



Planning & Infrastructure
Sydney Harbour Foreshore Authority

Sydney Harbour Foreshore Authority Register of significant trees 2013



Overview

Introduction

A register of significant trees recognises and highlights particular trees or groups of trees that help shape the character of our precinct's natural and cultural landscapes. These special trees are inextricably linked to the quality of 'place'. They are integral parts of an ever-changing landscape through their dynamic cycle of growth, maturity, senescence and renewal. In a practical sense, the register will also provide for a range of policy measures to manage the maintenance of these special trees through their lifecycles.

The Register only addresses trees on land owned by the Authority. Precincts include The Rocks, Darling Harbour, The Bays Precinct including White Bay Power Station and Rozelle Goods Yard, Ballast Point Balmain and Luna Park North Sydney.

Purpose

The purpose of a register is to identify trees that have particular historic, aesthetic, cultural or scientific qualities that give them special value within the landscape. In most cases trees will have multiple qualities of significance, for example, a tree may have both an historic and aesthetic significance that either individually or collectively makes the tree special.

Significance is also a relative concept, whereby a tree may have significance because it is very special in its own right or is a critical component in the experience of a broader landscape or place setting. A tree may have state or local significance, whereby it has a role in defining a state significant place or activity, or its importance lies only within the context of the local landscape or a community history. Trees can also just be beautiful in their own right which gives them a special place in the hearts and minds of those who experience them.

The assessment methodology for determining the significance of trees was in accordance with the Burra Charter and based on both the criteria developed for the Register of the National Estate and with the NSW Heritage Branch guidelines – Assessing heritage significance (2001). This is a nationally consistent approach for heritage identification and assessment, and can be applied to all types of heritage places and items.

A physical examination of trees in relation to their natural occurrence or cultural history was conducted and supported through field work and examination of reports, photographs, archival material and oral evidence. The collected data was evaluated on the basis of each tree's (or group of trees) contextual relationship to other similar trees (or groups) and relative importance in terms of the following criteria:

- > a planting that has historic connection with a place, person or event
- > a planting that has botanic and scientific significance whereby it is rare, endangered or a unique example in its location
- > a planting that has an identifiable link to an indigenous community
- > a planting that has social and cultural significance whereby it has become intrinsic to a location and recognised as a special part of the community fabric
- > a planting that has aesthetic and visual significance whereby its grandeur of size, form, spread and beauty makes it an important contributor to the presentation of a landscape and in many ways defines the sense of place.

Given the often subjective nature of determining the merits of significance and to be practical in respect of the management of these assets, it is proposed to have three levels of significance with different governance paths.

Level 1 – State Heritage Register

These trees are clearly recognised as having unique State significance. Their significance lies in their powerful cultural and heritage connections to a place, historic event or person; has natural rarity or is an endangered species. Trees in this listing will be subject to a Conservation Management Plan (CMP) and are included on the NSW State Heritage Register.

Management controls: The proposed removal or major maintenance works (impacts on more than 20% of canopy or root formation over a two year period) will require two independent arborist reports, an approved Section 60 application from the NSW Heritage Branch and a development application to the appropriate approval authority. Minor maintenance works (impacts on less than 30% of canopy or root formation over a two year period) would be managed by an arborist report, a Section 57 Heritage Exemption and reference to the Authority's Director Precinct Activation and Visitor Services for approval to proceed.

The draft Register recognises the Moreton Bay and Port Jackson fig trees in Luna Park as existing State listed items.

The Port Jackson fig tree in Tumbalong Park known as 'Fred the Fig' may qualify for State listing, given its iconic status in the park and most importantly because of its scientific interest as arguably the first mature tree relocation in NSW. The Chinese Garden of Friendship in Darling Harbour may also qualify given its origins as a symbol of the cultural bonds between Australia and China in commemoration of the 1988 Bicentennial of Australia's European settlement. Further research work is required to build a suitable case for the Heritage Branch to consider these items being included on the State Register.

Level 2 – Local Heritage Register

These trees also have natural rarity or historical connections but are of local significance only. Trees in this listing will be subject to a Conservation Management Strategy (CMS) and listed on the Sydney Harbour Foreshore Authority Section 170 Heritage Register.

