

THE NATIONAL TRUST OF AUSTRALIA (NEW SOUTH WALES) POLICY ON PUBLIC PARKS AND GARDENS

PREAMBLE

The Trust commenced entering parks on the National Trust Register in May, 1976 with the entry of the Royal Botanic Gardens and Domain, Sydney and Centennial Park. Hyde Park, Sydney was listed in 1986. Approximately 100 parks have been now entered on the Trust Register, the most recent being the Isabel Fidler Memorial Garden at Sydney University, the Japanese Garden and Cultural Centre at Cowra and the Chinese Garden of Friendship at Darling Harbour.

In 1993 the National Trust published “Urban Parks of Heritage Significance – A Collection of Essays on the History, Conservation and Management of Urban Parks”ⁱ, an initiative of the Trust’s Urban Parks Committee which was formed in 1986. In 1990 the Trust’s Parks & Gardens Committee was formed, taking over the role of the Urban Parks Committee and in 2011 the Parks & Gardens Committee became part of the Landscape Heritage Advocacy Committee.

POLICY

1. The National Trust Register will continue to be an important cornerstone for the Trust’s advocacy to promote recognition of the heritage values of public parks and gardens and the Trust will continue to list important public parks and gardens on its Register.
2. The National Trust will continue to educate and advise the community on the values of public parks and gardens (nature conservation, Aboriginal heritage, scenic, scientific, historic, educational, recreational, social and green space and wildlife corridors/habitat), and on their proper care and management.
3. The National Trust will continue to take any action it considers appropriate when parks and gardens it considers important are threatened by unwise planning, or damaging development/land use practices.
4. The National Trust recommends the preparation of plans of management for public parks and gardens, the process beginning with an assessment of each park or garden’s significance by way of historic research and analysis. Management plans should include management objectives based on an understanding of a park or garden’s cultural significance and strategies for achieving the objectives including priorities for action, proposals for staging, budgets and sources of finance and the appropriateness of conservation reserves or new planning and design.
5. The National Trust accepts that mature trees in parks and gardens will reach the end of their life and will need to be replaced, not always by the same species if a disease prevents this.
6. The National Trust urges that the provision of new parks and gardens should keep pace with increasing urban density.
7. Where parks have been used for the siting of leased clubs and that use is ceasing, the Trust, in the first instance, will lobby for the return of that site to general public use.
8. Accepting that if parks and gardens are to remain an important focus for the community there may be occasions when changes may be considered necessary, e.g. a change of use or new infrastructure. The Trust urges that care should be taken in the design and placement of these structures to ensure that they do not compromise the original park or garden design and that their addition is supported or allowed for in the park or garden Conservation Management Plan.

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ⁱ *Urban Parks of Heritage Significance – A Collection of Essays on the History, Conservation and Management of Urban Parks*, The National Trust Urban Parks Committee, 1993