



## Redevelopment of UNSW Cliffbrook Campus

State Significant Development Application (SSD 8126)  
Landscape Design Statement

**fjmt**

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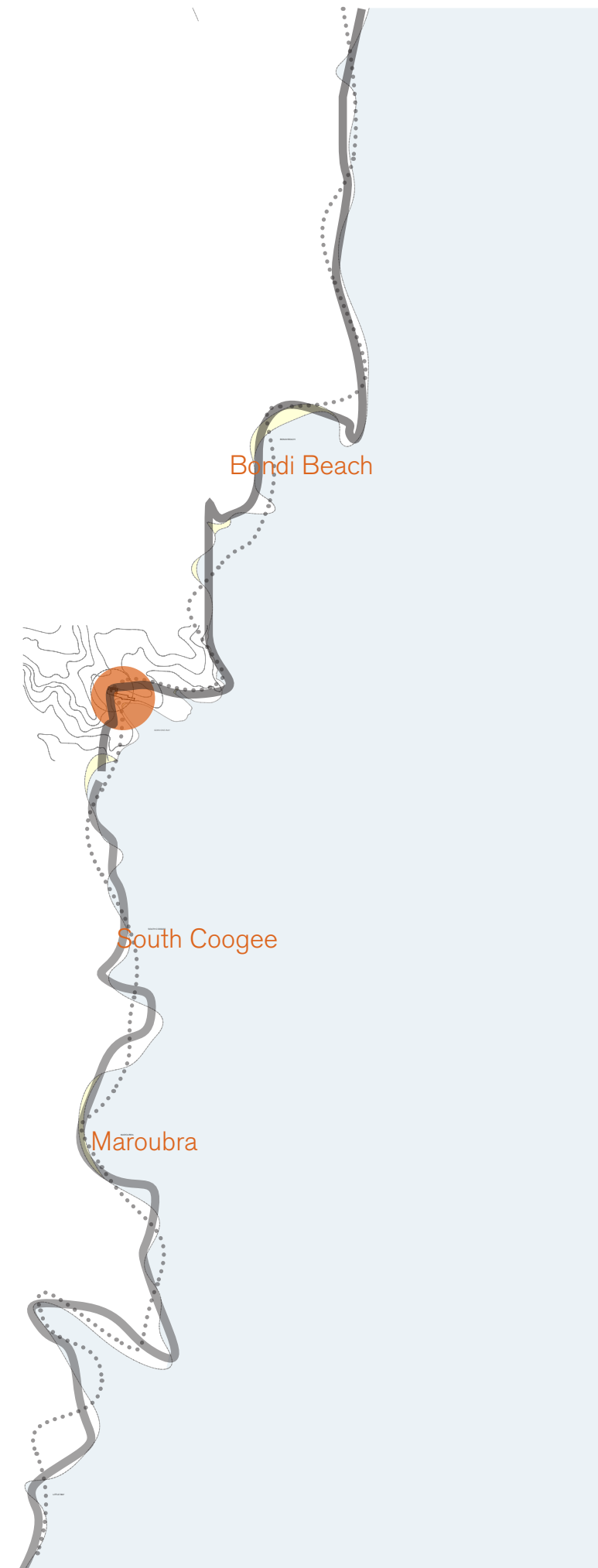
# 1.0 Introduction

## Context

UNSW's Cliffbrook Campus is a satellite campus located in The City of Randwick in Coogee on the corner of Battery and Beach Streets. The campus is approximately 6km South East of the Sydney CBD and 3km to the west of the UNSW Randwick Campus. The campus is located at 45 - 51 Beach Street, with ocean views over Gordons Bay, and a physical connection to the Coastal Walkway. The campus is composed of two lots totalling 11,536.4 m<sup>2</sup> (1.1536 ha) held in freehold title by UNSW. This includes the Cliffbrook Campus with its four existing buildings, carpark, a recreational lawn and patch of bushland, as well as the adjacent residential lot that contains a single dwelling at 10 Battery Street (Lot 8, DP8162). The site sits along the Coogee to Bondi coastal walk, connecting the area to the eastern suburbs coastline. It is secluded and quiet, and the bay is abundant in native flora. The dense vegetation provides a haven for many small birds and lizards.

