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National Trust of Australia (N.S.W.) Listing Proposal NTN.06

	LANDSCAPE CONSERVATION AREA			
MOSMAN	MIDDLE HARBOUR		SYDNEY (INNER)	
Location	Name or identification of listing		Region	
Proposer	Crown land	Freehold	Map reference 1:60,000 DMR	
A.M. WARD	X	X		
Date of Proposal	Local Govt Area/s		Owner/s Various	
Sept. 1982	Kuring-gai, Warringah, Willoughby, Mosman, Manly and North Sydney.			
Suggested Listing Category				CLASSIFIED
Committee (Trust use)				Lands. Cons.
Council (Trust use)	24.1.83			

Reasons for Listing

Aesthetic: This beautiful arm of Sydney Harbour contains a wide variety of contrasting scenery, ranging from dense bushland gullies and slopes to long expanses of beaches and marine centres, housing yacht and sailing Clubs and marinas. See Appendix A.

Cultural: The rugged bushland of the upper section, the Bantry Bay area in particular, contain many aboriginal rock engravings. In recent times, there have been some remarkable housing and estate developments around the shores. See Appendix B.

Description

The area embraces Davidson State Recreation Area in the upper reaches of Middle Harbour, and extends downstream, including all lands within the topographic catchment of the waterway. Below Roseville Bridge, the waterway opens out and assumes a fiord-like character.

The boundary encloses the residential arms of Sugarloaf, Sailors and Long Bays, the centre of marine activities at The Spit, and the slopes of Balmoral and Clontarf, where fine beaches front well developed residential areas.

The area extends to the line from Grotto Point to Middle Head, and has a common boundary with the adjoining Sydney Harbour Landscape Conservation Area.

For Geology, Flora and Fauna, see Appendix C

Note: Sydney Harbour and Parramatta and Lane Cove Rivers have been Classified separately. The previous Upper Middle Harbour listing has now been superseded.

Recommendations

Maintenance of strict controls by appropriate authorities to protect the scenic, cultural and conservation values of these foreshores. Incorporation of prominent foreshore reserves, including the former Bantry Bay Explosives Reserve, in the Sydney Harbour National Park. Private foreshore lands should be acquired for public open space whenever available.

Bibliography

P.R. Stephenson & B. Kennedy: "Sydney Harbour": Reed Pty. Ltd., 1980

Upper Middle Harbour Conservation Society: "Bantry Bay: The Case for Conservation".

APPENDIX "A"Aesthetic Values

Middle Harbour is one of the most beautiful waterways of the coast with a residential background, having retained much of its natural beauty and scenic value in spite of its proximity to the city.

In its upper reaches, the area comprises deep bushland gullies ideally suited to rugged outdoor recreation and appropriately included in the Davidson State Recreation Area.

Below Roseville Bridge, the timbered slopes and rocky foreshores of the main stream and its arms collectively form a beautiful, fiord-like waterway. It is a delightful area for leisurely boating and fishing, with a backdrop of green hillsides and rocky outcrops, often rising sharply out of the water in contrast to the evenly vegetated hillsides which slope gently down to the rock-strewn shores.

Bantry Bay is one of the finest remaining bushland areas adjacent to the harbour. Some 280 hectares in extent, the reserve forms a natural watershed drained by two streams through sheltered gullies. The main stream, Bates Creek, has a 18m high waterfall, a natural rock arch and three smaller waterfalls. Rocky outcrops and cliffs are frequent in the area, from which extensive views may be had down Middle Harbour.

Although the foreshores below Sugarloaf Point are more extensively developed for housing, they retain much of their natural character, and there is an interesting merging of housing, bushland and rocky shores.

The large marina on the western side of The Spit and the group of yacht and sailing clubs on the eastern side provide a busy centre for colourful boating activities. The broad waterway off Balmoral is crowded with sailing and other craft on summer week-ends, and crowds are attracted to the Balmoral and Clontarf beaches.

APPENDIX "B"Cultural ValuesPre-History

The Bantry Bay area the domain of the Cammeray-Gals tribe, contains one of the most extensive groups of aboriginal rock engravings in the Sydney Region. These depict men, fish, wallabies, dingo and various aboriginal implements. Tool-sharpening grooves are to be found near creek beds, also rock shelters used by the natives.

European

This bay was also the site of an early wharf from which timber was shipped to various parts of the port, the timber having been hauled from French's timber depot nearby down to the waterfront by bullocks. Traces of the old bullock road, closed in 1908, may still be found in the bush.

