



**DRAFT HERITAGE STUDY**  
**and**  
**REVIEW OF PROPOSED**  
**LANDSCAPE MASTER PLAN**  
**of the**  
**McELHONE RESERVE**



**Prepared for South Sydney City Council**

**by**

**Mayne-Wilson & Associates**  
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## The McElhone Reserve- Heritage Report

### 1.0 Introduction

#### 1.1 Background

The McElhone Reserve was created after Sydney City Council acquired three vacant lots in front of Elizabeth Bay House in 1948-9, 22 years after they had been put up for auction but not sold in 1927. These lots – 4, 5 and 6 – once comprised the sweeping lawns that served as a forecourt to Elizabeth Bay House, serving the dual purpose of displaying the House as an elegant marine villa when viewed from the Harbour, and of facilitating the enjoyment of the superb views from the House to the Harbour, right down to the Heads. It was a miracle that these three lots had remained unsold, despite a further attempt in 1934. It is possible that the House itself had generated such awe and respect, and that its visual relationship with the Harbour was so well understood, which had stayed the hand of prospective bidders. However, the onset of the Great Depression and the subsequent involvement of Australia in World War II probably had a lot to do with that. The House itself was enduring a period of neglect during this time, and was used as a boarding house for artists.

Shortly after purchasing the land, Sydney City Council had the site cleared, and requested Ilmar Berzins, a landscape designer on its staff, to prepare a park design. Just what instructions Berzins was given are not known, but it would appear that the Council principally envisaged the creation of a municipal park to serve the neighbourhood. It is not known if Berzins was told to pay heed to the original role of this open space as the forecourt to *Elizabeth Bay House*, although there were those in the Council who clearly placed importance on maintaining the views between it and the Harbour (see below). However, he appears not to have been told to re-establish its relationship to the House, nor to attempt to recreate its original layout and planting. In the event, he created a design which paid heed to the open space and natural rock features of the site, and whose plantings did not obstruct the two-way views between House and Harbour. He re-established extensive lawns on the site, introduced water by means of informal ponds, and provided for shade around the park edges. To that extent, therefore, he respected the origin and context of the original forecourt, for which we all are grateful.

Over the ensuing decades, local residents came to love and respect this park, and it was well maintained by Sydney City Council, to the extent of winning several garden competitions run by the *Sydney Morning Herald* in the early 1970s. For the last eleven years it has been managed by South Sydney City Council, and as the Reserve's fabric became worn, and plants matured and became over-grown or senescent, a little more intervention was required. In the process, incremental changes were made to the detail, the cumulative effect of which has caused subtle changes to its character. This, in turn, generated concern among perceptive residents and users, to the point where a petition containing approximately 250 signatures was put to South Sydney City Council, requesting the reinstatement of some plantings and removal of new pond edging. Because it became apparent that, in this case, the devil lay truly in the detail, Council decided that a proper heritage study should be prepared which would provide professional guidance for future management and maintenance. That is the purpose of this Report

#### 1.2 Aims

To achieve the above, Council engaged Mayne-Wilson & Associates, heritage landscape consultants, to prepare a heritage study which would provide reliable historic information on the creation and evolution of the Reserve, identify its key values, and give guidance for its future management in a way that would satisfy residents. In addition, the consultants were requested to review the draft landscape master plan which Council officers had prepared, and provide advice on what changes or additions may be desirable. The community was to be consulted during this process by means of workshops and invitations to make submissions directly to the consultants. This Report therefore has been prepared to satisfy this brief.

### 1.3 The Study Area

The study area (to be referred to henceforth as 'the site') comprises the McElhone Reserve, an open space bounded on the north by Billyard Avenue, on the west and south by Onslow Avenue, and on the east by two tall apartment blocks, in the suburb of Elizabeth Bay. Directly across Onslow Avenue stands *Elizabeth Bay House*, the historic mansion to which the site once served as an open, grassed forecourt. The location of these elements is shown in figure 1.

### 1.4 Methodology

The consultants, as their first step, sought and obtained from the Curator of *Elizabeth Bay House*, Mr Scott Carlin, and from the Historic Houses Trust at Lyndhurst, relevant historic information about the original garden installed by Alexander Macleay, Colonial Secretary for NSW between 1827 and 1837<sup>1</sup>. They then obtained relevant information and documents from the archives of Sydney City Council (for the period up to 1988) and from South Sydney Council for the later period. From these sources, the consultants acquired a good understanding of the site as it had evolved since 1827.

Included in the South Sydney Council files were letters and a petition from local residents expressing their concern about actions which had been taken in the park which they considered diminished its aesthetic qualities and established character substantially. As a consequence of reading these, the consultants suggested to the Council that a park user survey should be undertaken to ascertain what users liked and disliked about the park, what they used it for, and whether they would like any changes or improvements made. Council agreed to this proposal, and interviews were conducted during a wide range of hours when it was anticipated that different types of users would be available to interview, and different uses and functions may occur.

The consultants also undertook a detailed site analysis of the fabric of the park, focussing particularly on its vegetation and stonework, as well as its two-way visual catchment between *Elizabeth Bay House* and the Harbour. Its more subtle perceptual qualities were also recorded, such as the separate 'garden rooms' created by the plantings above the ponds; the changes in visibility of views to the Harbour (including the intrusiveness of rooftops of the large buildings below Billyard Avenue) as one moved about the park; the limited availability of shade; and the substantial degree of overlooking from tall, surrounding buildings.

Provision was made by the Council for consulting local residents about their views on the park, not only through the park user survey but by inviting them to correspond directly with the consultants and to attend two workshops, the first of which was held on 22 January 2001. Prior to this, the consultants had held discussions with Scott Carlin on 21 December 2000, and on 6 January 2001 with some members of the informal group of Friends of the McElhone Reserve. As a result of these initiatives, the consultants came to achieve a good understanding of the issues that concerned the local community as well those with a professional understanding of the heritage, aesthetics, and management of the park.

At the Community Consultative Meeting on 22 January, the consultants put on display 14 sheets which summarised their finding about the origins, evolution, design, and use of the Reserve between 1827 and the year 2000. Warwick Mayne-Wilson summarised the findings his firm had made and outlined the issues he had identified from the park user survey and his many discussions that must be addressed. He drew attention to the need to reach a sensitive balance between competing uses and perceptions over the last 175 years, and concluded by outlining what he suggested as desirable future works. These generally were endorsed by those present at the meeting, and commented upon by the Reserve's gardener, Kerry Rolfe in a supportive way. In the course of the discussion, considerable interest was expressed by some

<sup>1</sup> Macleay remained a respected figure, and was elected Speaker of the first Legislative Council in 1843. Source: Carlin, S. 2000 *Elizabeth Bay House: A History & Guide*. Historic Houses of Trust of NSW.

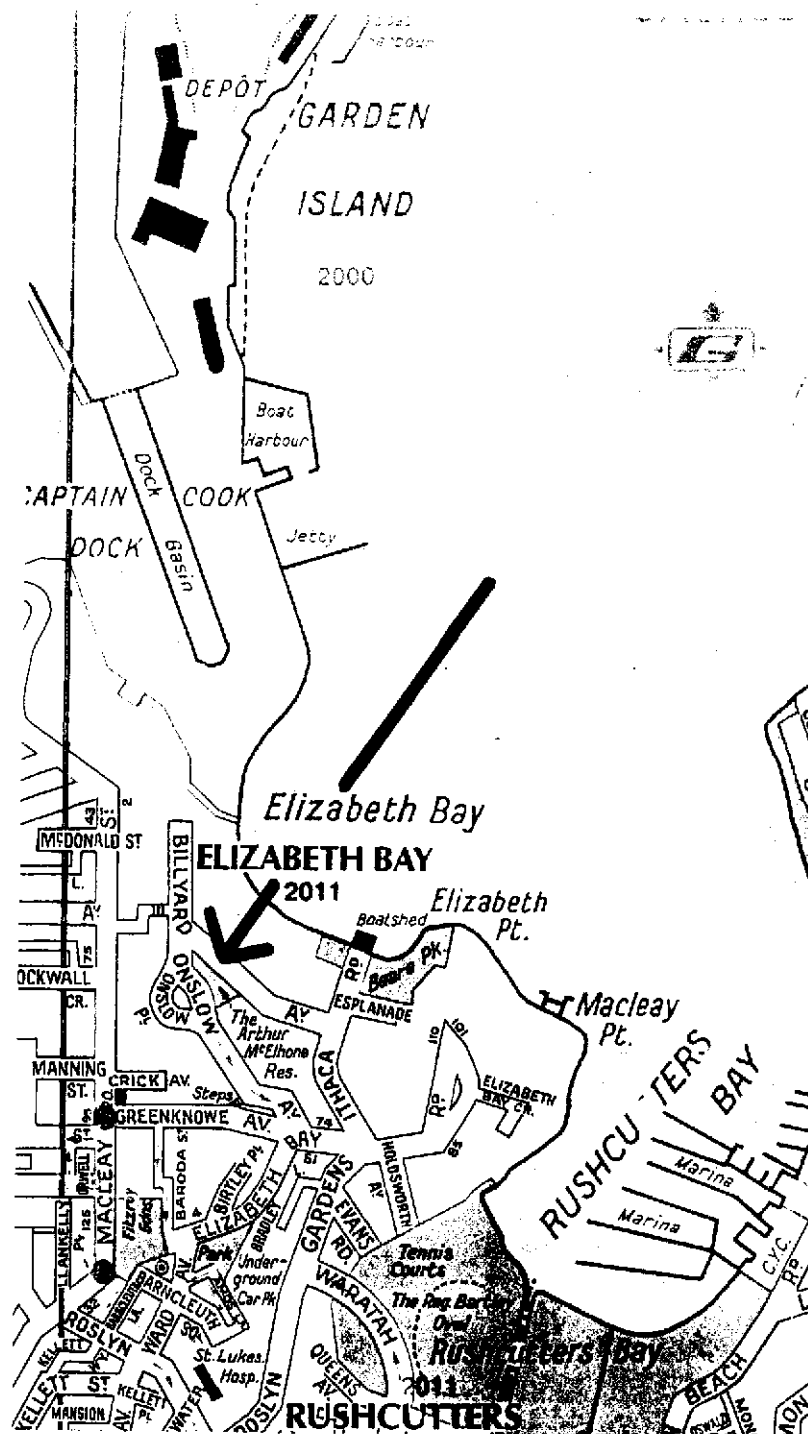


Fig. 1 Location plan - The Arthur McElhone Reserve, Elizabeth Bay.

participants in the original role and relationship between the House and the forecourt open space that now constitutes the core of the Reserve. Various suggestions were then made that this warranted further examination and public interpretation so that future users and visitors would appreciate it. It was agreed that this could be one of the matters addressed at the second community consultative meeting on 22 February, along with a more developed landscape master and planting plan.

## **1.5 Report Structure**

### **1.5.1 A Three Strand Approach.**

The consultants identified three main strands to be addressed in the research, analysis and assessment phase of this report, namely:

1. The creation of the site as a forecourt to *Elizabeth Bay House*
2. Conversion of the site to a public reserve
3. The attitudes and needs of contemporary park users and admirers.

The first two strands involved, in essence, the identification of the history and evolution of the site. This is set out in the first two sections under the heading 'History of the Site'. It is then followed by an assessment of its heritage values or 'cultural significance', which are assessed under the seven criteria used today for heritage assessment in New South Wales. One of these criteria has to do with the esteem in which the place is held by the community. As this covers communities in both the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the 20<sup>th</sup> century, up to the present time, it provides the linkage between the third strand and the first two.

### **1.5.2 The Structure**

The identification and analysis of all the information gathered in the historical research leads to an assessment of the heritage or cultural significance of the Reserve, which will be summarised in accordance with the key points under each criterion.

Following this is a section identifying the principal conservation issues relating to the site, broad management considerations, community expectations, and the various constraints and opportunities. From this a conservation policy will be recommended, followed by series of strategies and detailed actions. This will be provided in the form of specific aims, or desired outcome, for every relevant aspect of the reserve, with prescriptive actions spelt out where appropriate. These are intended to be a useful guide to those directly managing the reserve. While not denying them the opportunity to exercise some discretion and judgement within such matters as planting schemes, repairs to stonework, pond maintenance, and so on, the guidelines are, it is hoped, sufficiently precise to ensure that, if faithfully followed, the heritage values, design intentions and community expectations are preserved and met.