Since the purchase of the property UNSW has struggled to find a highest and best use for the site. Over the years the property has been used for satellite office based functions including the Australian School of Taxation, the Asia Australia Institute and the Redfern Legal Centre. It was used for decant space for the Kirby Institute during the Wallace Wurth project. The only existing occupants of the property are the offices of UNSW Press which has been located there since the late 1990s. Most of the property is fitted out for offices and remains vacant. The brief is to create alternative accommodation for the AGSM Residential Program functions, as well as for UNSW to make better use of an existing under-performing asset, whilst also improving the competitiveness of UNSW's management courses.

The project will offer a "4-star" conference centre experience, with improved residential accommodation & amenities; more contemporary and customised suite of learning spaces; a unique beachside 'retreat' locale. As well as a location for other UNSW faculties, schools and business units to hold small conferences and strategy days; and an opportunity to revisit the operational model (currently catering is managed by UNSW Venues and Events) to ensure this is market-competitive.





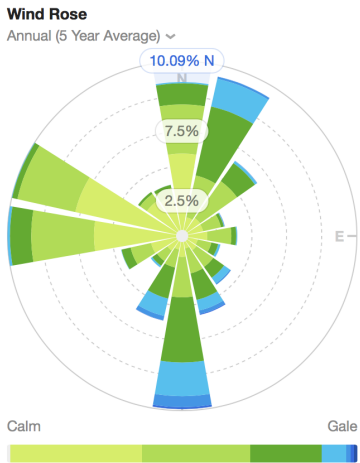
# 2.0 Existing Conditions

## Climate

The climate affecting the site area is typical of that experienced along Sydney's Eastern coastline. The Summers are typically warm to hot and the winters are cool to mild with a Summer maximum of rainfall. The average monthly temperature range for January is between a minimum of 17.4 degrees and a maximum of 26.1degrees. During July the monthly temperature range is between a minimum of 6.5 degrees and a maximum of 16.7degrees. The average annual rainfall is 1083.7mm The highest average monthly falls of rain is 124.3mm which occurs in June, whilst the lowest of 60.3mm occurs in September.

## Wind

In the winter months the dominant winds are from the West. The site area is most likely to be affected by the southerly winds. These winds increase the impact of aerosaltic spray on the bay by accelerating erosion to the sandstone. (Bureau of Meteorology, 2015)



Wind Rose Data for Coogee  
Source: Bureau of Meteorology 2015

## Geology & Soils

Gordons Bay is a deeply incised bay with steep sandstone cliffs and a small beach at its head. A public reserve consisting of remnant natural, heathland and a mix of exotic and native plant species is also located in the head of the bay.

Soil profiles and landscape mapping indicates that the soil landscapes that occur at the subject site are Newport, and Hawkesbury. The precise address of the subject site lies on the boundary of these two soil landscapes which are often correlated.

Newport soil landscape is characterized by surface layer of shallow aeolian (wind-blown) sands the shallow windblown sands of the Newport soil landscape unit usually overlie the Newport and Garie Formations of the Middle Triassic Narrabeen Group, which consist of interbedded laminite, shale and quartz to lithic quartz sandstone.

Hawkesbury soil landscape is characterized by exposed Hawkesbury Sandstone which fractures in a way to give a distinctive "blocky" appearance, remaining in boulders and rocky outcrops with only skeletal colluvial soils where weathering has occurred.

Newport and Hawkesbury Soil Landscapes are subject to high erosion. Where storm-water runoff is not adequately controlled, serious gully erosion can occur and can remove Newport aeolian sand layers, leaving behind only Hawkesbury Sandstone. (Narla Fauna & Flora Assessment

## Flora & Fauna Assessment

Narla Environmental were engaged to undertake a flora & fauna assessment on the project site. The following presents a summary of Narla's findings.

### Existing Flora

Prior to the 1940's the area (including the subject site) was predominately cleared of vegetation (ref: 1943 Aerial Mapping - NSW Spatial Services, 2016). As such, little of the vegetation on site can be considered truly remnant. Most native plants in the 'bushland' area of the subject site have naturally regenerated, presumably from seedbank, rootstock or dispersal by wind, water or animals. Regeneration has been encouraged on and adjacent the site through historic and ongoing bush regeneration activities in the area.

Site surveys undertaken by Narla determined the vegetation in the bushland area of the site comprised of native flora interspersed by weed infestations. Narla concluded that the subject site may have once supported a transitional vegetative community between the eastern Suburbs Banksia Scrub (ESBS) and Coastal Headland Heath. Although there is evidence that the site may have once supported ESBS (listed as 'Eastern Suburbs banksia Scrub in the Sydney Basin Bioregion' an endangered community under the NSW Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995 and the Biodiversity ConservationAct 1999) the detail site surveys undertaken by Narla concluded that the vegetation did not meet the criteria for classification as ESBS. The vegetation community identified on the subject site is more closely related to Coastal Headland Banksia Heath.