Management controls: Proposed removals will be subject to a normal development application to the appropriate approval authority. Major maintenance works (impacts on more than 20% of canopy or root formation over a two year period) will require an arborist report and reference to the Authority's Director Precinct Activation and Visitor Services for approval to proceed. Minor maintenance works will be subject to the Authority's Manager Operations for approval to proceed.


Level 3 – High Local Amenity Register

These trees make a special contribution to our precincts, mostly in respect of high quality amenity and aesthetics. Trees or groups of trees that define a landscape or are particularly excellent examples of a tree species or group of trees, may qualify for inclusion on this listing.

Management controls: These trees will not require management plans or strategies. Removal would be subject to a development application to the appropriate approval authority. Major maintenance works will be subject to an arborist report and referenced to the Authority's Manager Operations for approval to proceed. Minor maintenance would not require management approvals.


Schedule 1

State heritage significance

Register	
Item no.	1
Location	Luna Park, North Sydney
Botanical name	<i>Ficus macrophylla</i> , <i>Ficus rubiginosa</i>
Common name	Moreton Bay fig, Port Jackson fig
Origin	Cultural heritage
Assessment notes	<p>Extensive thematic collection, including iconic individual, group & row plantations. These four trees are monumental landmarks in themselves and reside on the top of the cliffs above Luna Park. They date from the end of the nineteenth century when the cliff top site was occupied by Northcliff house, since demolished.</p> <p>It is assumed they were part of a larger garden curtilage and are typical of the public plantings of fig trees at that time. These trees are identified with the sandstone cliff escarpment component of the Luna Park state heritage listing.</p>
Image reference	


Schedule 2

Local heritage significance with the potential for state heritage significance

Register	
Item no.	1
Location	Tumbalong Park, Darling Harbour
Botanical name	<i>Ficus rubiginosa</i>
Common name	Port Jackson fig
Origin	Cultural heritage
Assessment notes	<p>Known as 'Fred the Fig' this tree is a translocated cultural specimen. It originates from the early 20th-century Homebush Bay abattoirs site, since demolished, and is possibly a Joseph Maiden planting from that period.</p> <p>The tree was barged down the harbour in 1987, a media event in itself and is potentially the first mature tree transplant in NSW. The tree has rarity as a landmark and is a large symmetrical specimen well representing its taxa. It has high visual integrity.</p> <p>The tree is a significant component of Darling Harbour thematic collection.</p>
Image reference	


Schedule 2

Local heritage significance with the potential for state heritage significance

Register	
Item no.	2
Location	Chinese Garden of Friendship, Darling Harbour
Botanical name	Various species of trees reflecting southern China's natural landscape in the form of a cultural heritage garden
Common name	Various including black pine, sweetgum, willow, magnolia, plum, maple, pomegranate, myrtle and yew
Origin	Cultural heritage
Assessment notes	<p>The garden is a symbol of the cooperation and commitment of the local Chinese community to Australia over 200 years. The garden is a significant component of Darling Harbour thematic collection, and is internationally recognised as a fine example of a southern Chinese province garden.</p> <p>The garden was constructed to plans provided by Guangdong provincial government and part constructed with materials and tradesmen from China. There are no trees of particular individual significance but the collective of plantings, pavilions and landforms combined, make a unique landscape of potential national significance.</p>
Image reference	


Schedule 2

Local heritage significance

Register	
Item no.	3
Location	Ballast Point, Balmain
Botanical name	<i>Ficus rubiginosa</i>
Common name	Port Jackson fig
Origin	Natural heritage
Assessment notes	<p>A single self-sown and regrowth specimen of unknown age.</p> <p>A native lithophyte on rock face is highly characteristic of its type.</p> <p>Associated with the early industrial site development of retaining walls in the post Minervia House period. The tree has rarity and is a landmark large specimen tree and a fine example of its taxa.</p> <p>The tree has high integrity value.</p>
Image reference	