A word of caution is necessary here. Most landscape architects and others with aesthetic or design training or self-education will have an urge to advocate what they regard as desirable aesthetic improvements or adjustments to such a site. However, aesthetic conceptions vary considerably between individuals, and change – evolve, become more informed and refined – over the years. Moreover, matters such as taste and fashion can be involved, especially vis-à-vis planting schemes, and these can be quite subjective and emotional. The task of a heritage landscape consultant is different from this: it is to identify the design intent and the period style of an historic landscape, plus the way it has evolved over time, and then assess its (cumulative) cultural significance, while *at the same time* taking into account contemporary uses, any consensus on aesthetic evaluations, and community perceptions and expectations.

It is often a difficult matter for judgement as to whether to select a key period for the site – usually when a designed landscape has reached its maturity or potential as intended; or whether to acknowledge and respect each and every change or addition that has occurred to the site since it was first developed, because these reflect evolving uses and 'inputs' (especially plantings) over its lifetime. This task involves

a judicious assessment of whether the original design and its underlying intention was superior in most respects – e.g. had greater integrity, fitness to purpose or aesthetic value – to the end product that has evolved over time. It is the task of this study to make that difficult choice. In the end, a nice balance has to be struck between retaining the best (i.e. heritage values) of the old while accepting the best of what currently exists. It is to be expected that not everyone will agree with the choices that are made here.

### 1.6 Authorship

This report has been written entirely by Warwick Mayne-Wilson. However, it draws on a range of research material, ideas, discussions and suggestions contributed by a wide variety of sources, which are acknowledged below. While he accepts responsibility for the expression of findings and recommendations in this Report, he has based these on wide research and consultations described above, including frequent discussions with officers of South Sydney City Council, his client.

### 1.7 Report limitations

While every effort – within the fairly tight timeframe available – has been made to obtain accurate and precise information about the origins, design and evolution of the McElhone Reserve, not every aspect of it was documented historically. Some assumptions have had to be made on certain matters, and it is possible that later, more detailed research by others will provide confirmation or greater precision. However, the author is confident that the broad lines of this study, including its research and findings, are sufficiently accurate for the purposes of this Report and the needs of his client.

### 1.8 Acknowledgments

The author would like to gratefully acknowledge the assistance and contributions which have been readily made available to him by Scott Carlin (Curator of *Elizabeth Bay House*); the archivists of the Historic Houses Trust, Sydney City Council and South Sydney Council; the Friends of the McElhone Reserve (especially John McIntyre); and landscape architects Jonathon Henderson of South Sydney Councils and Ari Anderson of Mayne-Wilson & Associates. Quite a number of individuals have put forward constructive ideas and suggestions, but while the former are too numerous to mention, it is hoped the incorporation of the latter – in one way or another – in this report will constitute an appropriate form of acknowledgment.

## 2.0 History of the Site

The evolution of the site of the McElhone Reserve can be divided roughly into four periods, of which only two are of sustained interest to this study. The first was the pre-settlement period, in which no information is available other than that the site consisted of a series of well-vegetated sandstone benches stepping down the ridge from what is now known as Kings Cross and terminating in a white, sandy beach which comprised one of the bays of along Sydney Harbour. From the sandstone benches facing north-east magnificent views could be obtained along the harbour, with islands in the middle distance and the heads on the distant horizon.

The second period begins with European settlement and the naming of that bay 'Elizabeth Bay' by the early administration. Although the bay and its backdrop (to the ridge of Kings Cross) was originally set aside as a public reserve by Governor Macquarie<sup>2</sup>, his successor Governor Darling granted 54 acres of it to his Colonial Secretary, Alexander Macleay in 1826. (According to Carlin, the two men were politically quite conservative, and the relationship between their two families – and indeed their residences along Bridge Street in the city until 1837 – were quite close.)

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<sup>2</sup> Carlin, op. cit., p.2

A great deal has already been written about Macleay and his Elizabeth Bay property<sup>3</sup> and it does not need to be reproduced here. However, certain salient points need to be made.

1. Alexander Macleay began molding the landscape of his property in 1827, eight years before the building of his elegant mansion commenced. He spent a great deal of money (and time) in having the landscape fashioned according to the principles of the late 18<sup>th</sup> century British landscape movement and the early 19<sup>th</sup> century precepts of the Picturesque. In particular, he created a large forecourt of gently sloping ground in front of the platform he created for his future house. He had two terrace walls built to create this forecourt, which he planted with lawn and a range of bulbs, many from South Africa.
2. Macleay envisaged the forecourt serving both to provide clear views out to the Harbour, while at the same time enabling it to be viewed as an elegant marine villa in a wild, picturesque setting from the Harbour. The general effect is shown in Conrad Martens several paintings of the property in the 1804s, the clearest of which is contained in figure 2. It became perhaps the most celebrated landscape in the Colony at the time, and elegant outdoor entertainments were held there from 1829 onwards, well before the house itself was built.<sup>4</sup> Indeed, the cost of the landscaping works was so heavy that it served as a constraint on the completion of the House itself.
3. Macleay, and subsequently his son, William Sharp Macleay, were keen horticulturalists and entomologists, and planted the garden with a very wide range of trees and shrubs, mostly exotics which were collected or donated to them from all over the world. (Quite a number of these were planted even before they were acclimatised and propagated in the nurseries and conservatories in Kew.) An indication of the size and scope of the garden is provided in fig.3. Apart from some bulbs, however, few of these plants were planted within the forecourt, and the Macleays retained as many of the native trees and shrubs on its (north-western) perimeter as possible – see fig. 4. The forecourt was deliberately maintained as a spacious open lawn with the green turf sweeping right up to *Elizabeth Bay House* in the best 18<sup>th</sup> century British manor house tradition. This is clearly depicted in two photographs taken between 1895 and 1903 – see figs.5 & 6. As those photographs also show, some trees were planted on the south-east and north-west edges of this space, in order to frame the views between the House and the Harbour. At different times these comprised eucalypts, figs, palms and pines. Remnant Eucalypts are seen in the c.1865 photograph (fig.5) taken of the natural rock shelter at the base of the forecourt (now bordered by Billyard Ave.).
4. Although the land on which the elaborate gardens were laid out and planted have long since been built over, and very few of the original trees remain, quite detailed and extensive lists were kept of all the plants collected from many sources – see for example those attached to the Conservation Plan and to the publication *Mr Macleay's Garden*<sup>5</sup>. While it would not be possible to attempt to re-create Macleay's garden today, it would be possible to provide some link between Macleay and his surviving forecourt lawn by judiciously selecting from among those plants some which would serve the design purposes of the present McElhone Reserve.

The third period covers the interregnum between the final subdivision of the Elizabeth Bay estate in 1927 and the acquisition of lots 4, 5 and 6 containing the original forecourt by Sydney City Council in 1948. Despite the enticements in the advertisement of the 1927 subdivision - see fig. 7 - these lots had

<sup>3</sup> The most authoritative account to date was written by the present Curator of *Elizabeth Bay House*, Scott Carlin. This appears both in his (draft) Conservation Plan and his *Guide* to the House, already cited.

<sup>4</sup> Carlin, op. cit. p.82

<sup>5</sup> A paper compiled by the Historic Houses Trust for an exhibition at Elizabeth Bay House, June – August 1981. See also the appendix to Dr Lionel Gilbert's publication entitled *Mr Macleay's Elizabeth Bay Garden*. Canberra. 2000





**Fig. 2** All of the early paintings of *Elizabeth Bay House* from the late 1830s indicate that the immediate foreground to the mansion was always maintained as an open expanse of lawn, kept clear of any plantings which would interrupt its presentation as a marine villa or obscure key views to and from the Harbour. The many paintings of the property produced by Conrad Martens - such as the one above - show the house in a picturesque setting, sitting grandly on a platform at the summit of a sweeping lawn, as so many 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> century mansions in Britain did.

A record of the commencement of the site works at Elizabeth Bay by Alexander Macleay's daughter Fanny Macleay in November 1832:

*'My father has been levelling ground and blowing up rocks (by deputy of course) at Elizabeth Bay in order to gain a lawn for our new Residence - the foundation for which must be laid soon'.*

A record of the continuation of site works at Elizabeth Bay by Fanny Macleay in August 1833:

*'The House there is not begun yet, but a spacious, beautifully sloping lawn has been made, and drains (a work of expense and time, I assure you) completed now...'*

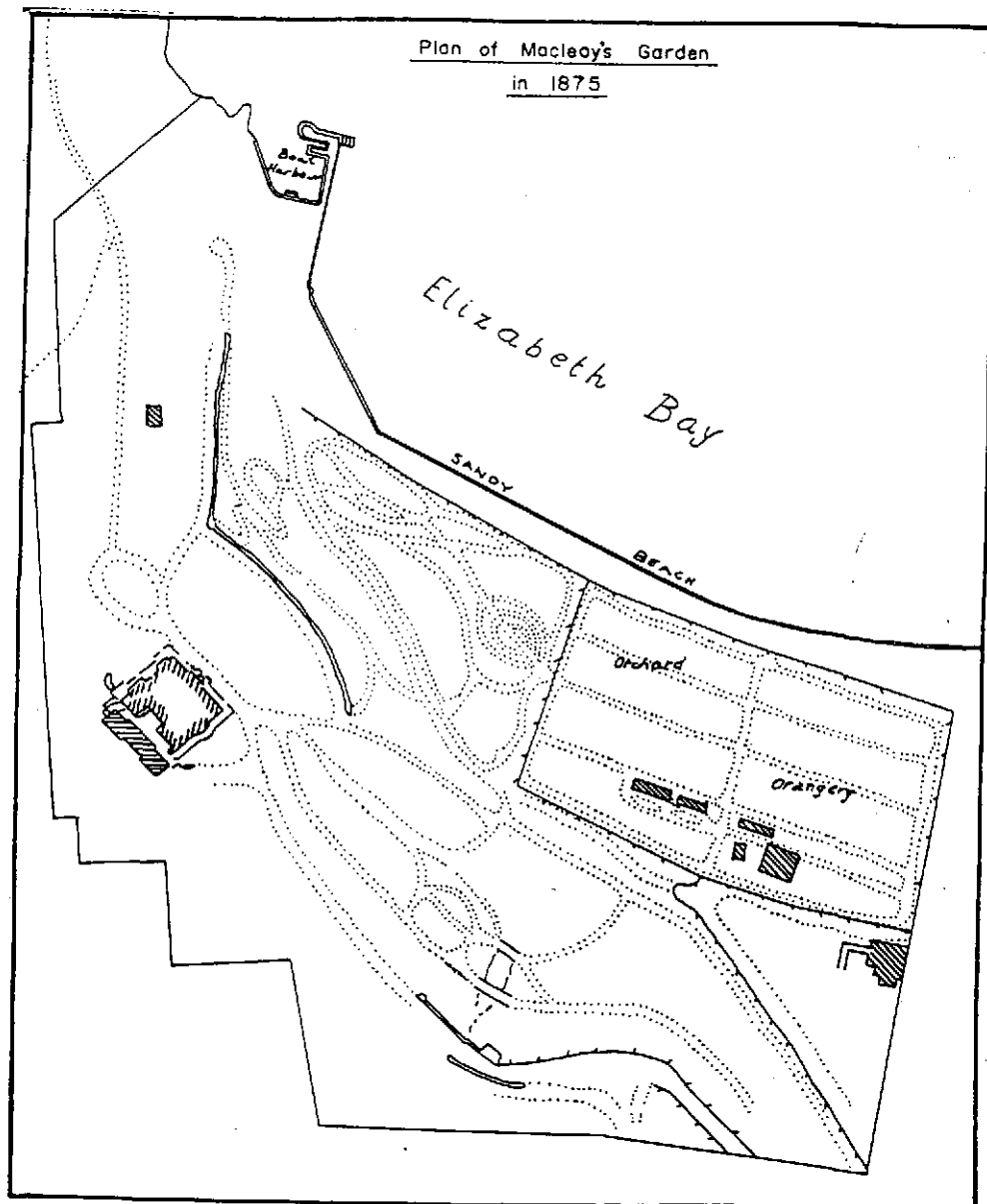


Fig. 3

A plan of the Macleay property produced c.1875 by surveyor F. H. Reuss shows that the area immediately in front of the mansion was not crisscrossed by paths and did not support elaborate garden bed designs. It is evident both from the patterning of the remainder of Macleay's grounds and from visitors' recounts of the property that most of the Macleay family's horticultural pursuits were carried out in zones beyond the mansion's immediate environs. The 'botanical' gardens, orchard and orangery were located to the north and east, on the colluvial flats near the edge of the Bay, while the woodland walks were mostly in bushland north-west of the mansion.