No flora species of conservation significance listed under Rare and Threatened Australian Plants (RoTAP), the NSW Threatened Species Conservation Act of the Biodiversity Conservation Act were identified on or immediately adjacent the subject site.

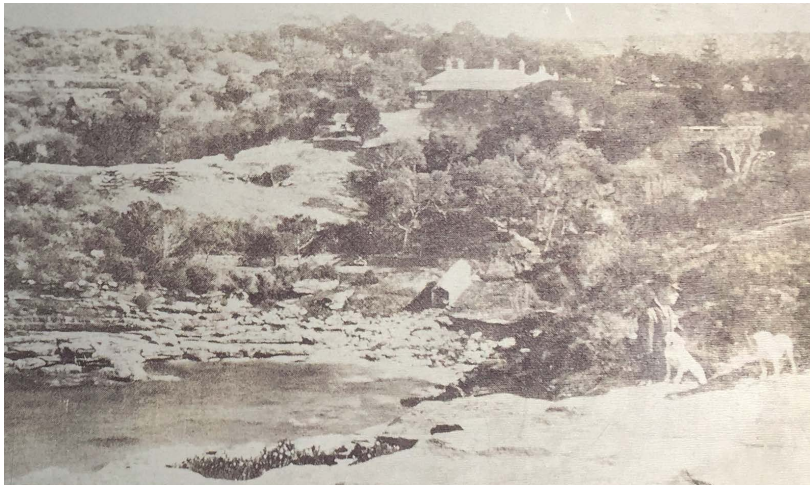
### Existing Fauna

Narla Environmental identified 20 fauna species on the day of the site visit, eighteen of these species are native, and two are introduced species, exotic to Australia. All native fauna species are listed as 'protected' under the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974. No species listed as threatened under the TSC or EPBC Acts were encountered.

Birds were the most strongly represented fauna group observed during the survey, with 16 species recorded.



Existing vegetation communities (Narla Environmental March 2017)





3.0 Client Brief

Project Objectives and Opportunities	Landscape Response
A 4-star conference centre experience with improved residential accommodation and amenities	Explore opportunities for amenity and extracurricular activities in external spaces.
A unique beachside 'retreat' locale .. with a unique accommodation experience: ocean views , beachside location, ample exercise and breakout spaces	<div>Provide visual connection to outdoor spaces</div> <div>Maximise views and vistas capturing the unique location and its coastal cliff setting</div> <div>Provide access and connection to Gordons Bay and the Bondi to Coogee coastal walk</div> <div>Create multifunctional external spaces to provide opportunities for outdoor learning, group activities, outdoor functions such as 'Welcome to Country' or post-ceremony celebratory events and private spaces for contemplation / relaxation.</div>
Ease of access and parking. Provision for shuttle bus transport or other arrangement to ensure connectivity to the Kensington Campus	Rationalise vehicular movement through the site and proposed building layout and consider provision of bus / taxi drop-off zones, loading/ deliveries, car and bicycle parking.
Proposed events with spill out / breakout spaces & casual seating around café areas	Explore opportunities at the building interface to facilitate spill out / breakout spaces in external areas.



GORDONS BAY AND 'CLIFFBROOK' - CIRCA 1883



VIEW TO EXISTING CLIFFBROOK HOUSE



CLIFFBROOK PARADE BOARDWALK - VIEW TO GORDONS BAY



# 4.0 Landscape Design Statement

## Design Principles

### Integrated form

Synthesis of the **landscape and the built form** is fundamental to the design concept. The core landscape design concept is to create a **multi-layered communal landscape** specific to the site and context.

The natural topography of the surroundings are comprised of sheer sandstone landscape with sparse mature trees and heath forest groundcover, native grass and sandstone substrate is referenced along with more fundamental principles such as “coastal edge” and “shelter”.

### Existing and Proposed

A ground plane layer is comprised of an existing mature garden surrounding the Cliffbrook House, formal hedges and pathways, informal seating areas, edges and planting generated from the building and reaching out to the site context. This creates a contrast between the natural assets of the coastal edge landscape and the formal landscape of the grounds around the historic house that connects the proposed retreat building and the site but also forms a series of **outdoor sub-spaces for different outdoor activities**. New tree planting on this ‘layer’ extends and references the original endemic trees on the site; the Coastal Banksia (Banksia integrifolia).