Schedule 2

Local heritage significance

Register	
Item no.	4
Location	White Bay Power Station, Rozelle
Botanical name	<i>Ficus rubiginosa</i>
Common name	Port Jackson fig
Origin	Natural heritage
Assessment notes	<p>A single self-sown and regrowth specimen of unknown age.</p> <p>A native lithophyte and highly characteristic of its type.</p> <p>Associated with the late/declining industrial (power station) period.</p> <p>The tree has rarity and is a landmark exceptionally large specimen tree, with a large buttressing structure and a fine example of its taxa.</p>
Image reference	


Schedule 2

Local heritage significance

Register	
Item no.	5
Location	Harrington Street, The Rocks (opposite Mission Stairs)
Botanical name	<i>Ficus rubiginosa</i>
Common name	Port Jackson fig
Origin	Natural heritage
Assessment notes	<p>A single regrowth self-sown specimen, c1970.</p> <p>A native lithophyte on sandstone wall on road-side kerb.</p> <p>The tree has rarity and is a landmark sculptural specimen; Fine example of taxa with high visual prominence and high integrity value as a survivor in otherwise harsh environment.</p> <p>Management issues includes damage to historic infrastructure.</p>
Image reference	


Schedule 2

Local heritage significance

Register	
Item no.	6
Location	Cnr. George Street and Gloucester Walk, The Rocks
Botanical name	<i>Ficus rubiginosa</i>
Common name	Port Jackson fig
Origin	Natural Heritage
Assessment notes	<p>A single regrowth self-sown specimen c 1970.</p> <p>A native lithophyte on sandstone wall on road-side kerb.</p> <p>The tree has rarity and is a landmark sculptural specimen; Fine example of taxa with high visual prominence and high integrity value as a survivor in otherwise harsh environment.</p> <p>Management issues includes damage to historic infrastructure.</p>
Image reference	


Schedule 2

Local heritage significance

Register	
Item no.	7
Location	Dawes Point Park, The Rocks
Botanical name	<i>Ficus microcarpa</i> var. <i>hillii</i> <i>F. macrophylla</i> <i>F. rubiginosa</i> <i>Phoenix canariensis</i> <i>P. reclinata</i> <i>Strelitzia nicholii</i>
Common name	Hill's weeping figs, Moreton Bay fig, Canary Island date palms, wild date palms, bird of paradise
Origin	Cultural heritage
Assessment notes	<p>A significant collection representing an eclectic planting character typical of the early 20th century. The mixed exotic and native species have high integrity value. The plantings have landmark values with high visual prominence in a harbour-side park.</p> <p><i>F. macrophylla</i> is historically significant as a pre-Sydney Harbour Bridge construction planting and likely from the 1913 city parkland planting scheme. There may be historic associations with Joseph Maiden, but this has to be determined.</p> <p><i>F. hillii</i> are multiple large specimens presented both as an avenue plantation and as single species. They date from the 1950s with contiguous inter-locking canopy and tunnel-like form framing the harbour vista.</p> <p><i>Phoenix</i> sp and <i>Strelitzia</i> sp are post-Sydney Harbour Bridge plantings but contribute to Bradfield's proposed vision of an 'Italianate' landscape setting for the bridge.</p>
Image reference	


Schedule 2

Local heritage significance

Register	
Item no.	8
Location	Circular Quay West adjacent to Overseas Passenger Terminal
Botanical name	<i>Ficus elastica</i>
Common name	Rubber tree
Origin	Cultural heritage
Assessment notes	<p>Maligned as highly invasive weed species but retained in raised circular planter during site development (1985/1988); Rarity and landmark values and an excellent example of taxa with considerable visual prominence.</p> <p>High integrity with representative value as outstanding multi-trunked specimen with distinctive aerial roots and highly sculptural form. Management issues include some recent die-back decline in the crown, possibly lack of water related.</p>
Image reference	


Schedule 2

Local heritage significance

Register	
Item no.	9
Location	Bligh and Barney Reserve, The Rocks
Botanical name	<i>Wollemi nobilis</i>
Common name	Wollemi pine
Origin	Cultural heritage
Assessment notes	Species rarity value as first generation cutting from the 'Bill Tree' classic lot 44. Highly experimental planting, as ultimate performance in an urban situation is unknown. Dedicated to Milo Dunphy by the Hon Frank Sartor, Minister for Planning, March 2006.
Image reference	 <p>The image shows a young Wollemi pine tree planted in a circular metal cage. The tree is green and appears to be in its early stages of growth. The cage is made of vertical metal bars. In the background, there are buildings and other trees, suggesting an urban environment.</p>