Description of the entry drive to *Elizabeth Bay House* grounds by Thomas Shepherd in 1836. (Whilst the drive appears not to have built in the way it was described by Shepherd, the landscape treatment for the lawn that was to be the centre of the carriage loop remained the same upon construction)

*'The approach of the mansion enters at the south-east corner; it is seen for several hundred yards, and then takes a bold turn towards the coach sweep in front of the house without any reverse turn, which adds to its beauty. The coach sweep will form an exact oval, the whole width of the front of the house, convex in the centre and covered with mowed grass. No clumps will be placed in the centre of the lawn, as that would lessen its breadth, but the lawn will be surrounded by a shrubbery...'*



Fig. 4

Macleay, in accordance with the precepts of the picturesque, retained a portion of the native vegetation to frame his residence, both when viewed from the Harbour and as a framing, foreground element in the broad northerly view down to the Harbour from *Elizabeth Bay House*. This photograph, attributed to Sir William Macarthur c. 1865, shows that some native trees were retained close to the natural cave below the lawn forecourt wall and along walks to the west.

Description of Elizabeth Bay House grounds by nurseryman and designer Thomas Shepherd in 1836.

*'The mansion is placed upon a flat piece of land, in the bosom of a gentle elevation, furnished with beautiful trees, branching off in thick masses to the right and left. A splendid open lawn is placed in the main centre front of the house, leaving to view from the adjoining grounds and windows one of the most interesting prospects of the harbour...'*



Fig. 5



Fig. 6

Photographs of *Elizabeth Bay House* from 1895 and 1903, taken prior to the extension of Onslow Avenue in front of the mansion, showing it sitting astride a sweeping lawn which was bordered by mature trees (principally stone pines at this stage).

Marguerite Fairfax, recalling the occupancy of Sir William John and Lady Macleay at *Elizabeth Bay House* (1865-1903):

*'the lovely lawn in front of Elizabeth Bay House - ablaze with ixias, sparaxis, and freesias of every colour'.*

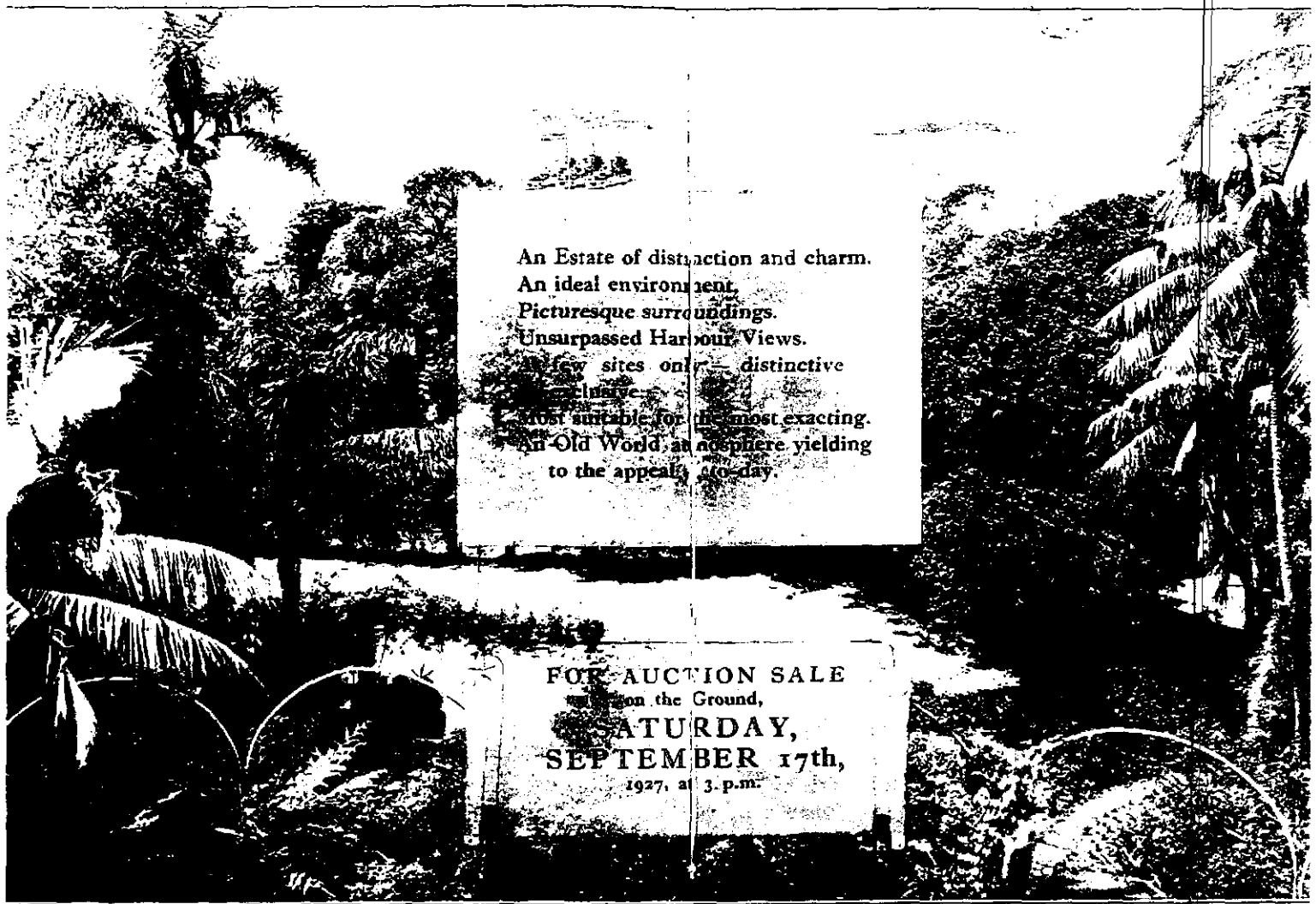


Fig. 7

Taken as part of an auction sale document in 1927, this photograph shows the maturity and style of the *Elizabeth Bay House* upper gardens, situated to the east of the main lawn area fronting the mansion. There is no evidence to suggest that gardens similar to these were developed within the area of the lawn platform that now supports the McElhone Reserve.

*Elizabeth Bay House Estate* subdivision document, 1927:

*'The lawn, immediately surrounded by the fine carriage drive fronting the residence, is said to have cost originally 3000 pounds to make, and contained every specimen of Cape bulb that could be collected.'*

*The Sydney Morning Herald*, March 30, 1937:

*'In front of Elizabeth Bay House, but divided from it in the last subdivision of land, is the last remnant of this once famous old garden. It is a strip of land, say an acre or more, now covered with tangled grass and straggling garden plants run wild. The old stone wall along Billyard Avenue is now dismantled, but when I searched there last week I found the old stone steps which led up to the little wicket gate through which we had a short cut from the house to the Macleay Museum in Ithaca Road. A few of the old time trees still exist along the wall.'*

*Elizabeth Bay House*, published by the Historic Houses Trust, 1984:

*Beyond an expanse of lawn at the front of the house, a gravel walk was bordered by a low stone wall and paths meandered "among picturesque rocks".*

miraculously not been purchased in 1927 nor in 1934 when they were re-offered for sale. However, the lawns were increasingly neglected, and various self-sown shrubs and other weeds accumulated there. Two photographs taken during this period show the unkempt state of these lots – see figs. 8 & 9. Local residents used to tip their rubbish there, and the northern retaining wall fell into disrepair. A decision was taken by Sydney City Council to clear the site before it could be developed into a municipal park. The early part of this period coincides with the neglect of the mansion and its use as an artists' squat until 1935.

The fourth period – that of the actual purchase of land and the design and construction of the Reserve – actually began during the third period, when Sydney City Council Town Clerk Roy Hendy wrote to the alderman of the Fitzroy Ward, Mr. W. J. Bradley on the 7<sup>th</sup> October 1938, informing him that Council agreed to the need for the immediate provision of more garden spaces in Kings Cross and to support a public movement which sought to raise funds for the acquisition of *Elizabeth Bay House* and the grounds fronting it. Prior to this correspondence, a petition signed by residents, rate payers and property owners of the area had been submitted to Council urging this action. However, World War II intervened, and such action was put on hold for its duration.

Then, on 29<sup>th</sup> July 1946, Sydney City Council approved in principle the concept of securing a strip of land which would extend all the way along the waterfront of Elizabeth Bay for 'park purposes'. (Ironically, this harked back to the public open space reservation there during Governor Macquarie's time.) It was proposed that this foreshore band of public open space would be approximately twenty to forty metres wide. A plan dated 1<sup>st</sup> April 1948, prepared by Sydney City Council, indicated this intent, identifying lots 4, 5, and 6 east of Elizabeth Bay House and the above mentioned linear park along the foreshore as spaces intended for public reserves see fig. 10. Of additional interest in the 1948 plan is the demarcation of five lots of land between Billyard Avenue and the foreshore, outlined as the area which would need to be retained as open space east of those lots upon which the new reserve was to be built, should uninterrupted views from it to the harbour be required.

On the 7<sup>th</sup> April 1948, the City Engineer detailed the size and nature of lots 4, 5 and 6 upon the request of the Town Clerk, following a letter regarding the creation of a reserve on these lots, forwarded to Council in March 1948 from the Health & Recreations Committee and the City Planning & Improvements Committee.

In his response to these Committees, the City Engineer described lots 4, 5 and 6 as making up 2 roods and 10  $\frac{3}{4}$  perches and quoted the City Valuer's figure of 13,810 pounds as the unimproved capital value of these lands. He stated that approximately 4,600 pounds would need to be set aside for treatment of the area. Further, he described in some detail and with a certain fondness the unique siting of the park, the broad cone of vision available from it and possible future blockages to views should those lots between the reserve and the harbour not be purchased as an open space reserve as well.

Following a note by the Town Clerk on 14<sup>th</sup> April 1948 regarding the possible purchase of the property known as *Elizabeth Bay House*, together with the land it stands upon and lots 4, 5 and 6 across Onslow Street, Council's Valuation Branch outlined details of the residence on 20<sup>th</sup> April 1948. The House was described as being an apartment residential house containing fifteen separate unit flatettes (into which it had been divided by its new owner, Mrs. Evangeline Murray, after her purchase of it in 1940). The dimensions of the land upon which the house stood was approximately 106 feet 9  $\frac{1}{2}$  inches x 108 feet and was expressed as a 'complete island block'. The gross rentals received at the property were 1,904 pounds per annum at that time and the estimate of the land and improvements in its use at the time was given as 16,000 pounds.



Fig. 8



Fig. 9

Photographs of the property taken between 1935 and 1937 indicate that the grass forecourt, which had by this stage been separated from *Elizabeth Bay House* by the installation of Onslow Avenue, was a bare grass platform only defined on its edges by street tree planting along Billyard Avenue and several large trees on the far south-eastern corner of what was to become the McElhone Reserve