The Bantry Bay area was reserved for the storage and shipment of explosives in 1917 and this restriction resulted in the preservation of the area as virgin bushland. With the closure of the explosives magazine in recent years, the Trust has advocated the inclusion of the reserve in the Sydney Harbour National Park.

Innisfallen Castle at Castle Cove is one of the most imposing buildings overlooking Middle Harbour. A Gothic style building, with ramparts, tower and stout stone walls, it was built in 1903-05 from sandstone quarried on the site by the Hon. Henry Willis, a member of Australia's first Federal Parliament, and, later, a member of the State Legislative Assembly.

Chalwin Castle stands in a more prominent position at Quakers Hat Bay, at the southern end of the main waterway. This elaborate structure was built by Vivian Chalwin in 1951, and, apart from its many living rooms, it contains a Roman-style swimming pool and a private theatre, where musical groups give regular concerts.

The Castlecrag area was the scene of a remarkable estate development in the 1920's, promoted by Walter Burley Griffin, the designer of the Australian capital of Canberra. Griffin's houses were built of stone and concrete blocks, with flat roofs, and were designed to blend with the landscape. Streets and reserves in the estate were named after parts of a medieval castle - The Battlement, Sortie Point, The Bastion, The Barbican, The Parapet to name a few.

The Spit has been the best point for crossing Middle Harbour from earliest times. A punt service established by Peter Ellery in 1850 ran for 38 years before being sold to the Government. Various punts continued to operate until the first bridge was built in 1924. Pressure of road traffic required its replacement by the present bridge in 1958.

Clontarf Beach was the scene of an attempt on the life of the then Duke of Edinburgh in 1868, when the Duke was enjoying a picnic whilst visiting Sydney during a world tour. The attempted assassin, an Irishman named O'Farrell, was a member of an anti-royalist society; he was convicted and hanged at Darlinghurst Jail. The Duke recovered and went on with his tour.

APPENDIX "C"GEOLOGY, FLORA AND FAUNAGeology

The sandstone which forms the foreshores of the harbour was laid down in a huge delta during the Triassic period, about 200 million years ago. The sands hardened to sandstone during this period. Later, the valley of the now Parramatta River eroded during the late Tertiary Period, laying the foundation of today's coastal geography.

The present harbour was caused by flooding of the old river valley when the general sea level rose at the end of the Pleistocene ice age, as melting of the glaciers and polar ice caps released water to the oceans.

Thus the harbour can be regarded as a ria, or drowned valley system into which flow several streams, the Parramatta River being the longest, the Lane Cove River being secondary, with the northern shores generally higher and more rugged than the southern.

Flora

The flora is typical of the Sydney Basin flora of the sandstone commonly referred to as "Hawkesbury Sandstone".

The undeveloped slopes are generally dry eucalypt forest. The canopy is provided by Sydney Red Gums (*Angophora costata*), Sydney Peppermint (*Eucalyptus piperita*) and Red Bloodwood (*Eucalyptus gummifera*) amongst others. The understorey features delicate spider flowers (*Grevillea spp.*) brilliant yellow and orange pea flowers (members of the Fabaceae), the soft white of Flannel Flowers (*Actinotus helianthi*) and the magnificent Banksias which not only provide beautiful flowering cones and a copious supply of nectar for bird and animal life, but give a readily identifiable Australian character to the coastal landscape. In the sheltered gullies dominant trees are Turpentine (*Syncarpia glomulifera*) and Blackbutt (*E. pilularis*) with an understorey of *Callicoma serratifolia*, Blueberry Ash (*Elaeocarpus reticulatus*), the highly perfumed Pittosporum (*Pittosporum undulatum*) and ferns.

The heathland of the wind-swept headlands carries a considerable diversity of vegetation, including dwarfed Banksia, Hakea, Grevillea, Isopogon, Darwinia, grass trees (*Xanthorrhoea spp.*) and Heaths (Epacridaceae). The cliff hangers include hardy ferns and the Native Fuschia (*Epacris longiflora*). In poorly drained areas, masses of the pink flowering *Sprengelia incarnata* flourish.

Fauna

Urban bushland in the area supports Brushtail and Ringtail Possums, Echidnas, Bandicoots. Numerous reptiles including Water Dragons, Blue-tongued Lizards, Skinks, Geckos and Legless Lizards are present in the area. Birdlife is typified by Magpies, Kookaburras, Honeyeaters, Black-faced Cuckoo-shrikes and seabirds such as Cormorants and gulls.

