

Your Parramatta Park 2030

CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT PLAN and PLAN OF MANAGEMENT



Draft Vision

Parramatta Park is **where history comes alive**, a place that respects, preserves and celebrates the richness of its past and present.

In the **heart of Parramatta**, it is a vital link to the river and the natural world, an urban respite and a place for recreation.



Why are we consulting with the community?

We are seeking your views to guide the long-term direction of Parramatta Park, as we prepare the new Conservation Management Plan and Plan of Management. Be part of the bright future that retains what we know and love about Parramatta Park. Your feedback will be incorporated into the future plans.



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Your Parramatta Park 2030

CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT PLAN and PLAN OF MANAGEMENT



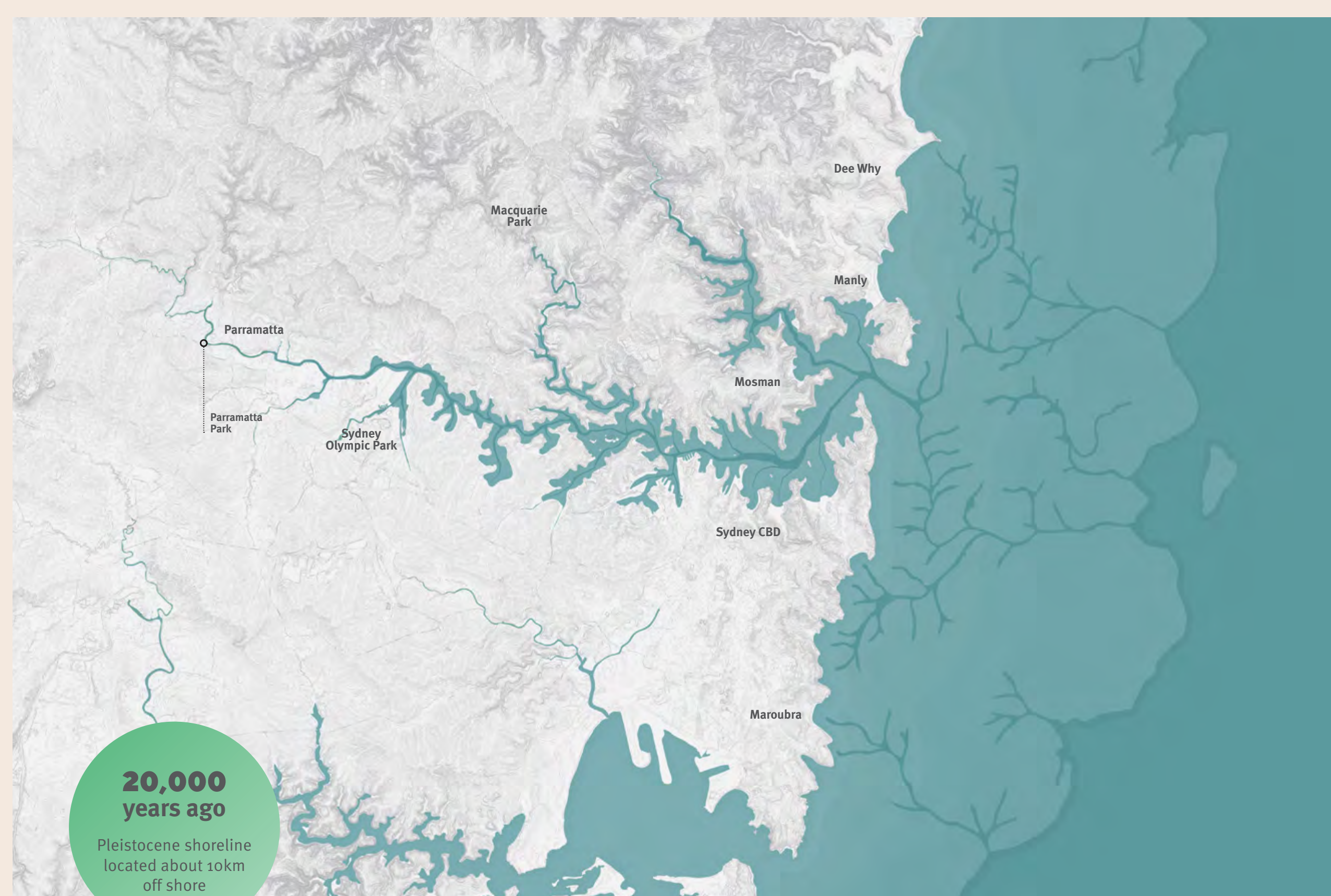
An Ancient River

The evolution of the Parramatta River and its valley lies in the distant past.

The physical nature and landscape setting of the river has changed dramatically over time and is today a drowned river valley estuary. Sea-levels reached their present level around 7,500 years ago. During earlier times when sea levels were lower, Parramatta was an inland freshwater valley on the periphery of the coastal plain.

At this time Parramatta was a significantly colder, windier and drier place than compared to today, it had different looking vegetation and probably different looking animals.

The buried sand of the ancient river bed and banks are known today as a geological layer called the Parramatta Sand Body. This sand body exists today under a large part of Parramatta Park.