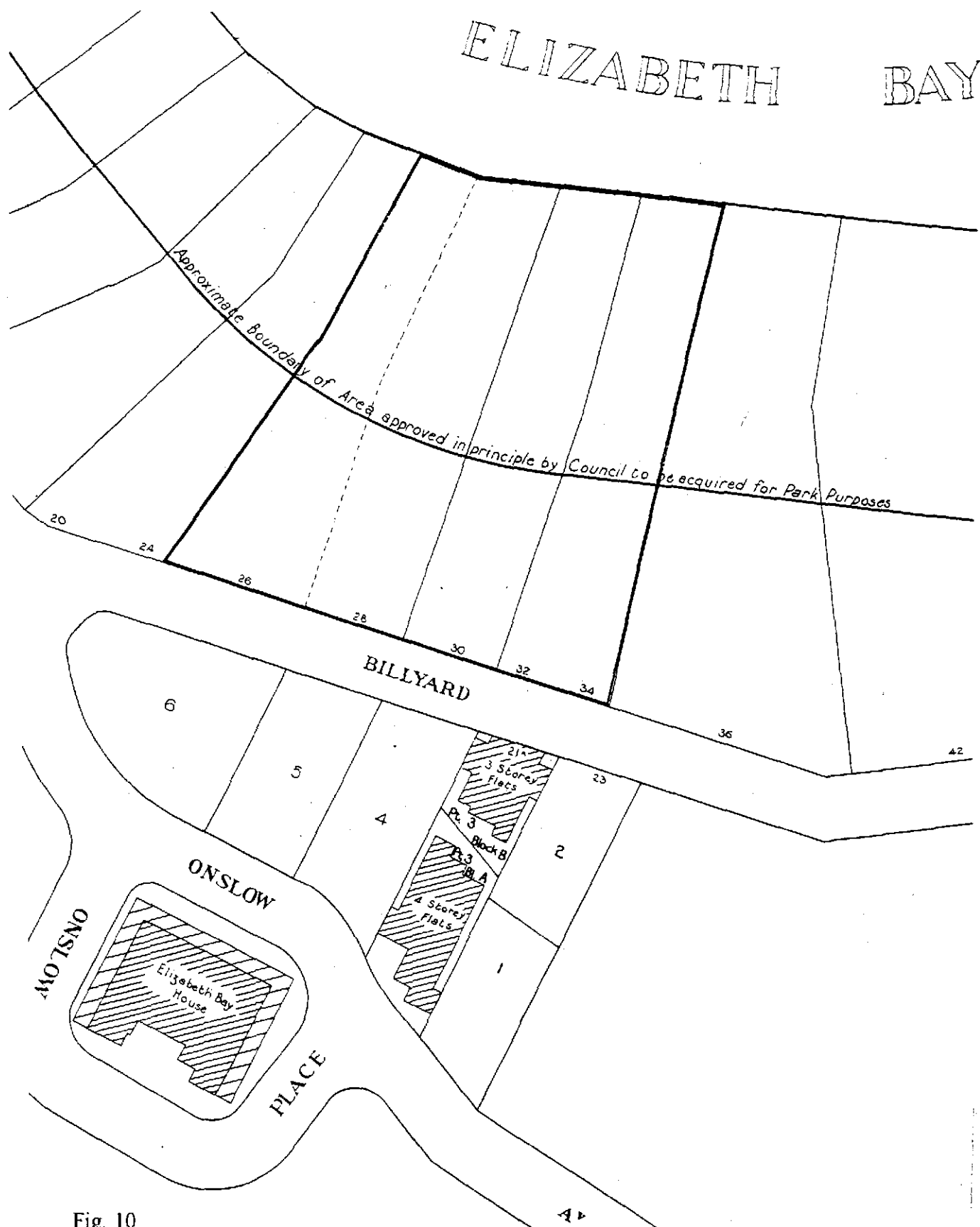


Fig. 10

Plan dated 1<sup>st</sup> April 1948, indicating those blocks of land (lots 4, 5 & 6) which were used for the establishment of the McElhone Reserve. Note that lots closer to the water were identified as being important for purchase if comprehensive views and access to the Harbour from the Reserve were considered to be vital in the park's creation. (In the event they were not purchased, although it is significant that the importance of retaining the two-way views was recognised.)



It would appear that by the time of Council's resolution of 9<sup>th</sup> August 1948, by which initial formal approval was given for the creation of the reserve, the proposals for creating a linear public park along the foreshore, of retaining the five lots below lots 4, 5 and 6 along the harbour, and of purchasing *Elizabeth Bay House* itself, had been abandoned.

Council's 1948 resolution expressed approval to:

- (a) *the acceptance of the offer of Elizabeth Bay Estates Pty. Ltd. to dispose of land situated at the corner of Onslow Avenue and Billyard Avenue and known as Lots 4, 5 and 6 Onslow Avenue to the Council for park purposes for the sum of 16,720 pounds, and*
- (b) *application being made for the approval of the Governor to the raising of a loan in the amount of 20,720 pounds (representing 16,720 pounds as the cost of the acquisition of the land and 4,000 pounds as the estimated cost of the treatment of the area) for the purpose of financing the proposal.*

A plan dated 2<sup>nd</sup> September 1948 (fig. 11) was produced by Sydney City Council showing the extent of the land - lots 4, 5 and 6 - purchased by them for the establishment of the public reserve.

## 2.1 Site Development

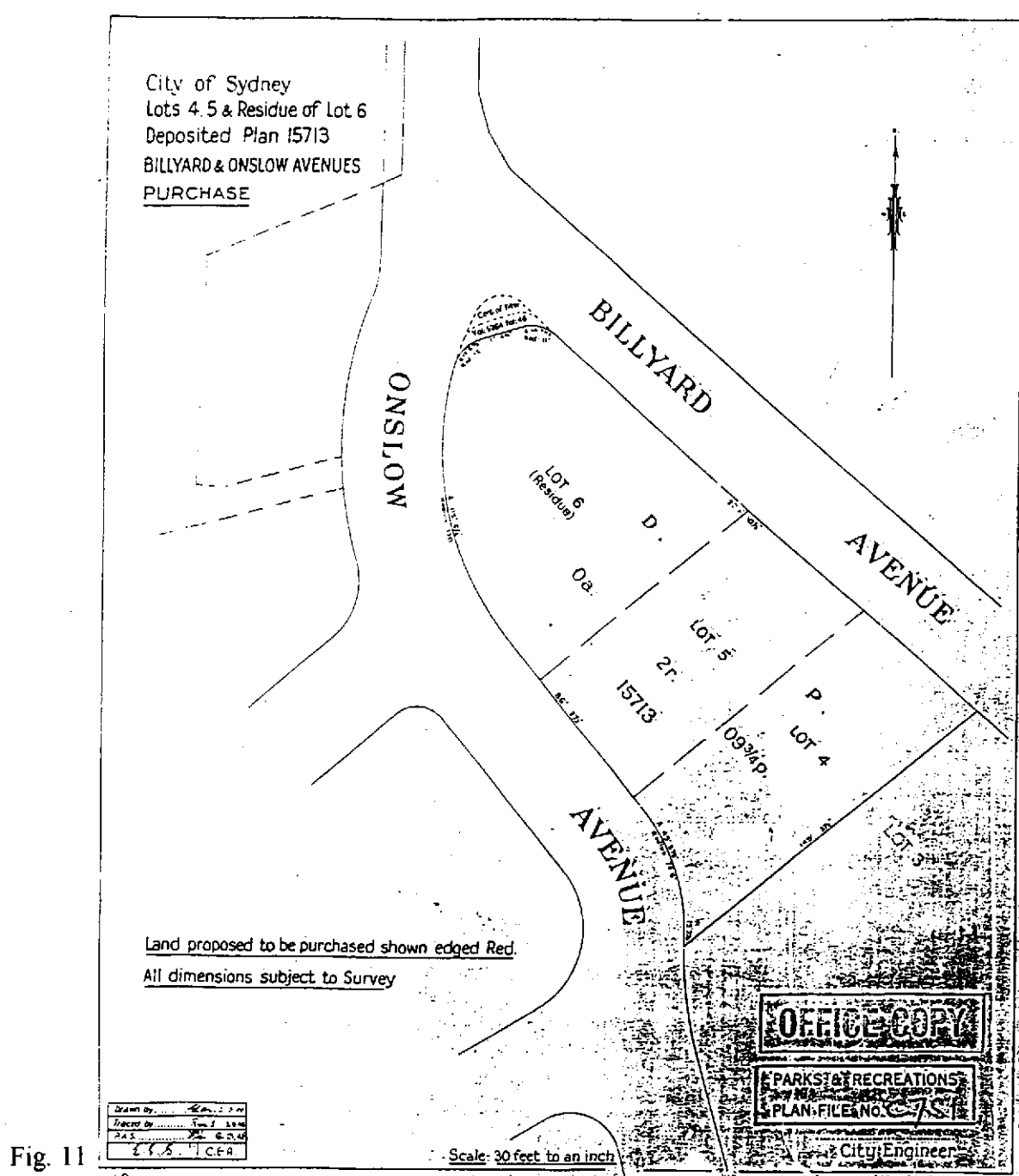
An early sketch design for the layout of Arthur McElhone Reserve – see fig. 12 – was prepared on 9<sup>th</sup> February 1950. It included very limited planting in the central lawn area, a proposed pool with statuary in the north-west sector, a suggested stair configuration, and the location of the main plantings around the north-western and south-eastern edges of the site. These plantings were kept to the extremities of the reserve so as not to disturb the viewing cone from the House. At the same time, a schematic bird's-eye view of this design was produced as shown in fig. 13. It is not known who produced this initial design proposal, but it would have been prepared in the newly established Parks and Gardens Section of Sydney City Council. (For further discussion of the latter, see below.)

The first stage of design development for the reserve was prepared by Sydney City Council in September 1950 – see Appendix A. It included a somewhat altered layout of the reserve's paths, ponds, stepping stones and plantings from that which had been earlier suggested, and included a small circular seating zone at the south-eastern end of the Reserve. From both of the designs prepared during 1950 it is evident that the edging treatment for the ponds was intended to be lawn or informally positioned small bush rocks.

On 3<sup>rd</sup> October 1950 Council authorised the amount of 5,700 pounds for the completion and construction of "The Arthur McElhone Reserve". (Arthur McElhone was a former alderman of the Council who had served it well for a period of 44 years and whose dedicated service the Council wished to honour.) Through the naming of the park after a long-serving alderman, and the absence of any reference in its signage to its original creator, Alexander Macleay, it would seem that Council aldermen saw it as simply another municipal park to adorn their city.

Stage two in the Reserve's design development comprised a series of plans including detailed water reticulation drawings – see fig. 14 – which appear to have been produced immediately following the second 1950 design. The pool alignments and stair configurations shown in these drawings were manipulated slightly from how they appeared in the coloured master plan drawing prepared in September 1950. The idea of having a circular seating area at the south-eastern end of the reserve was carried through into these documentation drawings. However, ultimately it was never adopted, as tall screen planting was more appropriate in that zone, given the close proximity of the tall neighbouring apartment buildings which would have directly overlooked it.

The third stage in the master plan development for the McElhone Reserve occurred with the production of the final plan prepared by Council on 19<sup>th</sup> January 1953 – see fig. 15. By this stage, the detailing of the



Plan dated 2<sup>nd</sup> September 1948 showing the extent of the land purchased by Sydney City Council for the establishment of the public reserve. These three lots made up most of the land originally laid out by Macleay as the lawn forecourt to his marine villa.

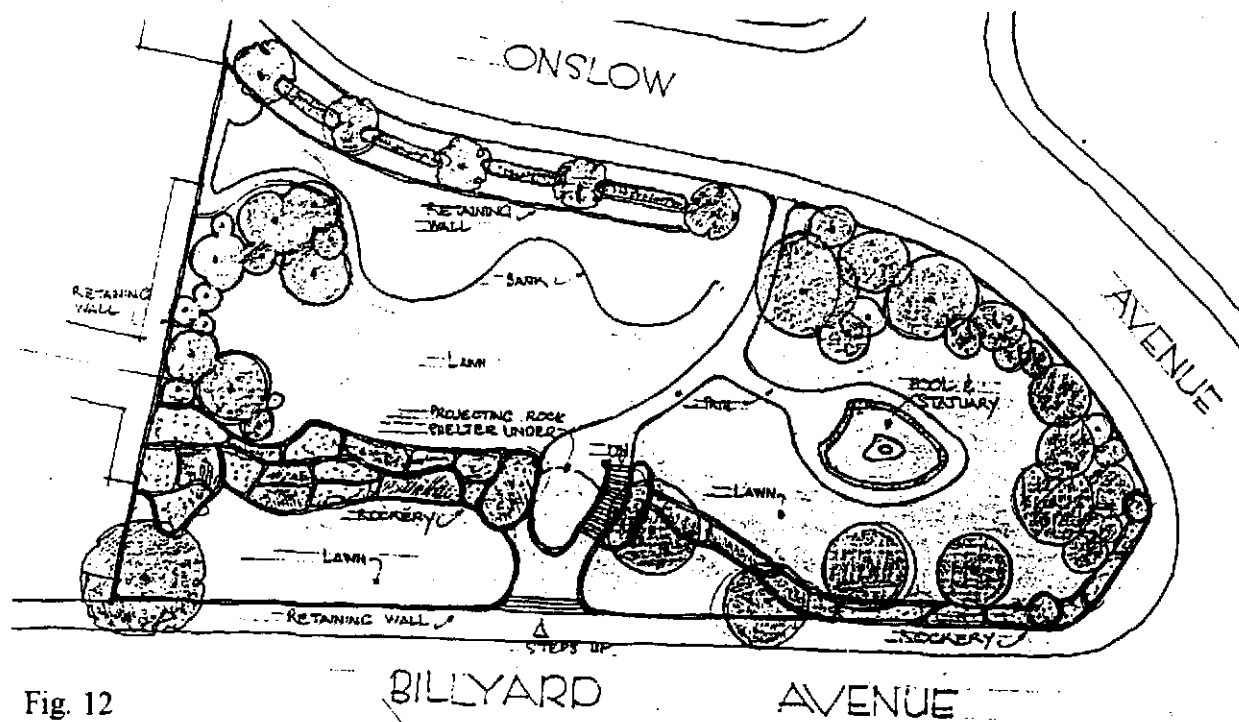


Fig. 12

Drawn on 9<sup>th</sup> February 1950, this plan is the first sketch for the layout of the Reserve, named in honour of former long-serving Councillor, Arthur McElhone. Note the very limited planting in the central lawn area, the linear rockery along the rock bench, the proposed pool & statuary, the stair configuration, and the proposed heavy plantings around the north-western and south-eastern edges of the site, well to the edges of the viewing cones from and to the House.