Schedule 2

Local heritage significance

Register	
Item no.	10
Location	Darling Quarter, Darling Harbour
Botanical name	<i>Melaleuca quinquenervia</i>
Common name	Broad-leaved paperbark
Origin	Cultural heritage
Assessment notes	<p>Single species in an informal massed plantation style but stunted due to site conditions including compacted ground and close planted spacing. Planted c1988.</p> <p>High visual and amenity value. Significant central precinct component of Darling Harbour collection.</p>
Image reference	

Schedule 3


High local amenity value*

Register	
Item no.	1
Location	Ballast Point, Balmain
Botanical name	<i>Ficus rubiginosa</i>
Common name	Port Jackson figs
Origin	Natural heritage
Assessment notes	<p>Three immature and self-sown trees. Post-industrial site association. Age undetermined but likely c1980s.</p> <p>Native lithophytes on rock face with other native regeneration. High natural integrity value.</p>
Image reference	

*Schedule 3 – only highlighted items are considered to be of “high local amenity value”.

Schedule 3


High local amenity value*

Register	
Item no.	2
Location	Essex Street, The Rocks
Botanical name	<i>Washingtonia robusta</i>
Common name	Mexican Fan palms
Origin	Cultural heritage
Assessment notes	<p>Five single species in a row plantation, likely post 1980 plantation but using semi-mature palms in the 40–50 yrs+ range. Not likely to be remnants from Maiden's (potentially but unconfirmed) c1917 central island plantation.</p> <p>High visual and amenity value and a reminder of earlier planting period.</p>
Image reference	

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Schedule 3


High local amenity value*

Register	
Item no.	3
Location	Argyle Street, The Rocks
Botanical name	<i>Populus deltoides</i> , <i>Platanus X acerifolia</i>
Common name	Cottonwood, London Plane trees
Origin	Cultural heritage
Assessment notes	<p><i>Populus sp.</i> are post-war period avenue plantings from c1950. Only remnant components remain. <i>Platanus sp.</i> are also post-war period avenue/replacement plantation/common sp.</p> <p>High visual and amenity value. Management issues include screening historic Argyle Stores facades and increasing damp issues with the building.</p>
Image reference	

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Schedule 3


High local amenity value*

Register	
Item no.	4
Location	Campbells Cove, The Rocks
Botanical name	<i>Ficus microcarpa var. hillii</i>
Common name	Hill's weeping figs
Origin	Cultural heritage
Assessment notes	Single specimen planted c1988 Bicentennial public domain upgrade works. High visual and amenity value. Superb example of species.
Image reference	

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Schedule 3


High local amenity value*

Register	
Item no.	5
Location	Campbells Cove, The Rocks
Botanical name	<i>Livistona australis</i> , <i>Washingtonia robusta</i>
Common name	Cabbage Tree palms, Mexican Fan palms
Origin	Cultural heritage
Assessment notes	Transplanted and immature cluster and row plantation. Planted c1988 Visual and amenity value, creating a border between The Rocks and Overseas Passenger Terminal back of house.
Image reference	

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Schedule 3


High local amenity value*

Register	
Item no.	6
Location	First Fleet Park, The Rocks
Botanical name	<i>Schinus areira</i>
Common name	Peppercorn trees
Origin	Cultural heritage
Assessment notes	Mature row plantation c1960s. Visual and amenity value. Species is mature and very representative of the planting style of the period.
Image reference	

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Schedule 3

High local amenity value*

Register	
Item no.	7
Location	Greenway Lane (off Argyle Street), The Rocks
Botanical name	<i>Ficus benjamina</i>
Common name	Weeping fig
Origin	Cultural Heritage
Assessment notes	<p>Outstanding specimen. Likely a pot-plant escape from c1980.</p> <p>Integrity and landmark values.</p> <p>Excellent example of taxa.</p> <p>Highly sculptural form defines special sense of place.</p>
Image reference	

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