An Ancient Land and its Ecology

At Rose Hill the heat on the 10th and 11th of the month, on which days at Sydney the thermometer stood in the shade at 1050, was so excessive...that immense numbers of the large fox bat were seen hanging at the boughs of the trees, and dropping into the water, which, by their stench, was rendered unwholesome. ... During the excessive heat many dropped dead while on the wing; and it was remarkable, that those which were picked up were chiefly males.

David Collins, Esq., An Account of the English Colony in New South Wales, London, 1798



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Your Parramatta Park 2030

CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT PLAN and PLAN OF MANAGEMENT



Aboriginal People and Culture

Archaeological evidence from Parramatta Park places the first Aboriginal People on the scene by at least 36 – 37,000 years ago. This evidence has come from the buried Parramatta Sand Body.

The people that were present in Parramatta during the Pleistocene have left only a light, but persistent archaeological record of their time spent here.

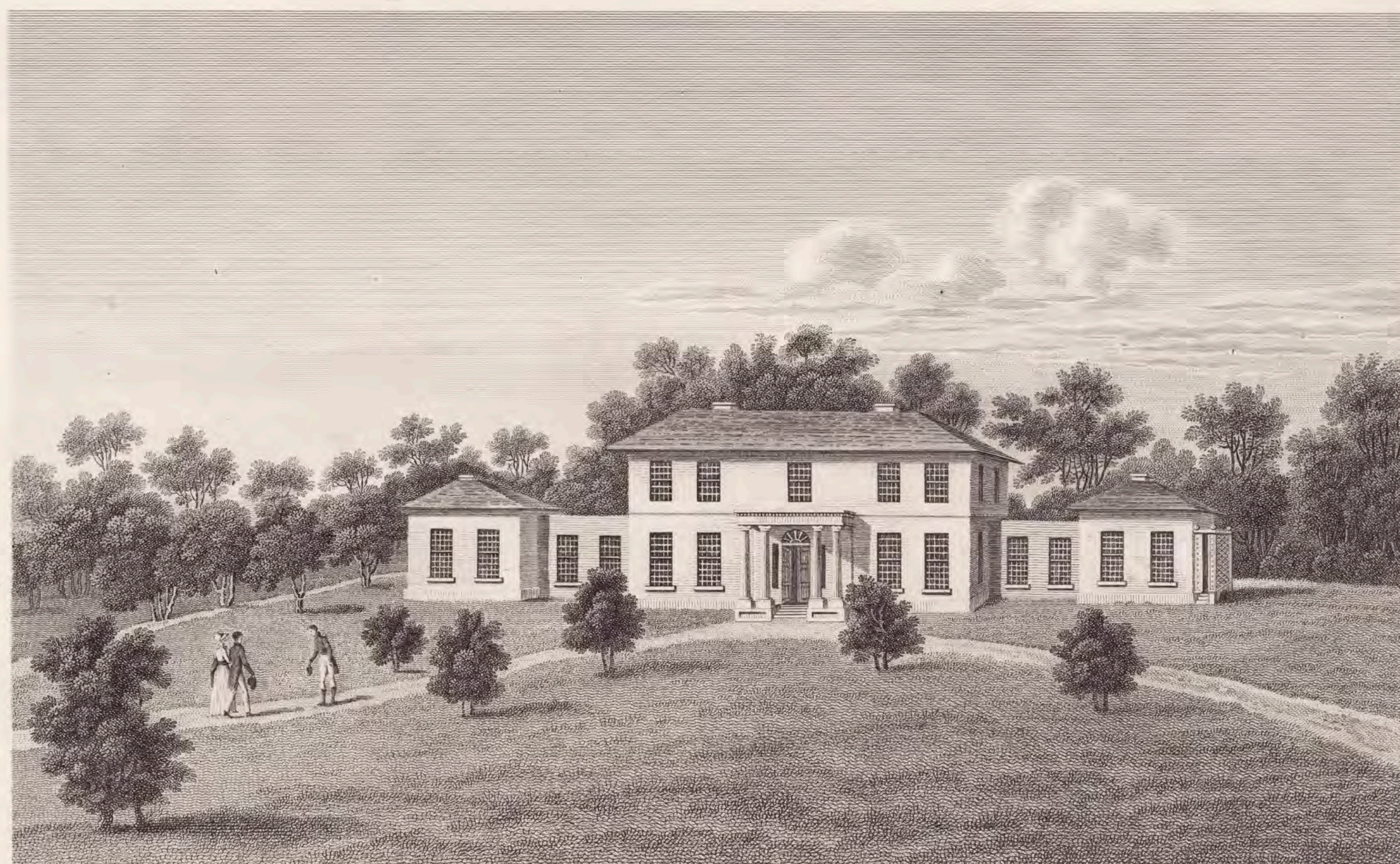
The surviving tangible evidence consists of only the most durable materials people either brought with them from elsewhere, often from long distances, or items made in Parramatta that were subsequently lost, thrown away, or saved and stored for reuse another time.