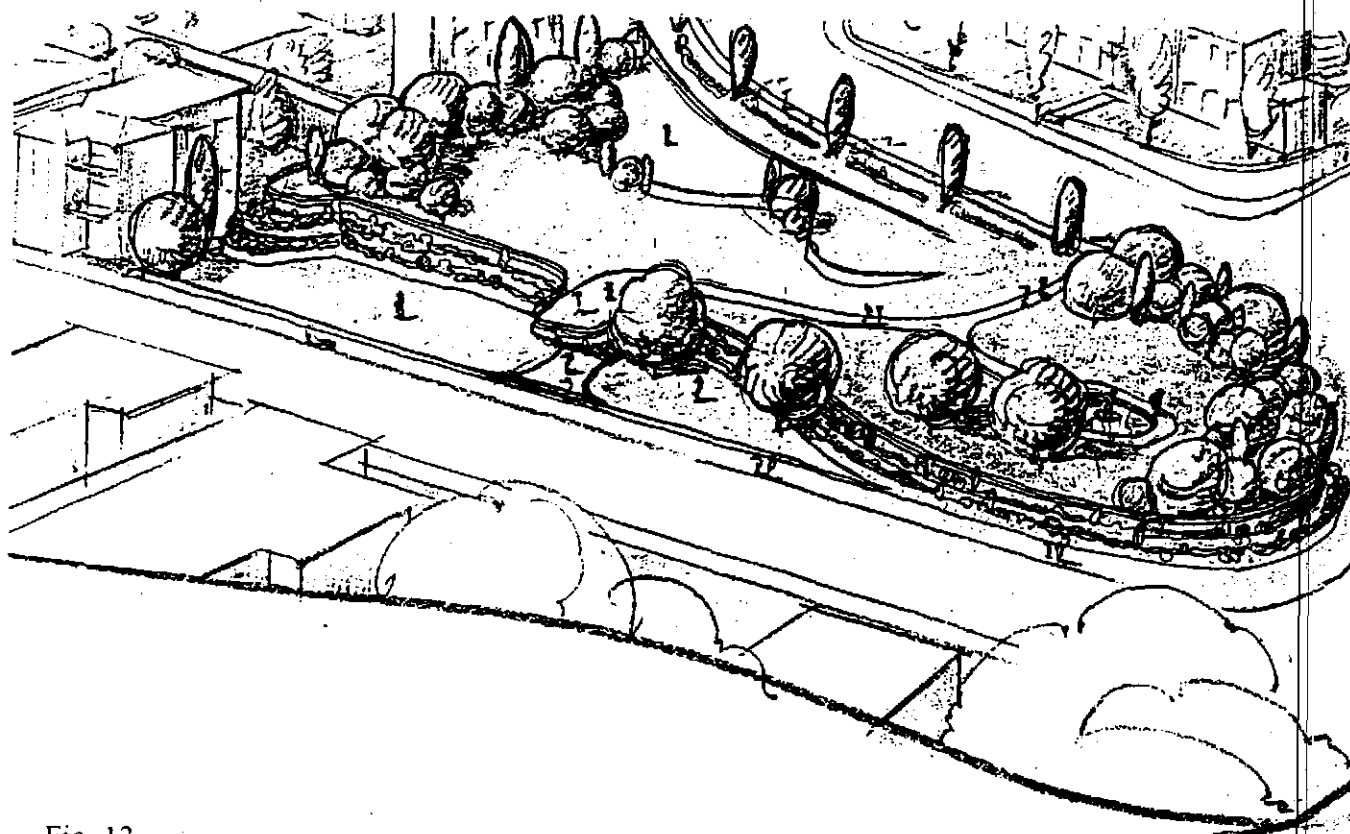


Fig. 13

This schematic bird's-eye view of the McElhone Reserve was based on the plan produced in February 1950 for its layout. In this original design for the reserve, it is clear that limited planting only was suggested within the main lawn area, so as to preserve a broad, uninterrupted cone of vision out to the Harbour. The rockery was intended to mediate the steep rockbench slope.

Sheet 1 of four

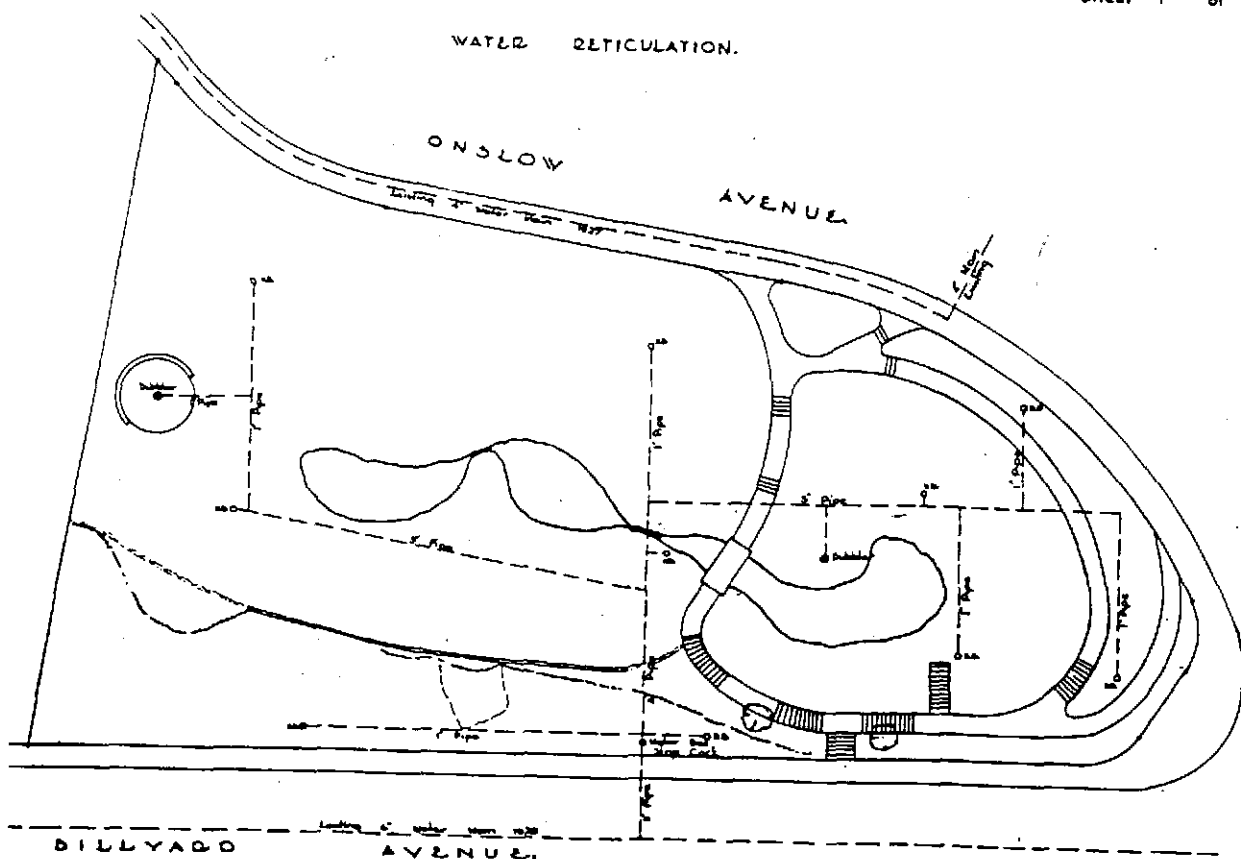
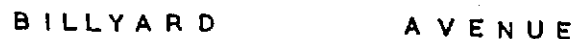


Fig. 14

This water reticulation drawing appears to have immediately followed the second 1950 design. The pool alignments shown here were manipulated slightly from the coloured master plan drawing, as were stair locations. Note that the idea of having the circular seating area at the south-eastern end of the Reserve was carried through into these documentation drawings. However, it was not adopted ultimately - probably as well, as tall screen planting was more appropriate here, given the close proximity of the tall apartment buildings.



## Conservation Landscape Architects

pools, the layout of the paths and stepping stones, and the location of planted areas had become better articulated. In this scheme, more planting was introduced to the central area, and that proposed originally around the park's north-western edge was much reduced.

Following a report by the Director of Parks on 21<sup>st</sup> July 1953, an additional 4,500 pounds was approved by Council on 3<sup>rd</sup> August 1953 for a continuation of works on the reserve, due to the full expenditure of the original allocation of funds on work to that date.

## **2.2 The early role of Sydney City Council in Park Design**

The decision to undertake the design and construction of this reserve was made in the context of a desire by the Council, actively fostered by its Town Clerk, to improve the parkland and public reserves in the city after the long period of austerity during World War II. The first expressions of the need to improve environmental quality were being made, and the Town Clerk and a few senior officials made an overseas tour to ascertain how other cities were managing their public parks. On their return, it was decided to set up a Parks and Gardens Section within the Council, and that it should be headed by a qualified landscape architect or designer.<sup>6</sup> According to Lynch, the title of 'landscape architect' was not actually used at that time, but the intention to engage a professional landscape designer was there.

In the event, the new Parks and Gardens Section was headed by Architect Clary Garth. Several draftsmen, horticulturalists and technicians were engaged between 1949 and 1951. None of the original senior officers were landscape architects, but some had had architectural training.

### **2.2.1 The role of Ilmar Berzins**

One of the first draftsmen engaged by the Parks and Gardens Section was Ilmar Berzins – see figs.16 & 17 – a formally trained landscape architect who had migrated to Australia from Latvia in 1948<sup>7</sup>. Berzins had trained first as a horticulturalist and subsequently as a landscape architect at Riga, in Latvia, followed by further training at Hanover in Germany. As Australia had no university courses in Landscape Architecture until the early 1970s, there were no Landscape Architects available locally for the Council to recruit. Consequently, their decision to engage Berzins is said by Lynch to have been the first employment of a formally trained landscape architect in Australia, making Sydney City Council the trail-blazer in this field.

It is not known precisely when Berzins joined them as a senior draftsman, but it is clear that he was working there in 1951. According to John Sweaney, who joined the Council in 1950 and transferred to the Parks Division in 1952, Berzins was already working on the detail of the Reserve in 1951 and that he "had a major hand in it".<sup>8</sup> There is also little doubt, given the explicit recognition within the Council and the community generally about the importance of the views between Elizabeth Bay House and the Harbour, and the increasing community regard for the House itself, that Berzins and his team would have been conscious of the history and significance of the site.

If Berzins did not explicitly seek to relate his design to Alexander Macleay's 19<sup>th</sup> century elegant house and garden, he certainly understood the need to retain the generous lawn forecourt as a platform for the enjoyment of the important two-way views between the Harbour and the House. This is exemplified in the retention of flowing lawns on much of the site, the small-scale, limited plantings in the centre of it,

<sup>6</sup> Leonard Lynch, Director of Clouston and a former officer of that Division in the early 1980s. Personal communication.

<sup>7</sup> According to his widow, Berzins paid off his two year bond (for his fares) by working in an Email factory in the town of Orange. While in Orange, Berzins already began to design gardens and public places in the district, including the golf course at Orange. On completion of his service, Berzins moved to Sydney in 1950. Sylvia Berzins, personal communication, Jan. 2001.

<sup>8</sup> John Sweaney, personal communication, Jan. 2001



Fig. 16 Mr. Ilmar Berzins, Sydney City Council's Landscape Architect and designer of the Reserve seen here on site c. 1953. Photo courtesy: Mrs. Sylvia Berzins.

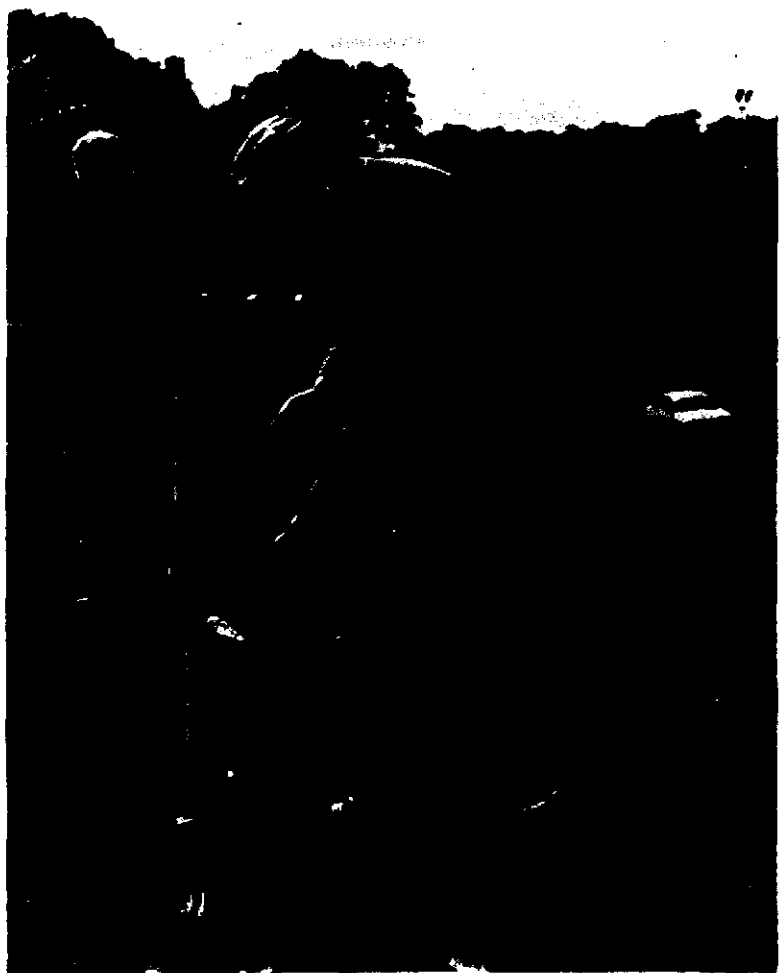


Fig. 17

Mr. Ilmar Berzins, seen here planting a tree at Sydney University, c. 1980. Photo courtesy: Mrs. Sylvia Berzins.