### Materiality and Geology

Further site references include the use of endemic tree species associated with watercourse and former swamp area (Coastal Tea Tree) and the use of primary landscape materials such as sandstone boulders reflects the underlying geology of the region. These design elements are intended to evoke a **connection to the site** rather than a literal interpretation of natural condition or historic events. Interpretation will be individual.



Concept Diagram

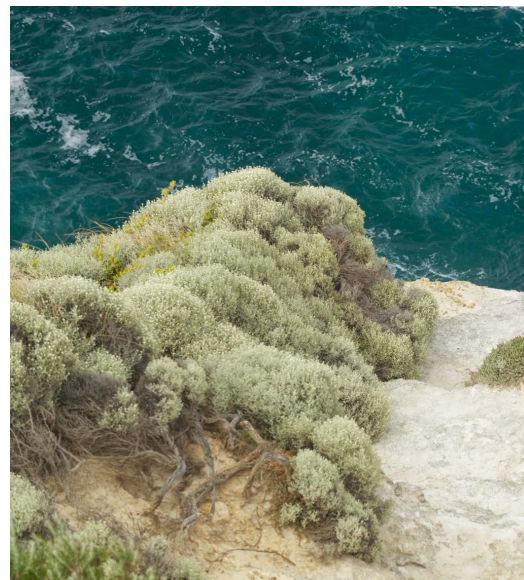
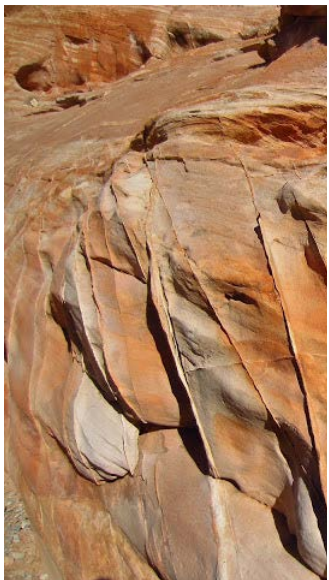
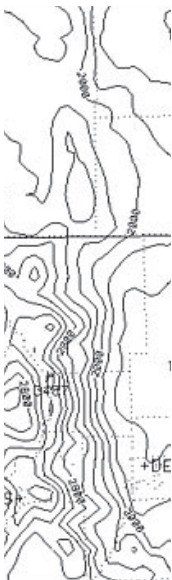
Historic Cliffbrook house set within existing trees, topographical setting & landscape forms



Concept Diagram

Integrated concept - building form and landscape forms coexist - Landscape elements extend into the site and embody existing and future transitions such as:

- historic - architectural - bushland
- formal - informal - natural
- brick - sandstone - concrete - timber - gravel - sand - ocean





## 5.0 Landscape Design Philosophy

A place connected to nature.

A meeting place.