British Convict Colony

As part of the establishment of a British penal colony at Sydney Cove in the early months of 1788, Governor Arthur Phillip lead an exploration party up the river into the land of the Barramattagal people.

Convicts lived on the land in huts, overseers in cottages and the Governor, from 1797, in the newly built Government House. This house became the major point of focus and alignment for the town plan of Parramatta, Australia's first fully planned Town.

It continued as a seat of active government in the 1820s and was actively occupied by Governors until the 1840s, just beyond the formal cessation of convict transportation and the end of the convict era.



Dess. par Marchais d'après un dessin communiqué.

Gravé par Schroeder.

PORT-JACKSON. VUE DE LA MAISON DU GOUVERNEUR, A PARRAMATTA.

Early Agriculture and Grazing



Over a very long period, probably thousands of years, the land was actively managed by the Aboriginal people through activities such as controlled burning to sustain and manage hunting grounds for mammals and other food sources.

A British colonial government farm was established by the river in 1788, the first successful farming venture of the colony.

This farm saved the new colony from starvation. By August 1801, land clearing for a new farm had begun at Castle Hill to replace this farm whose fields had by then been 'worn-out'.

The British also understood and saw this land as pastureland and at the domain Creek established a large government compound for cattle in 1788.



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Your Parramatta Park 2030

CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT PLAN and PLAN OF MANAGEMENT



A Tradition of Recreation and Sport

The sound of swimming and bathing would have been heard in The Crescent in the early decades of the colony, before there were fences and convict compounds. By the 1810s people were being warned off the domain. In the 1840s in the face of public demand Governor Fitzroy set aside the land on the north side of the river for a public racecourse.

With the creation of the Park in 1857 organised sport and private recreation flourished in the Park with the establishment of clubs and private leisure activities such as picnics, carriage driving, cricket, lawn bowls, public dancing, bicycle riding, swimming and in the 20th-century golf, tennis, car racing, steam trains, rugby league, public foot races and school sports carnivals.



A Picturesque Park Landscape

The land was appreciated as a park long before it was formally a public park governed by public trustees.

The first Europeans were struck by the conformity of the lands to their notion of parkland beauty. Early written accounts of the colony by Arthur Phillip, Watkin Tench, William Dawes and many others wrote about, and drew its picturesque beauty. Governor and Mrs Macquarie planted trees, orchards, flower gardens and built a formal gateway along a long sweeping carriage drive in the spirit of the English picturesque landscape tradition.

In the second half of the 19th century the park trustees further embellished the picturesque character of the park by planting avenues of oak trees and flower gardens and building ornamental gatehouses, bridges, pavilions and the first monument to war. In 1919 the park was declared to be significant as a National park, the third in the country.

In the early 20th-century as the older plantings of trees began to perish a new set of plantings inspired by Australian native trees was added, along with successive plantings of oaks and other familiar trees to replace those planted by the early trustees.



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Your Parramatta Park 2030

CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT PLAN and PLAN OF MANAGEMENT



The Heritage Significance of Parramatta Park

Parramatta Park is significant for its Aboriginal, Early Colonial & Vice Regal, Picturesque Park Landscape and Natural Heritage Values.

It was actively managed over a very long period, probably thousands of years, by Aboriginal Peoples who shaped the landscape much appreciated by the early colonialists. Its layout was further shaped by Governor and Mrs Macquarie to create a formal picturesque setting for their significantly improved Old Government House.

Parramatta Park was one of the earliest public parks in Australia and remains to this day a significant public recreation park for the people of Parramatta.

The Aboriginal Archaeological Landscape known as the Parramatta Sand Body is the ancient river bed and banks of the Parramatta River that runs under part of Parramatta Park. It has special significance to the local Aboriginal People whose ancestors lived on, and used, the sand body for many thousands of years. It is a tangible link with their cultural past.

Parramatta Park was formed out of part of the former Government Domain of Old Government House. It is the oldest surviving Domain of a Government House in Australia and is an enduring symbol of early British settlement in Australia, and the role Old Government House played as a seat of Colonial Government. It was also a place of early British Government enterprise including farming and grazing.

The Park's Natural Heritage includes some very old trees, such as the Melaleuca near Coleman Oval, the native Cumberland Plain Woodland on The Crescent ridgeline, the nationally significant Grey-headed Flying-fox camp along the river and is significant as a refuge for native fauna in an urban environment including birds, reptiles and an echidna.

It is one of the 11 Australian Convict Sites on the UNESCO World Heritage Register. The heritage significance of the Park has also been recognised and heritage listed by National, State and Local governments as well as the National Trust of Australia.

