from the subject development site, Site 4B



Figure 15

Looking north-east, past the Heritage Precinct, towards the commercial development on Herb Elliott Drive



Figure 16

View south across the subject development site towards the SOPA administrative building



Figure 17

View west from the avenue of trees adjacent to Site 4B, looking across the Soffitel building site



Figure 18

View east, across the north-eastern corner of the subject development site



Figure 19

View, from the north-west, through the avenue of Brush Box intersecting sites 4A (to the right) and 4B (to the left of the image)



Figure 20

View across to the Abattoir Heritage Precinct and the Dome (Hall 1) from the subject development site



Figure 21

View from the south, across the subject development site, with the Abattoir Heritage Precinct obscured by the double row of Brush Box trees.



Figure 22

The subject development site viewed from the Abattoir Heritage Precinct



Figure 23

Looking north, through the avenue of Brush Box, the SOPA administrative building to the rear, the existing car park (Site 4B) to the right, and the Sofitel building site (Site 4A) to the left

6 Description of the Proposed Works

The proposed development, described in the documentation prepared by Bovis Lend Lease (Environmental Assessment), and illustrated in the drawings prepared by BatesSmart Architects, comprises an 'A' grade commercial office building consisting of:

- Three (3) basement car park levels with approximately 350 parking spaces;
- Ground floor comprising retail, lobby and loading, and
- Six (6) levels of commercial office space with a total lettable area of approximately 21,000 sqm.

Plant and lift overrun will be located on the roof level and will be appropriately screened.

The proposed building will form part of the overall continuing development of the Olympic Site, providing further diverse uses for what was a site master planned primarily with the staging of the Olympics in 2000. Adjacent to site 4B is site 4A, currently under construction. This building site is located in the middle of what was the curved road that brought visitors to the abattoir administration building.

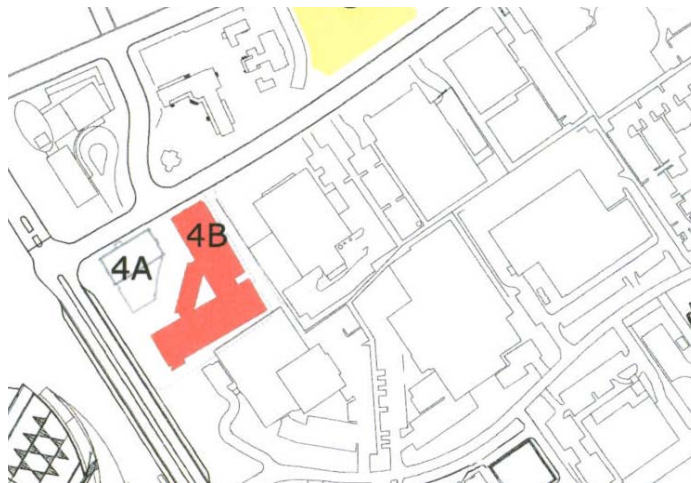


Figure 24

Proposed building footprint for the subject development

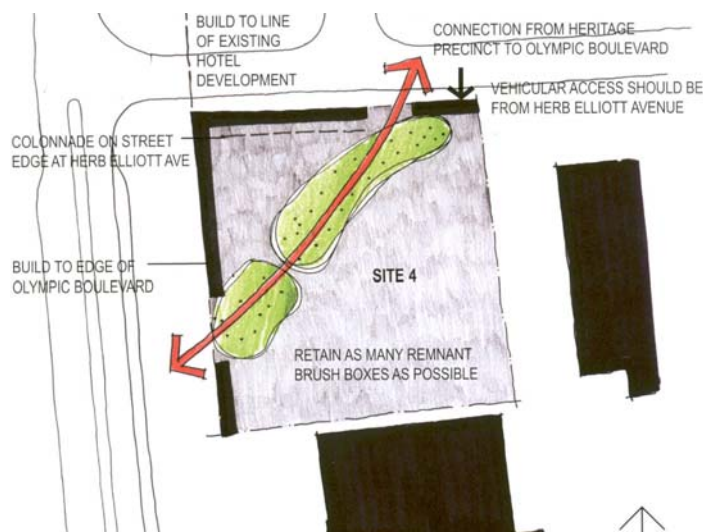


Figure 25

Master plan guiding principles for Site 4 (Source: Sydney Olympic Park Master Plan 2002, p. 94)

7 Heritage Considerations

7.1 Sydney Olympic Park Master Plan 2000 and Abattoir Precinct CMP 2003

7.1.1. Master Plan Overall Objectives and Vision

The objectives of the Master Plan are, *inter alia*⁶, to:

- Encourage early development of commercial, residential, entertainment, cultural and leisure uses that will foster an active and viable Town Centre for the long term and support the venues at Sydney Olympic Park.