Fig. 24 Ilmar Berzins designed or supervised the design of a large number of public parks in the Sydney city area, including Sandringham Gardens within Hyde Park, seen in this photograph. Photo: courtesy Mrs Sylvia Berzins.



and the larger shrubs and trees around the perimeter.<sup>9</sup> He also, by specifying bush sandstone rocks for the rockeries and some for the edging for the ponds - see figs 18 & 19 - was recognising the underlying Hawkesbury sandstone benching of the site, and seeking to integrate his new park with this inherent topography as sympathetically as possible - see figs. 20, 21 & 22.

However, it is less clear that Berzins perceived a need to relate his new park in any more specific way to *Elizabeth Bay House*. His proposed plantings between the seating along the original retaining wall below Onslow Avenue, and on the road verge above it - neither of which were carried through - suggest this was not an intention. This is supported by the absence of steps leading down into the park from the House's portico opposite.<sup>10</sup> The presence of the substantial roadway of Onslow Avenue between the park and the House no doubt discouraged such a linkage, and there was no proposal to remove it. This formal, physical disconnection remains today, and has served to foster both a psychological disassociation and a complete separation of management responsibilities for House and Reserve.

A photograph taken in the late 1950s - see fig. 23 - shows the modest planting Berzins and Sweaney provided within the rockery above the central pools of the reserve. Although still young, it comprises tufty, strappy plants and low shrubs, selected so as not to interfere with views towards the Harbour from the seats along the reserve's western wall. (Oddly, views to and from the House itself were somewhat interfered with by the poplars planted against its front façade some years before.)

Some have seen a Japanese influence in the small arched sandstone bridge, the use of natural rock, the addition of small ponds in irregular shapes, and controlled, small-scale plantings - all of which symbolically reproduce in the reserve, in a miniaturized scale, the essential natural elements present in the broader landscape in which the site is set.

## 2.2.2 An appreciation of Berzins

In a short appreciation of his work, Tempe McGowan considered that "Berzins' socially responsive designs provide an alternative model for [in favour of] small-scale interventions in the public domain"<sup>11</sup>.

"He held the passionate belief that all people need to enjoy nature and that nature, in turn, can ameliorate the human temperament. His strategy was to create gardens and introduce tree-planting programmes defining council boundaries with poplar trees and trying out diverse species of trees - all of this long before the ecological/environmental movement got into full swing in the 1960s/70s.

His garden designs may appear "un-Australian" for that period. In post-World War II Australia, while public swimming pools and ovals were being built into Victorian era parks, Berzins was crafting nature into clear, articulated places. His designs were socially responsive and typical of trends in international, modernist design culture in the way he created little arcadian retreats in the city wilderness."

McGowan wrote that Berzins' drawings of "outdoor rooms" appear as "virtual gardens".... His public gardens are experienced as lyric retreats with layers of subtlety that contrast with the austerity of the architecture of the time". Referring specifically to the McElhone Reserve, McGowan commented that

"against the high density massing of tall apartment buildings... the design provides a quiet, green refuge and an opportunity to feel and touch grass, watch carp in the pools, and look out across the most beautiful harbour in the world... These creations are enclosures with overlays of contemplative or reflective elements - water, diverse plant species, flowers, intricate walling or paving - woven together". (p.58)

<sup>9</sup> Sweaney confirms that apart from the Azeleas used for hedge effects, and tall plants on the south-eastern end, only low plants (such as *Cotoneaster horizontalis*) and groundcovers were used in the rockery areas and around the ponds.

<sup>10</sup> However, both Berzins and Sweaney were involved in selecting and designing the planting around the House itself in the early 1980s, based on research done on the species of plants which Macleay used and how the garden had been laid out.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid, p.56

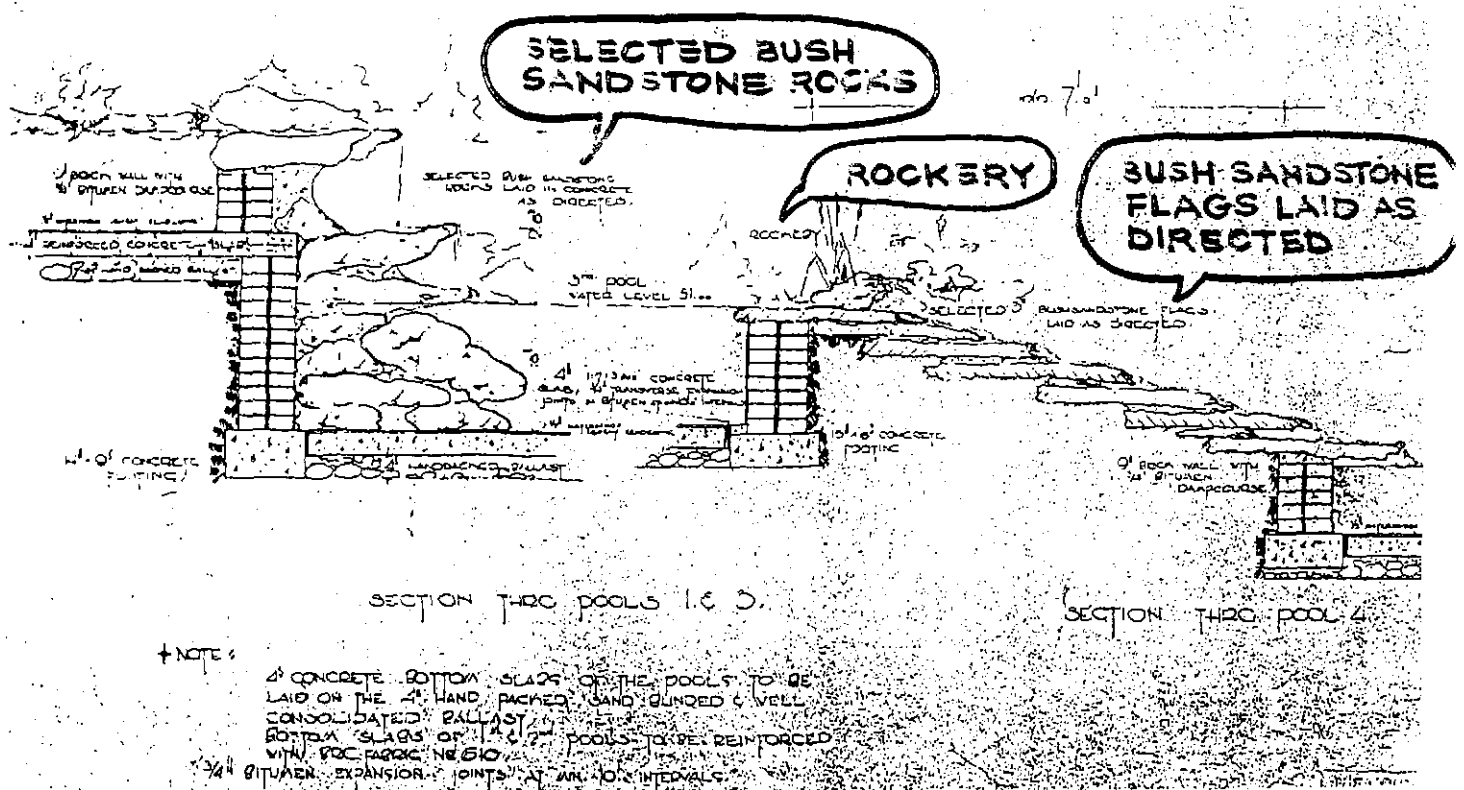


Fig. 18

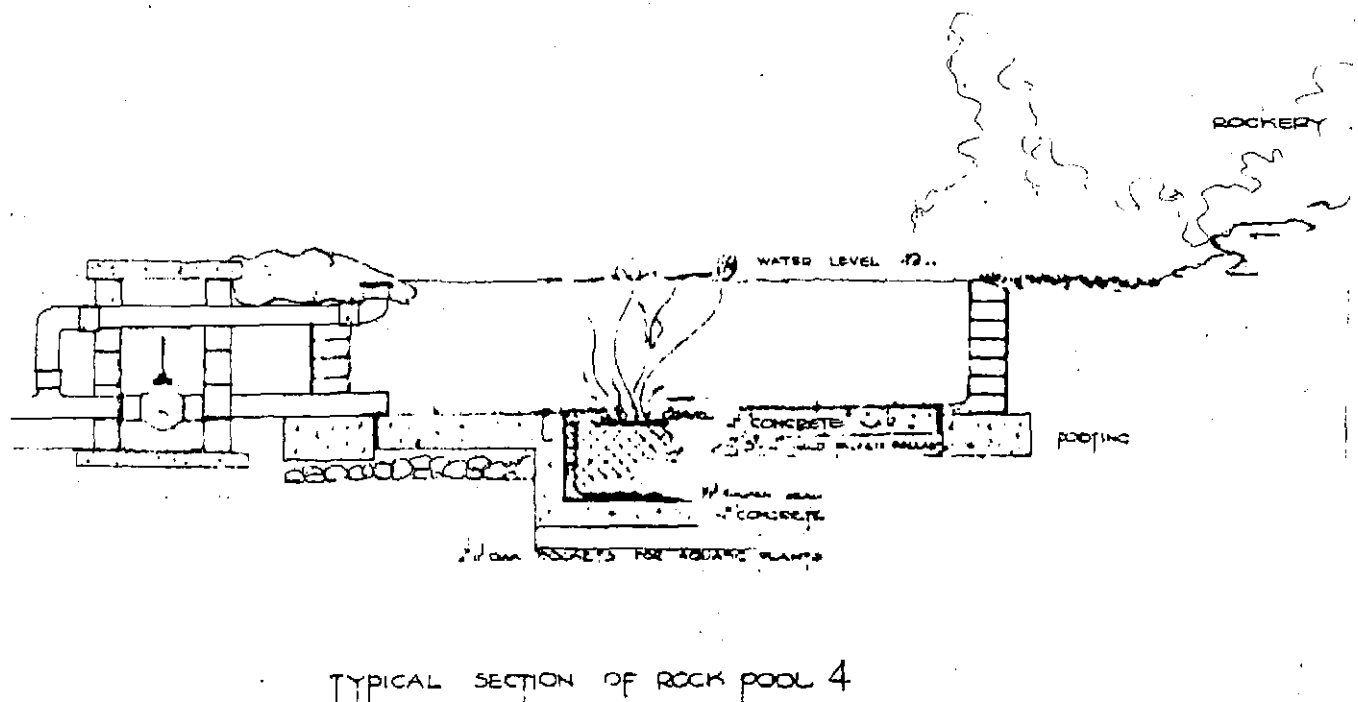


Fig. 19

These Detail drawings for the ponds at the Reserve, prepared in January 1953, show that the designer's intention was to make the ponds appear as if they were a natural, integral part of the site's existing sandstone benching and outcrops by using bushrock for the pond edging. The repeated use of the words "rockery" and "selected bushsandstone flags", as well as the wavy lines depicting the rock in the section drawings, indicate that for the most part, the pool edges were to be overhung by these irregular, weathered, exfoliated sandstone 'flags'. In a few parts, the turf was shown as growing right up to the pool edge. Small, rush-like plants were also to be used to soften the edges and help merge them into the adjacent rockery garden.

