

As part of the preparations for the war, the National Emergency Service (NES), New South Wales was also established in 1939 to "protect, educate and provide aid on the home front". The NES commenced operation on 1 February 1939.

According to the State Archives and Records Authority of New South Wales:

The agency was formed in response to a request from the Prime Minister that the Australian states devise a scheme for the protection of the civilian population against possible attacks from the air in the event of a national attack.²³

The first task of the Department was to prepare a scheme of organisation for the State. The scheme provided for the formation of a Civil Defence Organisation upon a municipal or shire basis. Each municipality or shire became an "Area". A Chief Warden was appointed, to take charge of each Area. The Chief Warden and all of the area staff served in a voluntary capacity.

The organisation of the National Emergency Services had two principal activities: a) the provision of measures for the protection of the life and property of the people, such as provision of air raid warnings, lighting control, air raid shelters, protection of vital plant and numerous other schemes to meet emergency conditions; and b) operational activities, including the organisation of personnel trained in specialist duties to cope with the immediate effects of enemy attack.²⁴

The Sydney Sports Ground was used to review NES workers (as depicted in Figure 19 below).



FIGURE 19: NATIONAL EMERGENCY WORKERS BEING REVIEWED AT THE SYDNEY SPORTS GROUNDS, 1942.
(Source: Australian War Memorial Photograph Collection Id.044551)

²³ State Archives and Records Authority of NSW South Wales <https://www.records.nsw.gov.au/agency/640>

²⁴ p. 5 Report Covering Activities of National Emergency Services, New South Wales p. 5 in NSW Parliamentary Papers 1940-41 Vol.3 pp.789-831.

IT'S NOT THE MAN YOU WERE...



...BUT THE MAN YOU ARE!



JOIN THE N.E.S. TO-DAY

POSTER GETS WIDE-SPREAD DISPLAY

Lithographed in multi-color, this poster is one of a series being issued by the Public Relations Bureau of N.E.S. in N.S.W. Queensland Government has asked for an issue of the posters, and the issue has been supplied.

Action, April, 1942. Page 11.

FIGURE 20 NATIONAL EMERGENCY SERVICE POSTER READY FOR FINAL ISSUE

(SOURCE: STATE ARCHIVES AND RECORDS NRS 19792. [HTTPS://WWW.RECORDS.NSW.GOV.AU/SERIES/19792](https://www.records.nsw.gov.au/series/19792))

The war effort in Australia ramped up from 1940 as a response to the Blitz, a German bombing offensive against London and other parts of Britain, and the southward march of Japanese forces. There were grave fears that the war was getting to close to home. A Sydney Morning Herald article from September 1942 noted that:

Large numbers of people ignored the daylight sirens as they walked through the city streets. NES minister Robert Heffron said: "There is need for a greater realisation of the fact that Sydney is not immune from assault." ²⁵

Despite these concerns, Sydney was never actually attacked by air, with the shelters and trenches across Sydney backfilled in the months and years after the war.

The National Emergency Services lapsed six months after the cessation of hostilities but the Chief Secretary's Department, and subsequently the Premier's Department, continued to be engaged in the collection and evaluation of information.

The pre-fabricated huts (as shown in Figure 18) were eventually removed in the 1970s and the military depot was finally transferred to the NSW Government in 1986, and all structures were demolished to make room for the construction of the SFS.



FIGURE 21: AERIAL OVERLAY OF EXISTING SITE, SHOWING WW2 ANTI-AIRCRAFT TRENCHES AND POTENTIAL EVIDENCE OF THE RIFLE RANGE WITHIN CLOSE VICINITY OF THE SITE (SOURCE: SIXMAPS WITH CURIO ADDITIONS, 2018).

²⁵ <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2017-10-12/curious-sydney-air-raid-shelters-wwii/9013568>