A people place with flexible space

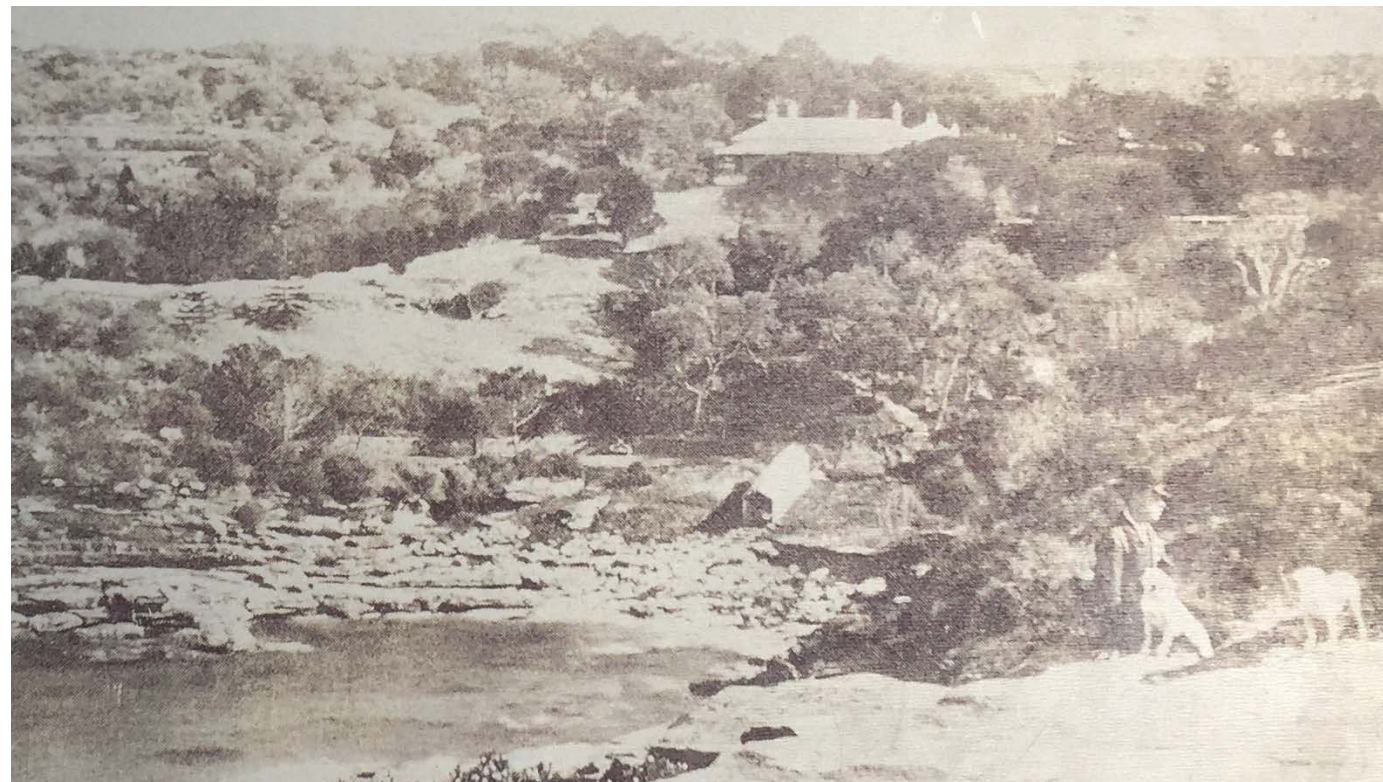
### Design Concepts

**To make an authentic educational retreat for the UNSW's Australian Graduate School of Management (AGSM) through:**

- Creating an informal meandering, organic ground-plane that connects as a fluid expression of arrival and movement
- Providing a new educational and communal heart drawn from the qualities of the site that make Cliffbrook a special place and destination
- Respecting and enhancing the site as a source of inspiration that also reflects the natural and anthropogenic history of the site and "The Meeting Place" of the traditional owners and inhabitants of the land. (Coogee or Kudjee is the aboriginal place name for Gordons Bay)



'CLIFFBROOK' HOUSE AND VIEW TO SOUTH PACIFIC OCEAN



GORDONS BAY AND 'CLIFFBROOK' - CIRCA 1883

### Key Design Principles

**The overall key principles of the project that are directly applicable to the design of the open space include:**

- Heritage & Views
- Scale & Form
- Microclimate
- Materiality and Detail
- Collaboration
- Flexibility & Diversity
- Geometry and Address
- Legibility and Identity
- Sustainability and Innovation
- Economy and Value





## Vision & Objectives

**The following are selected objectives that relate to the landscape design response:**

- Encourage healthier living through passive outdoor activities that maximize the natural assets of the site
- Interactive and welcoming environment for all visitors and residents
- Provide flexible and inviting outdoor spaces to congregate and pause that promote passive pursuits
- Integrate with attractions in the broader regional open space network including Gordon's Bay cliff top walking track, Clovelly Bay surf life saving club, and the main retail strip at Coogee Bay
- Harness emerging technologies and innovative environmental sustainable design approaches



## Principles

**The following selected principles have been developed to help inform the landscape design response:**

- Entrance to portray a sense of arrival and occasion
- Passive amenity landscape with good streetscape and arrival connections that reinforce the existing high value assets
- Formal Heritage house gardens and surrounds that facilitates events and social interaction
- Create a central gathering space between the new retreat building and the heritage house
- Provide an outdoor foreshore terrace that provides a connection to the natural environment
- Capitalise on views and natural assets of the site and provide access through the foreshore landscape to the cliff top walkway
- Ensure a safe, inclusive and sustainable place
- Showcase innovative environmentally sustainable design that emphasises passive energy use, incorporates integrated water management, demonstrates clever use of building materials, promotes health and wellbeing and potentially reduces future operating costs