And, in relation to the Master Plan's role⁷, The Sydney Olympic Park has (*inter alia*) the following functions:

- to protect and enhance the natural and cultural heritage of Sydney Olympic Park.

7.1.2 Site-specific Description and Guidelines

The description of Site 4 is as follows⁸:

This site is located on the corner of Herb Elliott Avenue and Olympic Boulevard. It requires sensitive development due to the existing Brushbox trees and its proximity relative to Olympic Boulevard, Vernon Buildings, Ibis and Novotel Hotels, Sydney Aquatic Centre and its visual connection to Stadium Australia.

Comment

The proposal conforms to the Master Plan guidelines for the site in terms of bulk and scale. The footprint as currently designed calls for the removal of a number of the trees at each end of the existing diagonal pedestrian link from Olympic Boulevard to Herb Elliott Avenue (Figure 25 above). The former relationship of the Brushbox on Site 4b to the heritage precinct has been diminished, firstly through the realignment of the roadway during the preparation for the Olympics, and most recently and significantly, through the construction of the Sofitel Hotel on Site 4A. (see Figure 8, p. 8 above, for the original relationship between the Brushbox and the heritage precinct)

The Master Plan guidelines for **5.3.6** under **Built Form**, state, *inter alia*, that:

The new building may be built to the corner street alignment provided:

- *The existing Brush Box trees are predominantly incorporated in the fabric of the development;*
- *The ground levels are visually permeable providing views of the heritage precinct and Brush Box trees;*
- *A colonnade along Olympic Boulevard and Herb Elliott Avenue street edge for pedestrian amenity is to be provided. The colonnade could provide connection through to the Brush Box trees.*

Under **Other**, the Master Plan states:

- *Retain and protect as many of the double row of Brush Box trees as feasible. No Brush Box may be removed without the approval of the Authority.*

Comment

It is the intent of the proposed development that a core section of the trees be retained. However, a number at either end of the existing pedestrian walkway / link will need to be removed. This will result in further diminishment of the remnant historic landscape. However, it should also be noted that the majority of the former components of the original avenue of Brushbox were already removed for site development both prior to, and following,

⁶ Sydney Olympic Park Master Plan, 2002, *Objectives*, p.2.

⁷ Ibid. 3.1 *Vision for Sydney Park*, p. 53.

⁸ Ibid. 5.3.6 *Olympic Boulevard – Herb Elliott Avenue Site 4*, p.93.

the 2000 Olympic Games. New trees, representing the new layer within the evolving cultural landscape, will be planted.

The construction of the new hotel on site 4A will effectively block the remnant diagonal view to the Abattoir buildings from Olympic Boulevard, thus reducing much of the contextual/visual significance of the curved group of Brushbox trees which formerly defined the curved entry roadway edge. New view lines will be created with the Site 4 cross-site link, which will allow for visual permeability and visual access to the Heritage Precinct.

Accordingly, the remnant group of Brush Box on Site 4B in their newly isolated context will now be of importance mainly for their interpretive value. The curved rear ground floor wall of the 4A building provides some reinforcement for this contextual value.

7.2.1 The Abattoir Heritage Precinct CMP 2003

The CMP⁹ includes (as of *High Significance*) the following:

Main views to the Precinct from the south bordered by the curved double row of Brush Box trees on the corner of Herb Elliott Road and Olympic Boulevard.