A Conservation Management Plan and Plan of Management

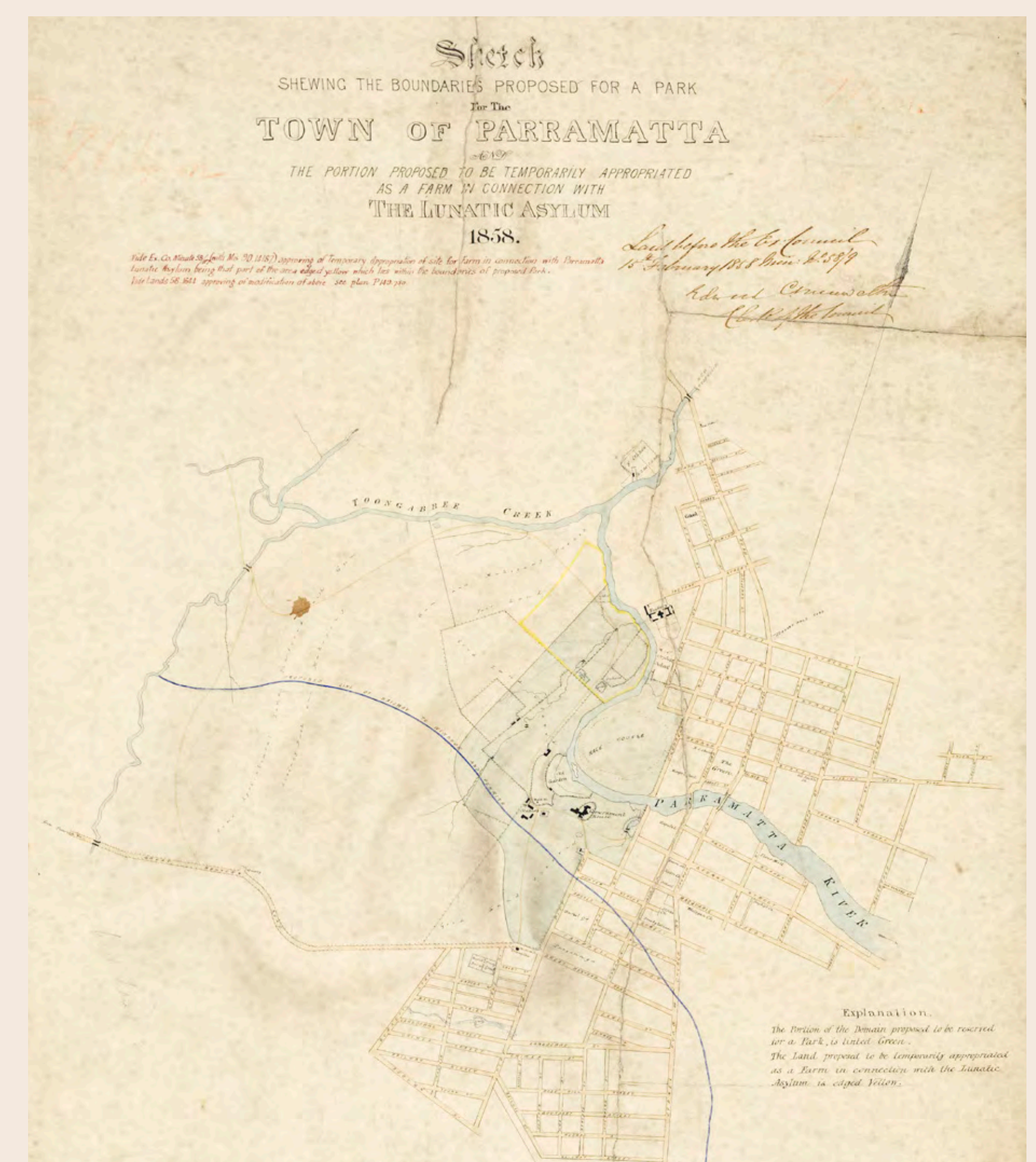
Parramatta Park Trust is preparing a new Conservation Management Plan and a Plan of Management for Parramatta Park.

The Conservation Management Plan will set out the heritage values and significance of the Park and provide a set of heritage policies for its future management.

The Plan of Management will set out a framework for the operations and further activations the Trust will undertake in the Park over the next 10 years.

These two documents will be combined to create a single framework for the ongoing management of the Park. This will ensure all aspects of the Park's heritage significance is considered in its ongoing operations and further activations.

An example of this is how the Trust recently planned and delivered the re-vegetation works for the Grey-headed Flying-fox camp and foraging zones along the Parramatta River near Little Coogee.



A case study

In 2018 the Trust undertook a planting project to secure the ongoing viability of the Park's Grey-headed Flying-fox camp through the re-vegetation of the River-flat Eucalyptus Forest where they live and forage along the Parramatta River.

The heritage values of the Park are complex and varied and include the Aboriginal and Early Colonial cultural landscapes, above and below ground. The principles set out in the Parks' current Conservation Management Plan defined and guided the direction of the project with these values in mind. Through careful site analysis the Trust was able to locate the new planting works in areas that did not impact the Ancient Aboriginal archaeological landscape and responded to the setting of the World Heritage-listed Early Colonial Cultural landscape.