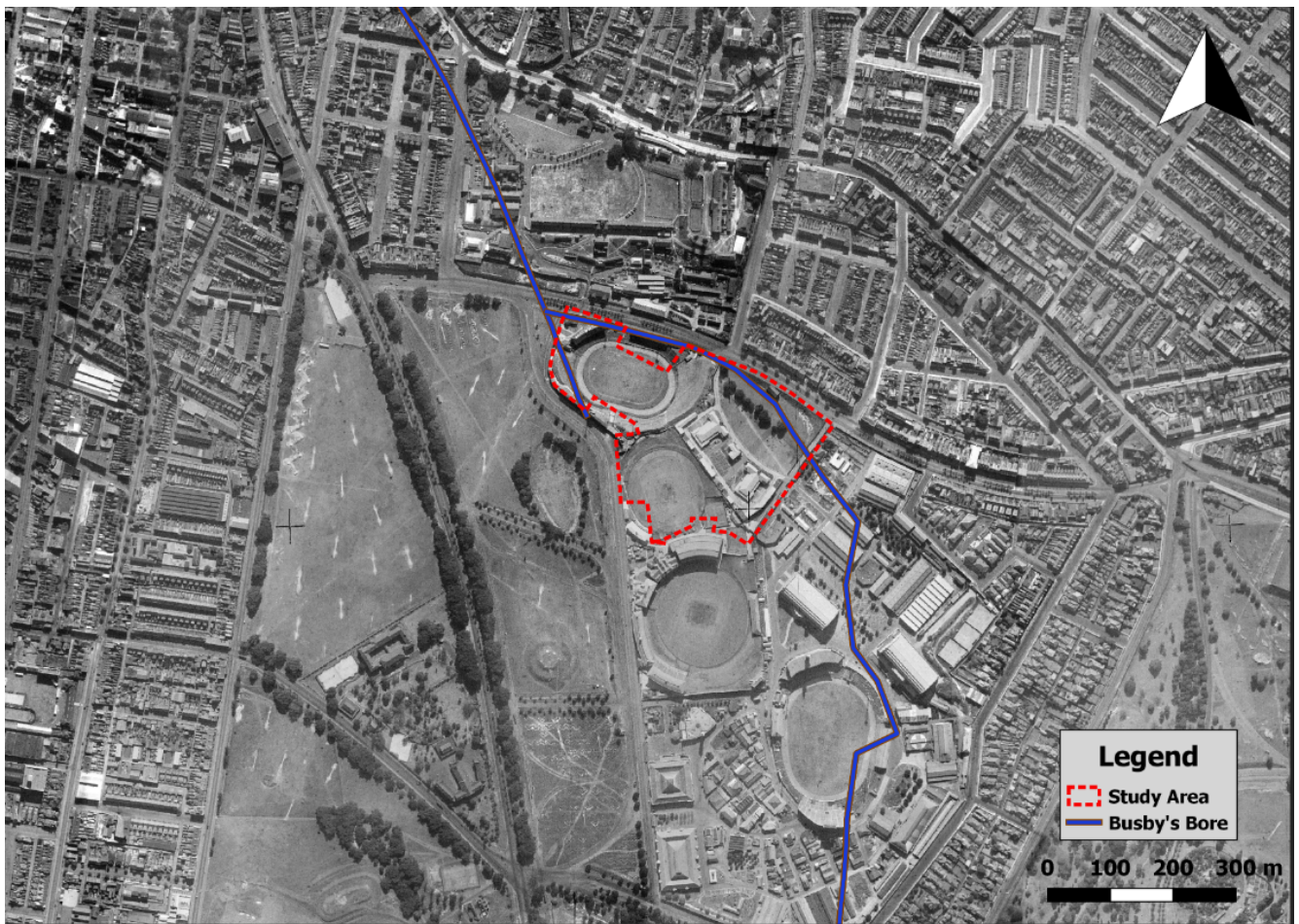


FIGURE 22: 1943 AERIAL OF THE SFS AND SURROUNDING LAND, WITH WW2 TRENCHES AND POSSIBLE EARLIER RIFLE RANGE TRENCHES SHOWN (SOURCE: SIXMAPS WITH CURIO ADDITIONS, 2018).

3.6. Sydney Sports Ground

In 1899, part of the former rifle range and military depot (fronting Moore Park Road) was rededicated as an 'Athletic Sports Ground' which came to be known as the Sydney Sports Ground (SSG) by 1902. The Sydney Sports Ground was once located approximately where the carpark of the SFS is currently. The impetus behind the creation of this sports field came from the need for a sporting ground facility that could be used consistently for sports and recreational activities other than cricket (while the SCG was occasionally used for other sports, cricket was also prioritised). A trust was appointed in January 1900 to represent the interests of various organisations in the matter of the SSG, including representatives from the government schools, the Great Public Schools, cyclists and amateur athletes (Figure 23).²⁶

Preparation of the SSG facilities included the survey and fencing of the boundaries in 1901, followed by partial filling of the site in order to level the playing field area, and form an embankment along the Moore Park Road frontage and along the eastern boundary. The shape and location of the SSG land (enclosed by the SCG grounds to the south, military depot to the east, Moore Park Road to the north and Driver Avenue to the west), necessitated the creation of an elongated rectangular field with an east-west orientation (Figure 24). The track was designed by James S Wigram, architect to the NSW Education Department at the time, while the stands were designed by private architect Richard Shute.

