



THE PADDINGTON SOCIETY INC
FOR COMMUNITY AND HERITAGE
EST 1964

13 August 2025 / EH

NSW Environment and Heritage

For the attention of: heritagemailbox@environment.nsw.gov.au

Dear Heritage Council Assessment team

Rushcutters Bay Park and Yarranabbe Park (SHR no. 02041)

On behalf of The Paddington Society below is our response to the Heritage Council NSW invitation for submissions concerning Woollahra Council's proposal for the Youth Recreation Facility in the State Heritage Listed Rushcutters Bay Park.

The Heritage Council will be aware of long-standing opposition to the proposal from local community groups and recreational park users, in the years prior to the State Heritage listing in 2020.

We note that applications for works and/or activities are advertised when the Department of Environment and heritage or the Heritage Council decides that:

- the proposal may materially affect the significance of the State Heritage Register item
- is in the public interest
- the application has not already been advertised by a local Council as part of an integrated development application.

We believe that the proposal, unchanged from that documented in 2022, meets those criteria.

- **In our view it is inappropriate to put such a facility into Rushcutters Bay Park, a precious green space, set at the boundary to one of Sydney's most densely populated areas.**
- **Rushcutters Bay Park is the gateway to Woollahra. The proposed location will destroy the sense of open landscape providing the forecourt to Paddington, Darling Point, Darlinghurst and Potts Point.**
- **It will have potential secondary damage to the mature row of Moreton Bay figs nearby.**
- **The proposal will transform the area with its hard surfaced 'concreted' space of 875 sq m, plus landscaping making the total area of intrusion into the parklands some 1,200 sq m.**
- **As a 'gateway' to Woollahra, Rushcutters Bay Park and Yarranabbe Park already hosts a wide range of community facilities including:**
 - Two fitness areas
 - Two tennis courts
 - Football / Cricket Oval with grandstand
 - Two open playing fields
 - Two children's playgrounds; and
 - Two coffee shops.

- Rushcutters Bay Park and Yarranabbe Parks are also well used also used for sail maintenance, dog-walking, a fitness trail, open air training, boating access and fishing.
- The parks also provide passive seating around the promenade and the venue for thousands of locals and visitors to watch New Year's Eve Fireworks.

The Youth Facility will be in the most prominent location in this significant open space.

- **The incorporation of a scooter / skateboard area, some elements of which are 2m high, a half basketball court and a 3.5m high shade structure, exacerbates the scale and visual and environmental damage this will create.**
- **Noise Impacts on neighbouring precincts and large numbers of residential apartments are only estimated**

The following are summarised from the NSW State Heritage Register (SHR) listing.

- *(The parks) reflect the influence of James Jones, Overseer for the Domains who laid out Victoria Park then Wentworth Park, incorporating sports ovals, greens and paths with lines or avenues of trees into the design, was innovative and reflected practice in England and France in the 1870s. (Historical significance)*
- *Rushcutters Bay Park has historic and aesthetic significance as a large-scaled inner-harbour foreshore informally-landscaped park, providing dramatic views to and from the harbour and surrounds. (Aesthetic significance)*
- *Rows of huge Moreton Bay figs form a mature and magnificent southern boundary to this bayside common and a distinctive entry into the Municipality of Woollahra along New South Head Road. (Aesthetic significance)*
- *There are few other parks in NSW of such grand scale and engineering scope with large open spaces, still relatively intact and not compromised by major infill or other incursions. (Rarity)*

The Paddington Society shares the views noted above.

- **In our view it is totally inappropriate to shoe-horn this proposal into this heritage listed parkland.**
- We have previously recommended - and continue to recommend - that Woollahra Council, in cooperation with the City of Sydney Council, considers other locations such as Centennial Park, which is large enough to absorb the facility without detrimental impact.

The Paddington Society's concerns regarding the proposal are based on all of the above and we trust that the Assessment team will take our concerns into consideration during the assessment.

Yours faithfully



Esther Hayter President The Paddington Society M: 0411 109 770 E: hayters@bigpond.net.au