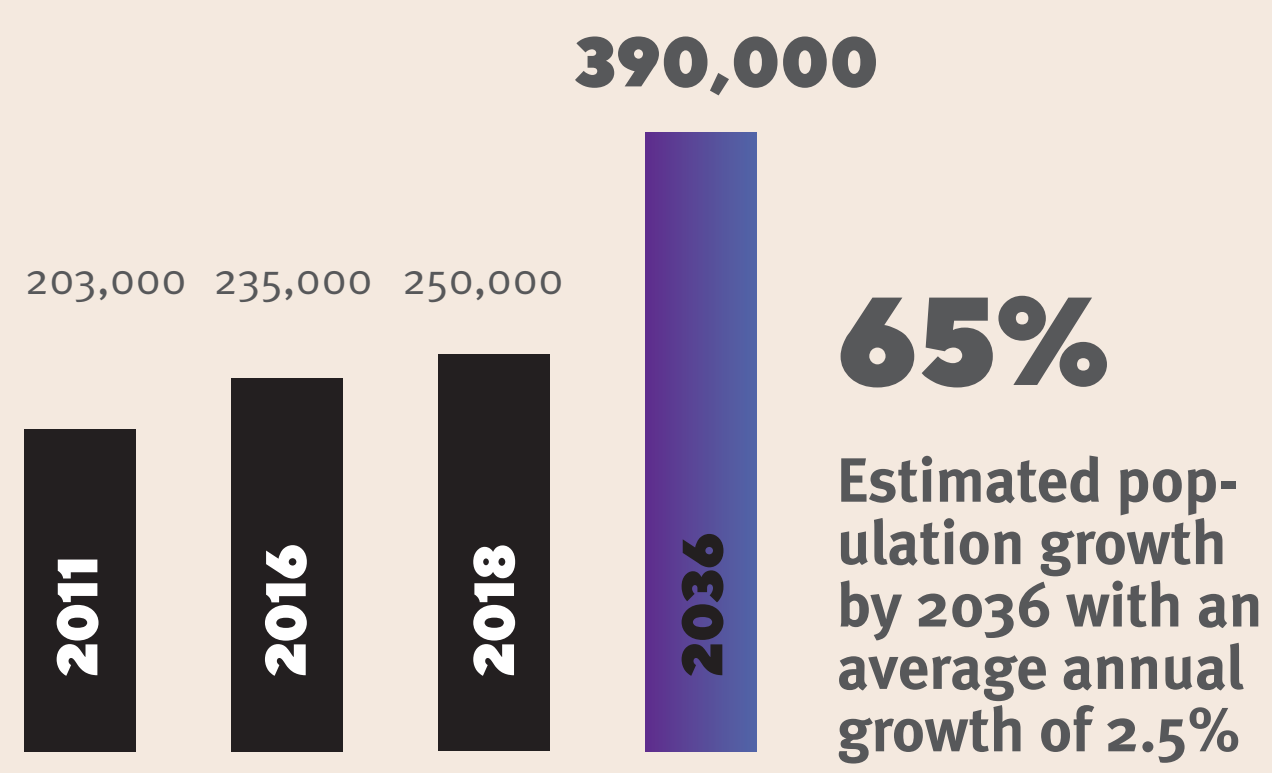
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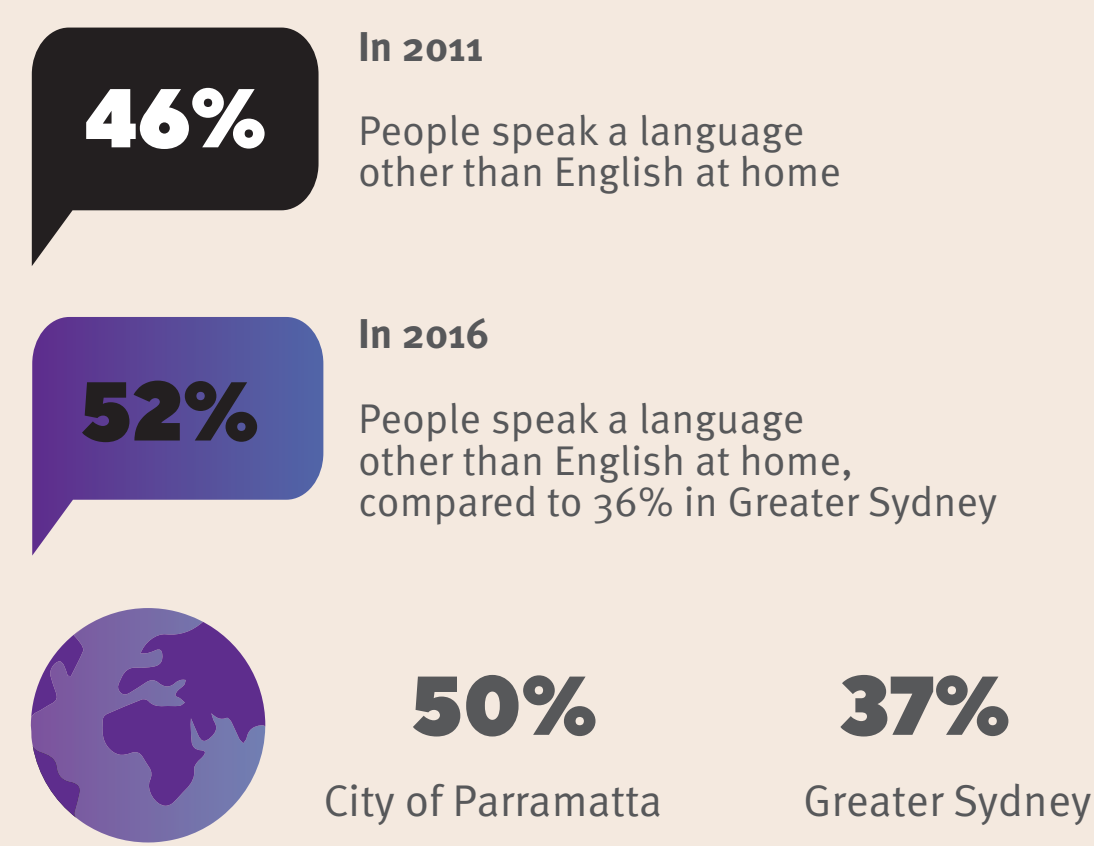
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A Growing, Changing Greater Parramatta