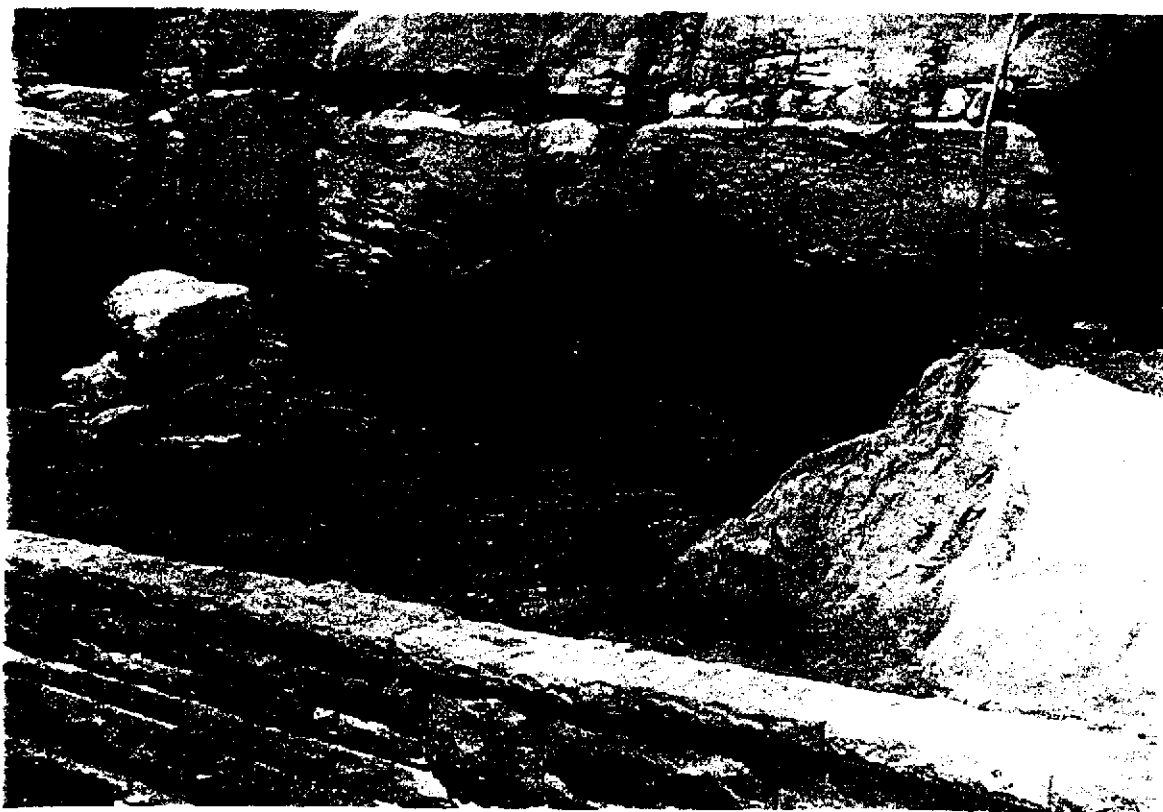


Fig. 20 Detail of the small pond constructed c. 1953 below the site's main rock bench. The pond is presently concealed behind the Golden Robinia and box hedge which lie between it and the footpath of Billyard Avenue. Photo: courtesy Mrs. Berzins.



Fig. 21 The McElhone Reserve under construction c. 1953, seen here from the junction of Billyard Avenue and Onslow Street. Note the bare slope in the right background, subsequently transformed into the rockery garden behind the site's central ponds. Photo: courtesy Mrs. Berzins.



Fig. 22 The south-eastern corner of McElhone Reserve c. 1953, showing the full extent of the large retaining wall built on top of the main rock bench and the formalised treatment of the natural cave/grotto on Billyard Avenue. The retaining wall is said to be on the same alignment as the one built for Alexander Macleay in the late 1820s. Photo: courtesy Mrs. Sylvia Berzins.



Fig. 23

This photograph, taken in the late 1950s - early 1960s, shows the north-western end of McElhone Reserve. The planting within the rockery above the southern pool (at the far left of the image), whilst young, comprised tufty, strappy plants and low shrubs, selected so as not to interfere with views towards the Harbour from the seats along the Reserve's western retaining wall. In the bottom left corner of the photo, note that the small section of the pond that is visible to the right of the bridge is edged by small bush rocks and not formally cut sandstone coping.

Leonard Lynch has provided another perspective. According to Lynch, Berzins was influenced by the landscape style of Christopher Tunnard<sup>12</sup>, a Canadian-born landscape architect who lectured at Harvard's Graduate School of Design in the late 1930s and 1940s and was author of the seminal work *Gardens in the Modern Landscape*, published in 1938. According to Peter Walker<sup>13</sup>

"Tunnard was sympathetic to many of the ideals of Le Corbusier, Walter Gropius and other European modernists . . . but what distinguished him from his modernist colleagues was a pragmatic, unsentimental interest in historic gardens and landscapes and his appreciation of the qualities of order, unified composition, and artistic expression in great gardens of any era and culture. He also believed in the sort of progress – artistic, scientific, technological, and social – that was based on an understanding of both past achievements and present opportunities. Even centuries-old historic landscapes could be preserved nearly intact and intensively developed". (Pp.149-150)

Coming from Riga, a city which will be celebrating its 800 year anniversary in 2001, Berzins would have been particularly attuned to Tunnard's approach. It was certainly one which he applied to the Reserve in front of *Elizabeth Bay House*.

While agreeing that Berzins had introduced a new style, Lynch described its trademark characteristics as "whimsical gardenesque", with "amoebic shapes" and "bookleaf sandstone walls" to protect vegetative edges. Prof. Weirick has remarked on the influence of Luytens and Jekyll in Berzins' reliance on an underlying architectural layout (also a strong modernist approach), with the use of raised beds, built of bookleaf sandstone, but with soft planting overspilling them.<sup>14</sup> Both Lynch and Weirick noted that during the 1950s, Sydney City Council had a lot of highly qualified stone masons, who had a high involvement in the actual execution of landscape works and were given a fairly free hand to decide on finishes.<sup>15</sup>

Berzins was also one of the founding members of the Australian Institute of Landscape Architects, and had a long and distinguished career in Sydney City Council, rising to head of the Parks and Recreation Division, from which he finally retired in 1986<sup>16</sup>. During his 35 years of service, he designed or directly supervised the design of a large number of public parks within the Sydney city area, the most notable of which are the Sandringham Gardens within Hyde Park (fig.24), the Fitzroy Gardens in Kings Cross, the Fragrance Garden (beside the former Blind Institute), the Chessboard garden in Hyde Park, Macquarie Place, and the grounds for Commonwealth Steel at Unanderra.

### 2.3 Early site management

According to Sweaney, the Reserve was given no.1 priority within the Parks and Gardens Department, to be maintained at the highest level. Only their top gardeners, who were dedicated to their work, were permitted to work on it. During the period of the Waratah Festival in the early 1970s, the Reserve won several gardening awards, sponsored by the *Sydney Morning Herald*, for the excellence of its design and plantings, augmented by showy displays of annuals in the front of some of its beds. That, combined with the launching by Lord Mayor Leo Port of the "Greening of Sydney" campaign in 1972, encouraged more extensive and larger plantings in the Reserve, as shown in figs. 25 & 26. This lush, more exuberant planting was much loved by many, partly because it gave an increased sense of comfort and privacy – see figs. 27 & 28, but it also largely obscured views to Elizabeth Bay House from the central garden room of the Reserve.

In the last few years, Berzins' design has been incrementally altered, with much of the vegetation pruned back, and some of it replaced with smaller species. While the reduction in plant size and volume is

<sup>12</sup> Tunnard was Canadian-born and lectured at Harvard's Graduate School of Design in the late 1930s and 1940s.

<sup>13</sup> Walker, P. & Simo, M. 1994. *Invisible Gardens – the Search for Modernism in the American Landscape*. MIT Press, Cambridge.

<sup>14</sup> James Weirick, Professor of Landscape Architecture, University of New South Wales, personal communication.

<sup>15</sup> Lynch, personal communication to the author, Jan. 2001.

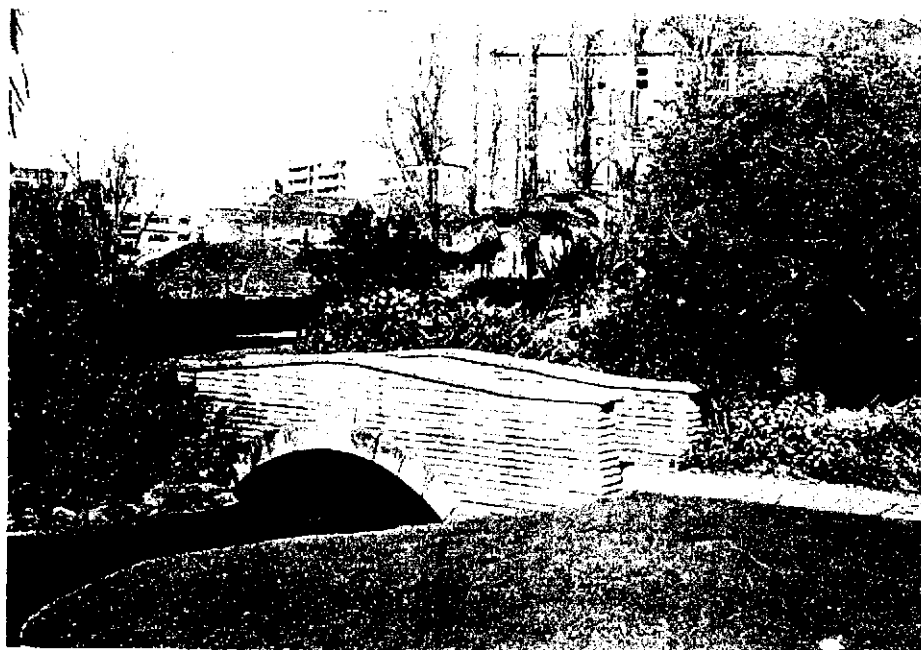
<sup>16</sup> McGowan, Tempe. 1998 (Ilmar Berzins) *HUMANISING THE CITY* in MONUMENT 25, published in Sydney.



**Fig. 25** Looking west towards *Elizabeth Bay House* from the southern section of the Reserve, this photograph taken c. 1980 shows the density of planting that bordered the site's central ponds. Whilst this former height and massing of plants provided considerable privacy for those people enjoying the lower lawn areas of the Reserve, views of the mansion were restricted to a greater extent than they are today. Photo courtesy: Mrs. Sylvia Berzins.



**Fig. 26** View of the McElhone Reserve in September 1983 taken by Sydney City Council photographer Ron Dunphy from the apartment building to the site's north. Note the band of large flowering Azaleas in the middle-ground of the image which then provided the only planted backdrop to the Reserve's northern pond. Also note the continuous and dense Photinia hedge skirting the main Reserve lawn, seen behind the now removed Willow, in the left background of the photo. Photo courtesy: Sydney City Council Archives.



**Fig. 27** This photograph c. 1980 shows the uniform line of mature Poplars that extended along part of the southern boundary, and the dense continuous 1m. high hedge along the harbour side of the lawn platform (left background). Note the bush rock and lawn edging to the pond in the left foreground and the planting bed which abutted the western side of the bridge prior to the construction of the recent dwarf retaining wall. Photo: courtesy Mrs. Sylvia Berzins.



**Fig. 28** This view over the planting behind the reserve's southern ponds, taken c. 1980, shows a marked difference in the 'visual permeability' of the garden bed compared to that which exists today. Much of the vegetation seen in this image has been cleared or 'thinned', including the removal of the Crepe Myrtle (on the right). Photo: courtesy Mrs. Berzins.



consistent with Berzins' original design intentions, there has also been some loss of shade, screening and privacy. This has led to public criticism, to the point where Council recognized the need for a study to assess its essential character, and advise on how that should be maintained into the future. That is an essential task of this study.

### 3.0 Site Description

Following the historical research, the consultant then made a detailed investigation and analysis both of the fabric of the Reserve and its perceptual and visual qualities. The Reserve has the character of a self-contained municipal park, sufficient unto itself, with its own combination of 'garden rooms' and internal visual 'scenes', although still providing the site's original role as a viewing platform for expansive views out to the Harbour.

In general terms, it was found that the essential layout and character of the Reserve as designed by Ilmar Berzins in 1950-53 had been maintained. This included the sets of access stairways; the terracing, stone bridge and central ponds which helped create the separate garden rooms; the internal pathways; the park benches just below the Onslow Street sandstone retaining wall; and the pattern of planting. In addition, the views out to the Harbour had been retained, as well as the two-way views between *Elizabeth Bay House* and the Harbour.