²⁶ GML 2013: 31

Landscaping scheme advice was provided by Joseph Henry Maiden of the Sydney Botanic Garden, who also supplied six fig trees, fifty oaks, fifty border plants and twenty flowering shrubs for planting at the new SSG.²⁷ At its height, the Sydney Sports Ground consisted of two main grandstands, as well as change rooms and laboratory blocks, surrounded by grass covered hill, with capacity for c.35,000 people. The main layout and facilities of the SSG had been formed by the late 1930s and continued in that similar form until its eventual closure in the late 1980s.

Due to the severely limited funds of the SSG Trust, the player and spectator facilities at the SSG were relatively basic in nature for the majority of the lifespan of the ground. The first constructed grandstands were mainly using available materials salvaged from government building sites in Sydney. For example, the main stand at the SSG, known as 'The Federal', was originally a temporary structure made of timber that had been constructed in Centennial Park in 1901 for viewing of passing troops during the celebration of the federation of the colonies, which was then relocated to the SSG. The cycle track was originally surfaced with clay sourced from the Central Station site (which was at the time under construction), later sealed with asphalt in 1903, and seating on the grassed embankments was formed from decking timbers salvaged from the demolition of the original Pyrmont Bridge.²⁸

The SSG was used for a wide range of sports including cricket, cycling, athletics, football and rugby, as well as for events such as scout rallies, brass band contests, dog shows, and dirt track racing. However, it was mainly the rugby union that early on facilitated the ongoing financial success of the ground, providing income for the roofing and fitting of seats in the grandstand, construction of a dressing shed for players, and rooms for the trustees and office support in the early 1900s. By 1907, the SSG had a capacity of 20,000, with a second grandstand constructed in 1908 (Figure 25 and Figure 26).

While sporting events were substantially less during WW1, the SSG remained open to the public throughout the war, with the exception of frequent use of temporary military encampments and use as a place of enlistment. During the inter-war years, the SSG secretary Luther Harvey attempted to increase the success of the SSG by encouraging use by the Amateur Athletics Association and securing a contract with the rugby league administrators to win the return of the game to the SSG from the SCG in 1921. The 1920s also saw the decrease in the use of the grounds for cycling events (leading to the eventual removal of the cycling track altogether in the late 1930s), which was for a short time replaced by use of the track for greyhound racing, although objections by Amateur Athletics Association saw greyhound racing at the site to be a very short-term venture only.

Renewal of the contract between the SSG and rugby league in 1929 allowed further improvements to be undertaken at the ground, including a new main stand—Turner Stand (as the temporary nature of the Federal Stand meant it had blown away in a storm), press box (1929), scoreboard (1931), steel floodlighting towers, a new turnstile building (1935), and a public bar (1936). The land of the SSG was slightly enlarged and rededicated in 1930 for 'Athletic Sports and Public Amusements'.²⁹

Although the first motorcycle race had taken place at the ground in 1907, dirt track racing was only properly introduced to the SSG in the late 1930s. The events were promoted by the Empire Speedway Pty Ltd, with the speedway officially opened on 30th October 1937, and the first midget car race held in November 1937. The use of the SSG for racing required the reconfiguration of the banked racing track and floodlights. Again, WW2 saw the reduction of sporting events at the SSG and the use as staging and

²⁷ GML 2013: 32

²⁸ *ibid*

²⁹ GML 2013: 34

enlistment facilities for the war (Figure 19), however after WW2 the SSG became the major racetrack in Australia (Figure 27 and Figure 28). During its time of operation, in an era where death was an accepted risk of the sport, twelve riders and drivers were killed in accidents on the dirt track between 1937 and the closure of the track in 1955.³⁰ In the most tragic accident, close friends off the track Norm Clay and Ray Duggan both died after crashing together in a solo race on 20th January 1950. The speedway was eventually closed on 25th March 1955.