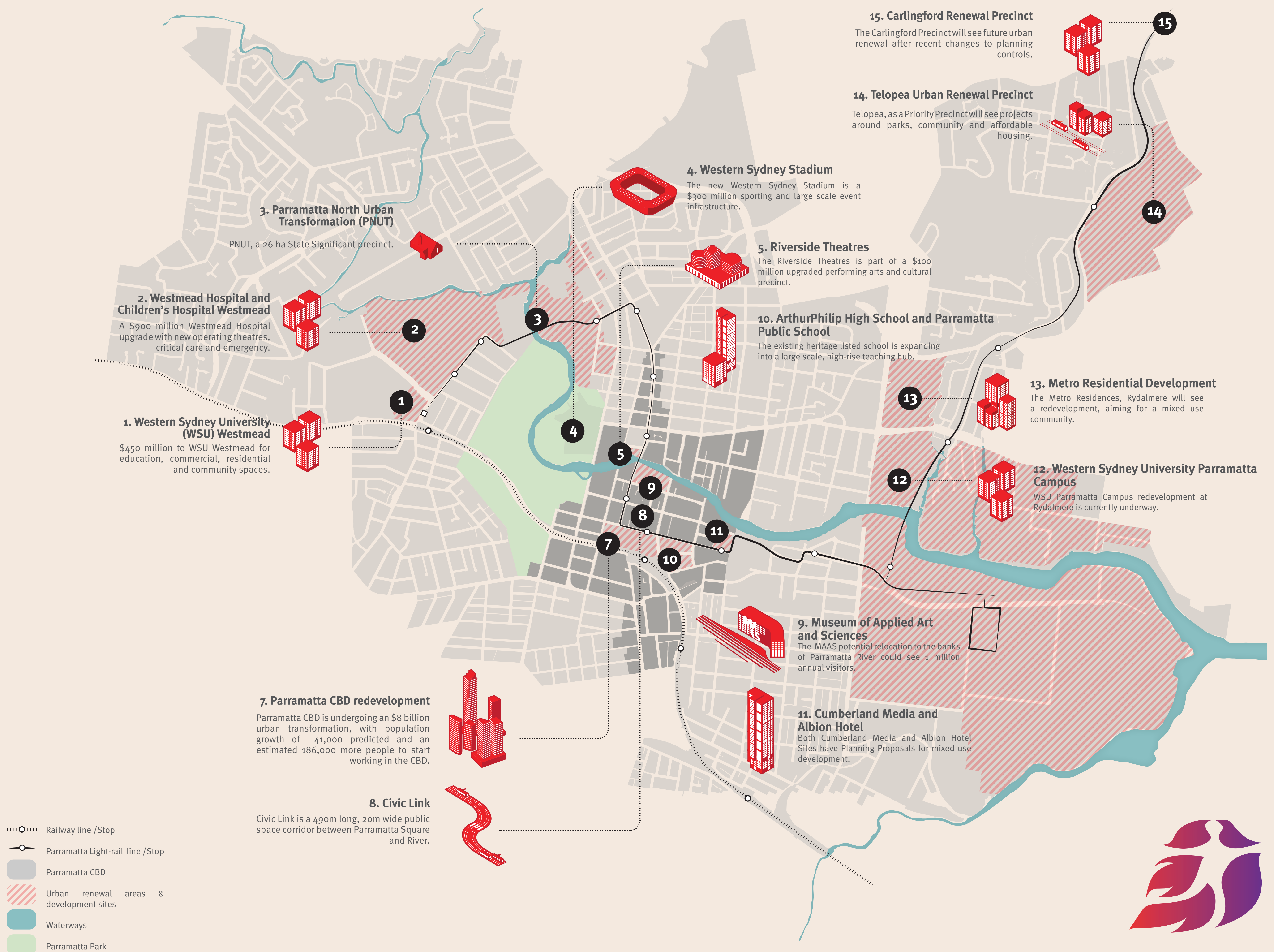
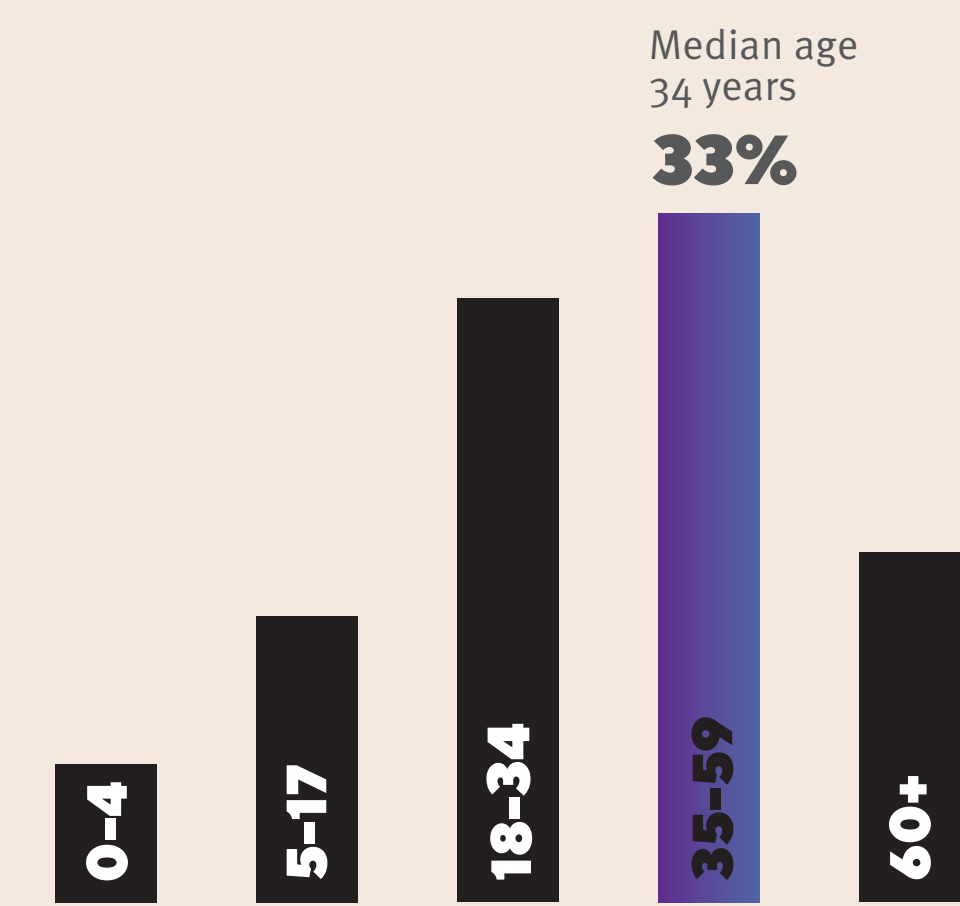
Fast residential population growth