Comment

- The Brushbox trees were not singled out, *per se*, as of high significance. Nevertheless, as the framing device for the view, at the time of the writing of the CMP, they formed an integral component of the value (or “values”) associated with the visual experience, which was assessed in the report as of high significance. Therefore, within a values-based analysis the remnant curved double row of Brushbox historically contributed, at that time, to an *associated* rating of high significance. With the construction of the Sofitel Hotel on Site 4B, this associated high significance rating has been diminished.
- The remnant Brush Box trees are not, however, separately listed heritage items and are, therefore, not specifically protected by a legal instrument or process. Nevertheless, we understand the SOPA Act still requires consideration of the overall heritage and environmental values of the site.
- Within the context of the 2003 CMP’s analysis, the trees are representative of the layering of the *cultural landscape*: the “place” (in Burra Charter terms) that has evolved from being part of the vegetative “edge” along a stock route, to a remnant of a former visual link with a highly significant suite of buildings within the public domain. However, as a result of this evolving cultural layering, in particular the realigned/strong Olympic Boulevard axis and the construction of the hotel on Site 4A, this original visual link from the south-east to the Abattoir Heritage Precinct has lost its relevance. Within the new context, the remnant trees have been reduced to a background interpretive role.

7.3 Meaning, Significance and Essence: The Brush Box trees on Site 4

The significance that has in the past been attached to the double row of Brush Box, together with their current significance in their remnant form, are addressed below.

- 7.3.1 There was an historic association with the entry roadway to the Abattoir to which the trees added spatial definition. This association no longer exists.
- 7.3.2 The extant Brush Box on Site 4 represent a small remnant portion of what was previously the curved avenue leading from the south-east to the Abattoir buildings.
- 7.3.3 Their current significance¹⁰ lies in the remnant contribution that they make to the existing vista across Site 4 to the Abattoir Heritage Precinct.

⁹ CMP 2003, Section 5, *Grading of significant elements*, 5.2.1, *Elements of High Significance*, p. 20.

¹⁰ See *Comment*, Para 1, above.

8 Assessment of Heritage Impact

The impact of the proposed development has been assessed against the evaluation criteria for the assessment of impact of any proposal on a heritage listed item published by the NSW Heritage Office.

How is the impact of the new development on the heritage significance of the item or area to be minimised?

The proposed development is in accordance with the SOPA Masterplan.

The new development is separated by a roadway, is at some distance, is not excessively high, therefore it will not overshadow/overscale the heritage buildings. The new buildings in the vicinity are all components of an evolving cultural landscape. The Abattoir complex of heritage buildings are a strong and robust composition, capable of withstanding any impacts from the new developments.

As a result of the work associated with the Sydney 2000 Olympic and Paralympic Games the context of the administration buildings, gardens and tree plantings surviving from the Abattoir site dramatically changed.

The proposed development respects the boundaries of the conservation area and retains as much as is feasible of the curved row of Brushbox trees on the site, a significant remnant feature of the historical cultural landscape.

Why is the new development required to be adjacent to a heritage item?

The proposed works are part of the post-Olympic development scheme for Sydney Olympic Park that aims at ensuring the ongoing viability of the site, supporting existing venues and maximising best use of significant infrastructure investment.

The development site is in a primary position in the core of the intended Town Centre, located on one of the high points of the Park. It is in proximity to the Olympic Park Railway Station and adjacent to Olympic Boulevard, the spine of the Park, featuring a number of significant buildings and key venues.

The proposed commercial building will form a component of the new urban development¹¹ marking the Town Centre of Sydney Olympic Park.

How does the curtilage allowed around the heritage item contribute to the retention of its heritage significance?

The boundary of the conservation area has been defined to take account of both the historical background and the spatial and visual reality of the changing context of the heritage precinct.

The Abattoir Heritage Precinct retains a strong sense of a landscaped setting for the group of fine historic buildings. The entire precinct is surrounded by roads or gardens that enhance the open setting of the buildings and provide buffer curtilage.

The general scale of the separation between the new and old buildings is satisfactory. The proposed development will not affect the scale or quality of the curtilage or open setting.

¹¹ Sydney Olympic Park Master Plan (2002), 5.3.2 Desired Precinct Character, p. 84.

How does the new development affect views to, and from, the heritage item? What has been done to minimise negative effects?

Views from Olympic Boulevard along the remnant of the curved entry roadway have already been disrupted by the development on Site 4A. Views are still available from the public road that leads to the Entry Gate to the heritage precinct, with attendant filtered views through the proposed courtyard between Sites 4A and 4B.

Uninterrupted views from the junction of Olympic Boulevard and Herb Elliot Avenue will be unaffected by the development.

The vista along the curved row of Brush Box trees that are to be retained will be unaffected.

Is the development sited on any known, or potentially significant archaeological deposits? If so, have alternative sites been considered? Why were they rejected?