In 1951, administrative control of the SCG and SSG were brought under the same entity, with the creation of the Sydney Cricket and Sports Ground Trust. Discussions began in the early 1970s about the upgrading of sporting facilities at Moore Park, which eventually lead to the decision to construct the Sydney Football Stadium. The SSG was closed and demolished in c1987, following the acquisition of the military depot in c1986, which was also demolished at this time to prepare the site for the construction of the SFS.

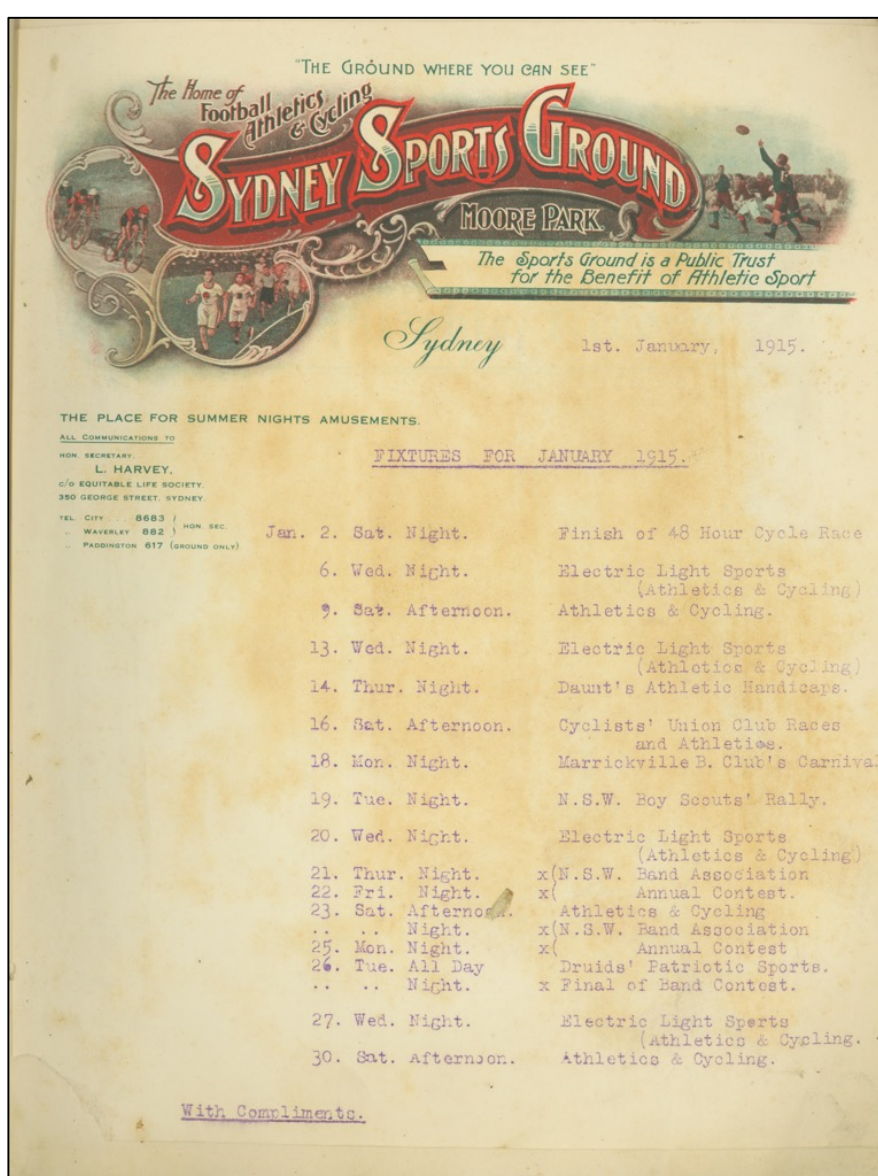


FIGURE 23: OFFICIAL LETTERHEAD OF THE SYDNEY SPORTS GROUND TRUST, 1915 (IMAGE: COURTESY OF SCG MUSEUM)

³⁰ Sydney Sportsground Speedway, available at: <http://www.vintagespeedway.com/Sportsground.html>