Diverse communities



Young & family oriented



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CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT PLAN and PLAN OF MANAGEMENT



Planning for the Future

Draft Defining Principles

In safeguarding the future of Parramatta Park, the Trust has developed a set of draft Defining Principles to :

Respect and protect cultural and natural heritage

Identify, conserve, protect, restore, manage, enjoy, interpret

Be good custodians

Respect, considered, conservative, pride

Be the heart of the River City

Connectedness, engagement, destination, icon, accessible

Enhance health and wellbeing

Urban respite, recreate, play, rest

Contribute to the vibrancy and visitor economy of Greater Parramatta

Events, visitors, tourism

Work in partnership

Aboriginal community groups, Local and State Government, business, partners, sporting groups, schools, community

Be sustainable

Environmental, social, financial

Draft Strategic Objectives to 2030

Draft Strategic Objectives have been prepared to ensure the Vision is achieved and the heritage values of the Park are respected –

OBJECTIVE 1

Protect, conserve and celebrate the natural and cultural heritage values

OBJECTIVE 2

Increase community participation, activation and engagement

OBJECTIVE 3

Create linkages and connections

OBJECTIVE 4

Restore and manage the Park in a sustainable way



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Draft Key Actions

Protect, conserve and celebrate natural and cultural heritage values

Some of the ways we are proposing to do this are :

