



## POSITION PAPER

### WHITE CITY, PADDINGTON

#### NATIONAL TRUST INVOLVEMENT

In 1998, as a key stakeholder, the National Trust joined the White City Masterplan Reference Group. The Masterplan was intended to guide the upgrade of facilities for the White City Tennis Club and the future use and development of the site as Tennis New South Wales moved its operations from White City to Olympic Park, Homebush.

In February 2000, the National Trust expressed its concerns that a major redevelopment proposal for White City posed very serious problems and exacerbation of flooding as a consequence of the intention to raise the level of the land where the tennis courts were sited. The Trust resolved to oppose the development and participated in a rally which the Trust publicised to its members. Other concerns were the transformation of an open, essentially undeveloped area into a developed area and the precedent that would be set in transforming an area zoned Private Open Space into a residential zoning. In July 2000, the Trust developed a Position Statement on White City highlighting the importance of the open space and heritage values of the site and the maintenance of natural ground levels and ecological systems.

In August 2000 Woollahra Council rejected the rezoning application for White City lodged by Tennis NSW on the grounds of the site's open space significance, the 'excessive magnitude' of the scheme and its failure to demonstrate 'clear and tangible benefits' to the community. White City was also listed on the Register of the National Estate.

In November, 2002 the National Trust strongly opposed a draft Local Environmental Plan and Development Control Plan for the White City site saying that there would be a negative impact on cultural and social significance, overshadowing and an impact on views, a lack of adaptive re-use of historic elements and a failure to recognise the heritage significance of White City.

In May, 2004, following a public hearing, Woollahra Council resolved to not proceed with the Local Environmental Plan as proposed buildings would have impacts on the cultural and heritage significance of the site. The Council sought to preserve the valley floor for open space and recreational purposes.

In September 2007, Woollahra Council adopted a White City Development Control Plan. White City was bought by the Hakoah Club in 2010. Hakoah's early plans for the development include tennis courts, an indoor multi-use sporting complex, pool and childcare facilities. It is reported that Council is considering amendments to the new LEP, including its height controls and heritage listings and amendments to the existing site specific DCP at the request of the Hakoah Club.

#### NATIONAL TRUST POSITION

- The Trust considers White City to be a site of high heritage significance for its contribution to the international perception of Australia as a world-class sporting nation, through it serving as the venue for many international tennis events. and an important area of green, open space for Woollahra Local Government Area and eastern Sydney residents.
- It would be inconceivable for either Kooyong or North Sydney Pool to be demolished, as had been proposed for the White City Centre northern and southern grandstands.
- The significance of the grounds as remnant green space requires that the views within the site from the surrounding suburbs towards Rushcutters Bay remain.
- The natural ground level and ecological systems on the site should be maintained.
- The National Trust maintains a very strong interest in the future of this site and appreciates Woollahra Council's notification of any rezoning, DCP amendment or redevelopment proposals.

#### ACTION TO PROMOTE THE TRUST'S POSITION

The Trust will prepare a White City National Trust Register Listing Proposal based on the August 2000 Register of the National Estate Listing and Woollahra Council's 2013 State Heritage Draft Inventory Sheet.

The Trust will monitor and comment upon redevelopment, rezoning and DCP amendment proposals in line with the its adopted Position and in terms of the long-term conservation of the heritage values as set out in the National Trust Register Listing Report for White City.