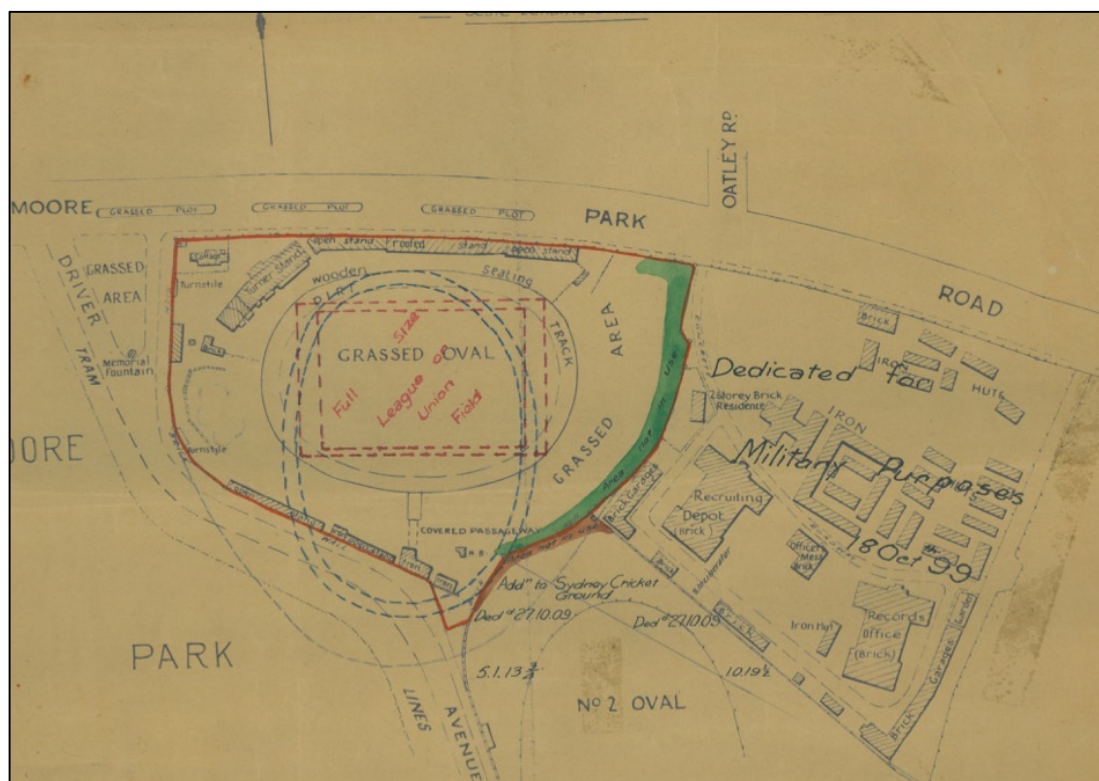


FIGURE 24: PLAN OF SYDNEY SPORTS GROUND AND ADJOINING AREAS (UNDATED). (SOURCE: SCG MUSEUM COLLECTION 17/5)



FIGURE 25: BLACK AND WHITE PHOTOGRAPH OF SYDNEY SPORTS GROUND, 1919 (IMAGE: COURTESY OF THE SCG MUSEUM)



FIGURE 26: BLACK AND WHITE PHOTOGRAPH OF SYDNEY SPORTS GROUND FEATURING THE TURNER STAND, 1919. (IMAGE: COURTESY OF THE SCG MUSEUM)



FIGURE 27: NEW SPEEDWAY TRACK AT SYDNEY SPORTS GROUND, 1937 (SOURCE: SLNSW, CALL NO. HOME AND AWAY - 8735)



FIGURE 28: NEW SPEEDWAY TRACK AT SYDNEY SPORTS GROUND, 1937 (SOURCE: SOURCE: SLNSW, CALL NO. HOME AND AWAY - 8735)



FIGURE 29: CITY OF SYDNEY – BUILDING SURVEYOR'S DETAIL SHEETS, 1949-1972: SHEET 16 – MOORE PARK (SOURCE: HISTORICAL ATLAS OF SYDNEY)



FIGURE 30: 1946 LIONEL VAN PRAGG AUSTRALIA'S FIRST WORLD CHAMPION AT THE SYDNEY SPORTSGROUND. (SOURCE: [HTTP://WWW.SPEEDWAYANDROADRACEHISTORY.COM/SYDNEY-SPORTSGROUND-SPEEDWAY.HTML](http://www.speedwayandroadracehistory.com/sydney-sportsground-speedway.html), PHOTO: DEAN DONOVAN