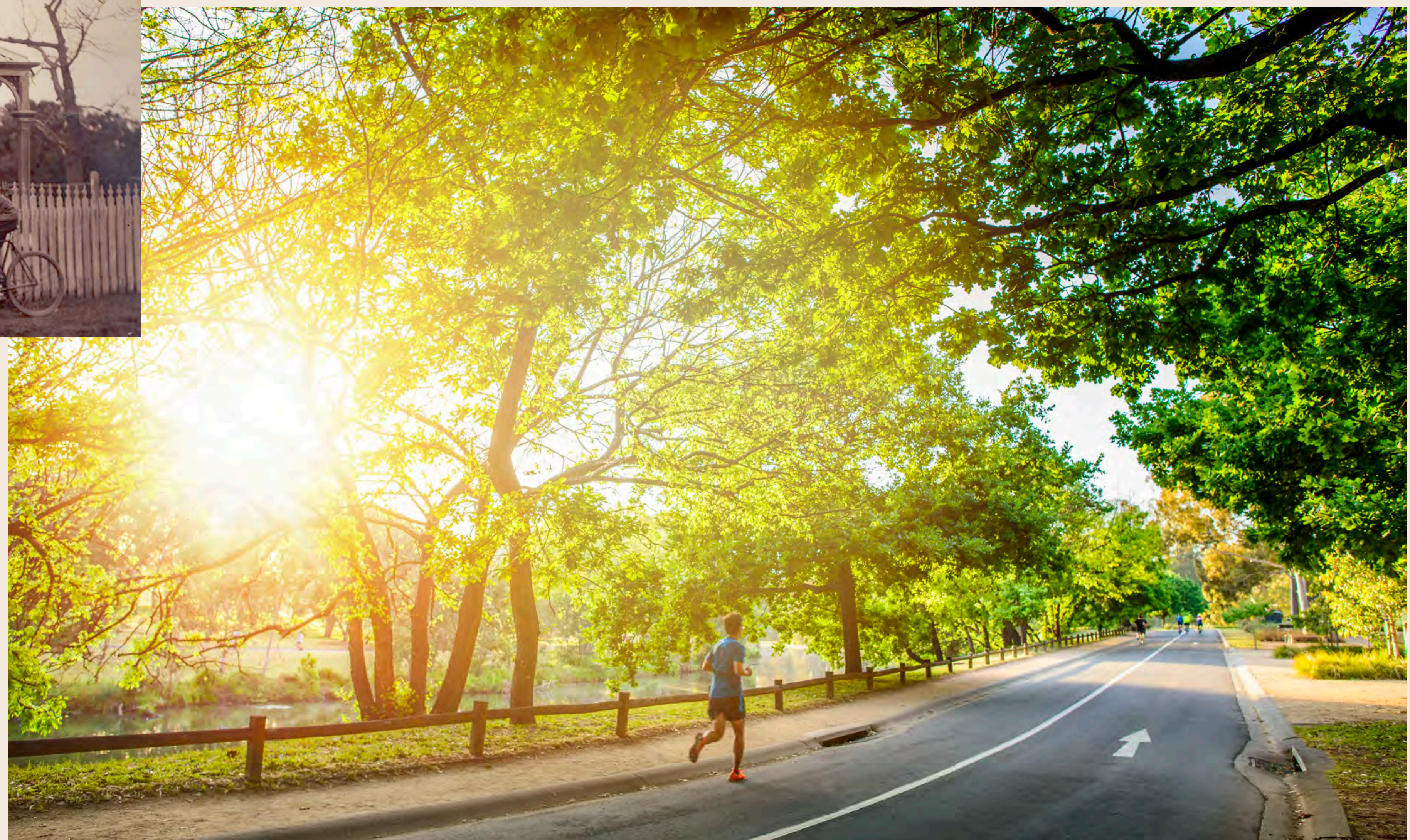
- Work with Aboriginal and heritage groups and the community to identify and explore heritage values
- Continue to protect and conserve the heritage fabric of the Park
- Provide online public access to existing research and collections
- Continue to undertake bushland restoration
- Improve and stabilise the river banks and tell the stories and cultural significance of the river through interpretation and activation.



Increase participation, activation and engagement

Some of the ways we are proposing to do this are :

- Expand recreation and informal sport opportunities throughout the Park for residents, schools, tertiary institutions and office workers
- Allow for the proposed Parramatta Aquatic Centre at Mays Hill
- Expand our diverse annual events program at The Crescent and elsewhere allowing the Park to appeal to a broad audience
- Tell the stories of the Park through events, programs and interpretation
- Continue to expand the use of existing ovals and pitches in the Park for informal sports.



Create linkages and connections

Some of the ways we are proposing to do this are :

- Increase opportunities for walking and cycling in the Park
- Reduce cars in the Park
- Provide lit night time walking connections from Parramatta CBD to Westmead and from the Park to the Western Sydney Stadium
- Provide new bridges over the Parramatta River and the railway lines to better connect the precincts of the Park and to connect destinations outside the Park through the Park
- Work with our partners and neighbours to connect these new linkages with the broader Parramatta walking and cycling networks

Restore and manage the Park in a sustainable way

Some of the ways we are proposing to do this are :

- Develop a heritage asset restoration and management program
- Develop a tree replacement planting plan and program for the Park
- Investigate the potential to provide smart technologies within the Park such as electric car charging points, smart metering and a Wifi network
- Develop a long-term irrigation strategy for the Park
- Review waste collection and recycling methods to achieve greater sustainability



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Your Parramatta Park 2030

CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT PLAN and PLAN OF MANAGEMENT



Thank you for taking the time to talk to us about the future of Parramatta Park.

We have set up an online survey. Please visit parrapark.com.au for further information.



You will be able to have your say again. We will be seeking feedback on the Draft Conservation Management Plan and Plan of Management when it goes on exhibition later this year.

Like to stay in touch? Please leave your details with the project team if you have not already and we will let you know when the draft Plan goes on exhibition.



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