Based on the results of the archaeological assessment and subsequent test excavation and survey that were undertaken prior to the 2000 Olympics development program, it is not anticipated that there would be any archaeological deposits in the ground. It is possible that some evidence of previous uses of the area may have survived, but it is unlikely that any such evidence would have archaeological significance.

Recommendations of the 1997 archaeological study relating to the subject development site are included under the heading in Section 8.2 below.

Is the new development sympathetic to the heritage item? In what way (e.g. form, siting, proportions, design)?

The new development is sympathetic to the heritage precinct in that it is adequately separated from it, retaining the spatial and historical context of the group of Abattoir buildings, including the roadways that encircled them.

Will the additions visually dominate the heritage item? How has this been minimised?

The general scale of the separation between the new and old buildings is adequate in terms of the retention of the visual dominance of the Abattoir buildings in their distinctive setting. The scale and massing of the proposed new commercial building are satisfactory in relation to the scale, complexity and robust architectural composition of the heritage buildings and their garden setting.

Will the public, and users of the item, still be able to view and appreciate its significance?

There will be no overall adverse impact on the ability of the general public to view and appreciate the significance of the precinct, as the heritage group of buildings is still surrounded by public roads on three sides.

The amenity of the through-site link between Sites 4A and 4B will be enhanced by additional plantings, public art and interpretative elements that relate to the history of the site, and will draw the public and users of the space through to the historic Abattoir precinct.

8.1 Summary of Heritage Impact

Proposed works	Positive impact	Negative impact	Neutral impact
Construction of a 7 storey commercial building on Site 4B	The opportunity for an increased proportion of users of the Park, namely those who will use both the Sofitel Hotel, currently under construction, and the proposed commercial building, to view the Abattoir Heritage Precinct, and the associated heritage listed avenue of palms, from an elevated position.		1. The proposal will have a neutral impact on the existing views through to the Heritage Precinct from the SOPA offices, as these views are currently blocked by the avenue of Brush Box. 2. The proposal will continue to change the scale of the locality surrounding Abattoir buildings in accordance with the existing buildings approved, or under construction, in accordance with the Master Plan. 3. The scale and complexity of the Abattoir buildings is well able to stand this change of scale without loss of integrity.
The proposed development's semi-circular, geometric ground-level footprint	1. The shape of the footprint will allow for a curvilinear public space within the pedestrian walkway at ground level which will be emphasised by the curvature of the footprint of the Brushbox that are proposed for retention 2. The shape of the footprint will act as a counterpoint to the curving line of the retained, remnant Brush Box trees.		There will be a minor impact from the proposed development on the view through to the Heritage Precinct along the old curved alignment of the entry road. This will be balanced by the enhanced presentation of the public domain at ground level. However, this view has already been impacted upon by the construction, currently under way, of the Sofitel Hotel.

9 Conclusions and Recommendations

9.1 Conclusions

The proposed development adjacent to the Abattoir Heritage Precinct Conservation Area will have no unacceptable, adverse impact on the cultural significance of the heritage listed Abattoir Precinct, and only a minor impact on views to and from this precinct. Given the evolving cultural landscape of both the immediate vicinity, and the whole Sydney Olympic Park generally, the partial loss of visibility of the precinct from the existing SOPA headquarters building, and from the public domain to the south-east, is considered acceptable. This partial view loss will be off-set by the interpretation mechanisms that will be put in place, and by the enhancement of public amenity within the through-site link to the Abattoir Heritage precinct.

9.2 Recommendations

- Initial sub-surface works preceding development on the site should be archaeologically monitored. The subsequent discovery of archaeological features should be reported to and assessed by an archaeologist at the time of discovery.
- The four Brush Box trees that are to be retained should be complemented by specimens that will enhance the relationship of this section of the public realm to the adjacent Abattoir Heritage Precinct.
- A comprehensive Interpretation Strategy and Plan should be prepared, and implemented, following the completion of the works. It is further strongly recommended that the floor of the foyer of the building on Site 4B be laid out in a substantial manner as an interpretation of the former tree-lined, curved entry roadway.
- Recommendations relating to the subject site, as outlined in both the Sydney Olympic Park Master Plan 2002 and the Abattoir Heritage CMP 2003, should be implemented where practicable.

Yours faithfully
GRAHAM BROOKS AND ASSOCIATES PTY LTD



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