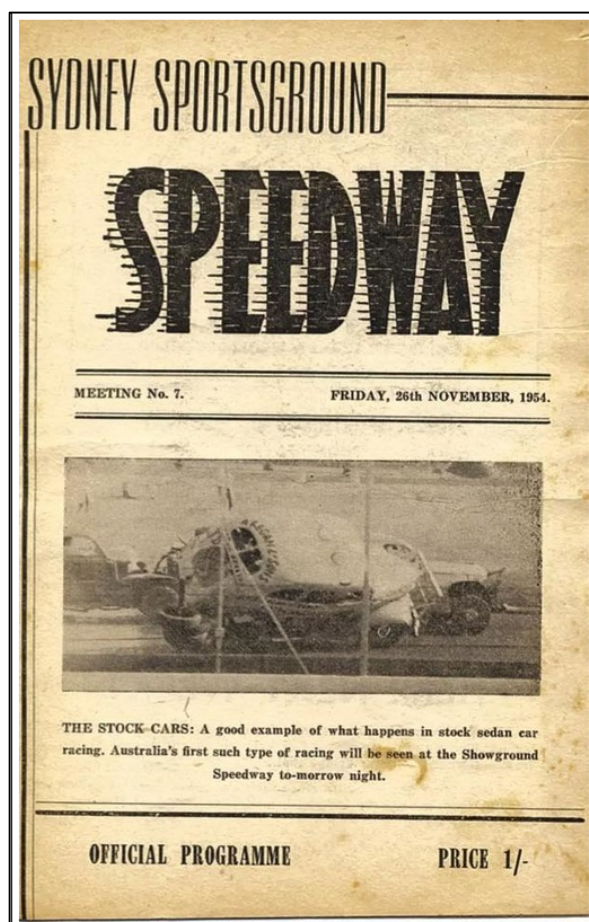


FIGURE 31: 1954 SYDNEY SPORTSGROUND SPEEDWAY PROGRAMME (SOURCE: [HTTP://WWW.SPEEDWAYANDROADRACEHISTORY.COM/SYDNEY-SPORTSGROUND-SPEEDWAY.HTML](http://www.speedwayandroadracehistory.com/sydney-sportsground-speedway.html))

3.7. Sydney Football Stadium

A Design and Construct Competition was orchestrated in August 1985 for the Sydney Football Stadium, won by notable architectural firm Philip Cox Richardson Taylor, with Ove Arup & Partners as structural and civil engineers.³¹ The SFS officially opened in January 1988 as one of Sydney's major Bicentennial projects. The construction of the SFS included the removal of all remnant structures from the Sydney Sports Ground and former military Engineers Depot, as well as the levelling and development of the former SCG Oval 2 (originally located to the north of the main SCG oval) (Figure 32). The stadium was designed to accommodate c.40,000 spectators and was constructed at a cost of \$58 million, funded mainly by the 1985 introduction of Gold Membership and Corporate Membership to the SCG.³² The design brief for the stadium included the requirement to minimise the effects of light and noise on the surrounding residential areas. The existing stadium was constructed with a distinctive continuous warped roof shape, which at the time allowed for a more efficient roof structure, while avoiding excess shading of the playing field³³

The SFS was the main competition venue for the Soccer during the Sydney Olympic Games in 2000, is home to the Sydney Roosters, Sydney Football Club, and NSW Rugby Union from 2001, as well as hosting qualifying games for the Rugby World Cup in 2003. Since its opening in 1988, the SFS has hosted many international football matches, including rugby league and rugby union tests, Bledisloe Cup matches, World Cup Football, as well as hosting boxing bouts, and many concerts and events such as the Edinburgh Military Tattoo.³⁴ For sponsorship reasons, the SFS has been known by several names during the course of its operation, most recently referred to as 'Allianz Stadium'.

Other buildings adjacent to the SFS include the NSW Cricket Centre (constructed in 1997), the Waratahs and Roosters Building (constructed in 2007), and the Sheridan building (constructed in 2008).

On 24 November 2017, the NSW Premier announced the SFS Redevelopment, which will include demolition of the existing facility and replacement with a modern, globally competitive stadium that achieves the requirements for a Tier 1 stadium to meet future requirements.

³¹ National Trust of Australia, 'Sydney Football Stadium', available from: <https://www.nationaltrust.org.au/initiatives/sydney-football-stadium/>

³² GML 2013:38

³³ Cox Architecture, 'Allianz Stadium, Moore Park, Sydney, NSW', Accessed 5 April 2018 at <http://www.coxarchitecture.com.au/project/allianz-stadium/>

³⁴ National Trust of Australia, 'Sydney Football Stadium', available from: <https://www.nationaltrust.org.au/initiatives/sydney-football-stadium/>