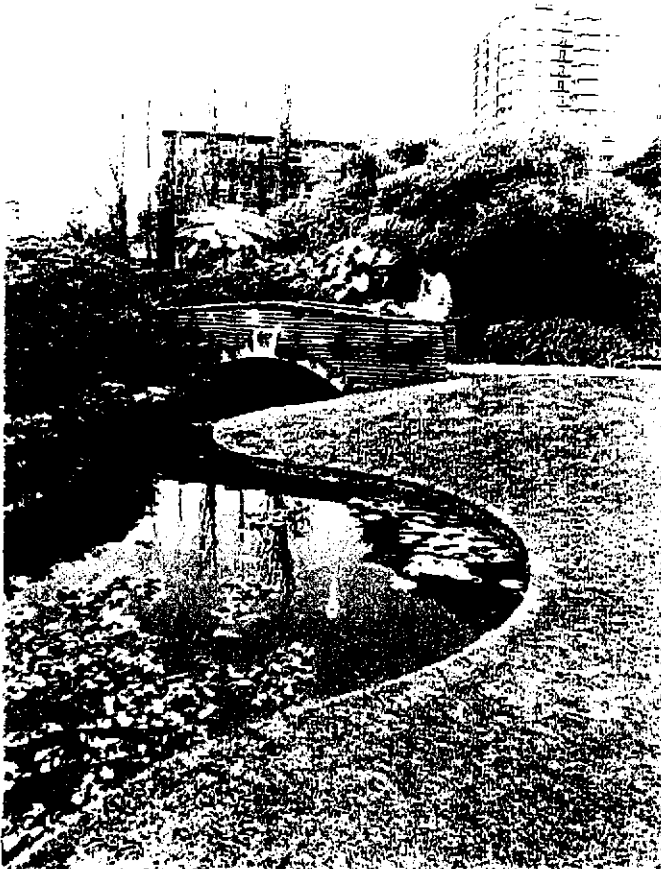
The maturing of the vegetation and lawns has provided a softening, rich texture that contrasts pleasantly against the built sandstone elements and the natural rock benches, as well as providing a framing to the above views. The sinuous ponds, with their goldfish and the perpetual sound of (reticulated) running water, has also enriched the sensory experience of the place. All of these elements have combined to create a satisfying perceptual and aesthetic experience for park users. As these are essentially subjective experiences, their intensity and significance varies from person to person; however, as the park user survey shows (see section 4 below), there was a considerable consensus on what was most appreciated. Details of all these various elements are shown in a separate A1 sheet, which is attached as Appendix B.

### 4.0 Current Concerns

Nevertheless, those who had enjoyed the Reserve over a period of years and had become attached to particular aspects of it during that time, became concerned about various changes that have occurred over the last few years. While either not noticed or of little concern to the majority of users, the changes became of growing concern to those whose design consciousness or aesthetic sensibilities had been heightened by formal training or deliberate study of aesthetics. Their concerns were expressed both by individual representations to Council – usually by letter – and by petition. A copy of the petition is attached as Appendix C.

In essence, the concerns of the petitioners, the organisers of which have organised themselves in a group calling itself 'Friends of the McElhone Reserve', are:

- Replacement of the lawn edging of the north-western pond with yellow sandstone flags – see figs. 29-30
- Excessive thinning of the vegetation in the central garden bed above the ponds – see figs. 31-32
- Changes in hedge plants which reduced screening out of house roofs in Billyard Ave. – see figs. 33-38
- Removal of the tall screening Poplars from the south-east corner of the Reserve (against the tall, brick apartment block), with the consequent loss of shade and privacy – see figs. 39-40.
- Inadequate shade generally, and especially in the north-west 'room'.
- Reduction in the amount of fussy annual plantings and replacement with robust perennial ground covers of bold form and texture, skilfully massed as appropriate.



**Fig. 29** This 1998 photo shows the large Azaleas on northern edge of the western fish pond (left), the use of annuals at the front of beds, and the mature, densely foliated Poplars screening the neighbouring apartment block. Photo: courtesy Friends of the Reserve



**Fig. 30** This photograph, taken in 2000, shows the broad, new sandstone edging along the western pond, the Magnolias which largely replaced the Azaleas, and the fully exposed apartment block at the rear, without the screening Poplar trees. Photo: courtesy Friends of the McElhone Reserve



**Fig. 31** This 1998 photograph looking east from above the central ponds in the Reserve shows the maturity and style of planting that surrounded the ponds prior to the selective clearing of this lush rockery garden. Photo: courtesy Friends of the McElhone Reserve.



**Fig. 32** Taken in 2000, the same aspect as above shows the removal of the tall Cordylines from behind the ponds and the thinning of the vegetation there. Photo: courtesy Friends of the McElhone Reserve.

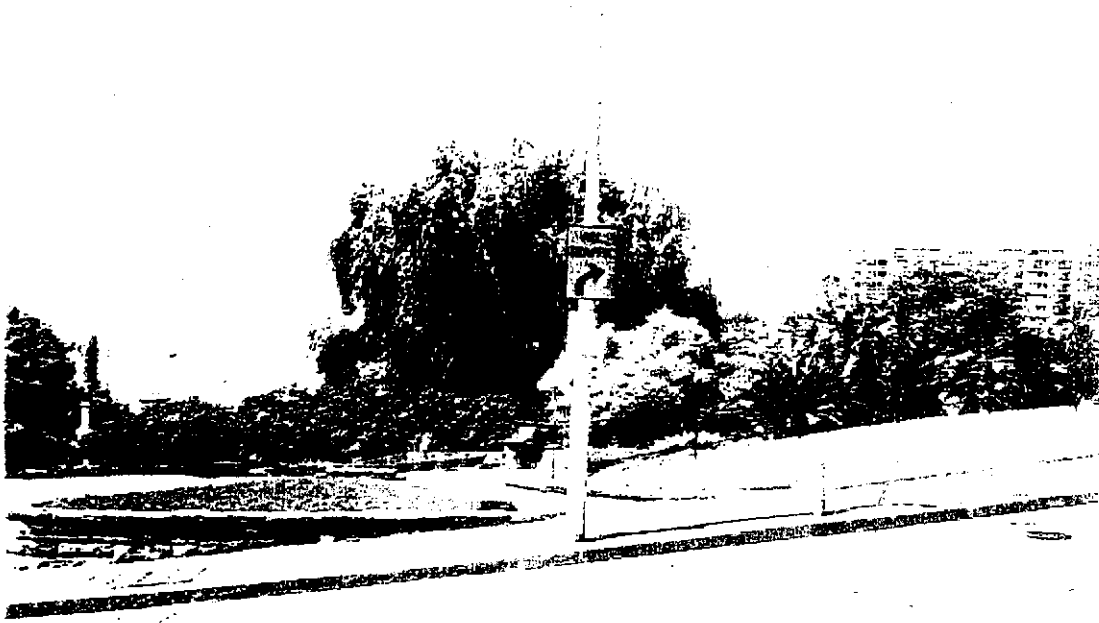


Fig. 33

The 1998 photograph (above) shows the former large Azaleas (left middle-ground) which used to screen out the homes along Billyard Avenue below. No small trees had been planted behind the Azaleas, such as the Magnolias, which as shown in the 2000 photograph below now partly conceal easterly views to the Harbour but reveal the roofs of the homes below.

Photo: courtesy Friends of the McElhone Reserve.

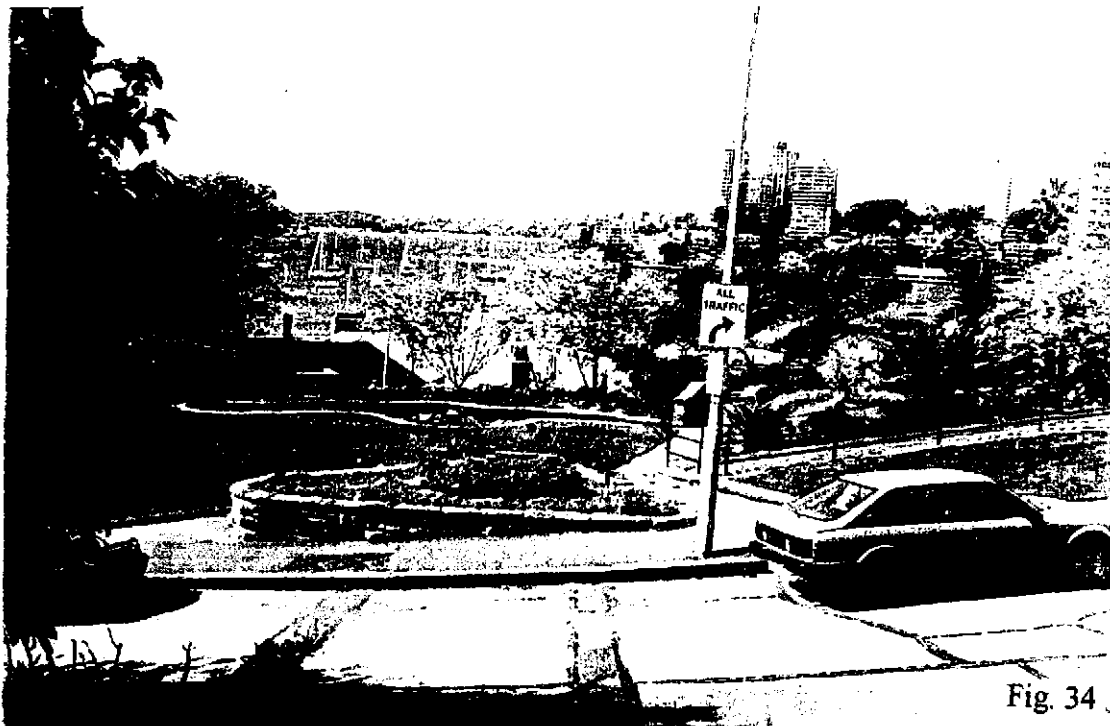


Fig. 34



**Fig. 35** Taken in 1998, this photograph shows the dense, well maintained and healthy Photinia hedge that ran in front of the estate fencing along the edge of the steep rock bench, with the majority of the homes along the lower side of Billyard Avenue being efficiently screened out by it. Photo courtesy: Friends of the McElhone Reserve.



**Fig. 36** Taken in 2000, this photograph shows the new Osmanthus hedge planted to replace the earlier Photinia hedge. Although still young, on present indications its poor growth suggests it is unlikely to develop into as successful a metre high hedge as the Photinia one. Note also that older park users deliberately seek out shade, now in short supply. Photo: courtesy Friends of the McElhone Reserve.



**Fig. 37** This photograph, taken from the southern end of the Reserve in 1998, shows that prior to the removal of the Photinia hedge, the roofs of the houses along Billyard Avenue were well screened from park users sitting within the south-eastern section of lawn in the Reserve. Photo: courtesy Friends of the McElhone Reserve.



**Fig. 38** Photograph taken in 2000 looking over the same lawn. Note the poor screening of the Billyard Avenue homes by the new Osmanthus plants. There has been little growth on these plants since that time. Photo: courtesy Friends of the McElhone Reserve.



Fig. 39

Looking south across the Reserve from the western fish pond in 1998, showing the soft, turfed edge along the pond. The Poplars which used to line the south-eastern boundary of the site (at rear) were still in place. Photo: courtesy Friends of the McElhone Reserve.



Fig. 40

Taken from the apartment block to the south-east of the Reserve in 1998, this photo shows the mature size of the former Poplars along this edge, the former density of the planting within the rockery above the ponds, and sunbathers seeking some privacy. Photo: courtesy Friends of the Reserve

While there will inevitably be differences of taste between park users and critics regarding their favourite plants, there is an underlying agreement on the nature of the elements which, in the composition created by Berzins and enriched by matured plantings, have created a pleasing aesthetic outcome in the Reserve.

## 5.0 Park User Survey

In response to the above criticism, South Sydney Council decided to undertake a systematic survey of park users, partly to ascertain whether it was widely held, and partly to gain constructive ideas about what might usefully be done. Following authorisation by the Council, the consultants visited over a week-end and at varying two hour periods during the week (e.g. early morning to catch exercisers, mid morning to catch young mothers, lunchtime to catch office workers, and late afternoon to catch dog-walkers and older residents). The questionnaire is attached as Appendix D and the answers to it are analysed in Appendix E.

Broadly, the outcomes of the survey showed that practically all users believe the Reserve is a beautiful, unusual and well-maintained small park and an essential public open space within Elizabeth Bay. Of the people interviewed, 92% said they appreciated the Reserve's facilities and overall landscape layout as they existed today, and would not want to see dramatic changes to its composition.

The great majority of interviewees were young, local residents of the area and most of this group said that they used the Reserve on a regular basis. Of the 13% of interviewees who were not local residents, half said they used it more than once a week.

When asked what they mainly used the Reserve for, the majority said their usage was best described as 'passive recreation'. Further questioning and observation revealed the Reserve was used for four main purposes, those being for:

- sun-baking (49% of respondents)
- reading (30% of respondents)
- eating (local residents on weekends and local workers during the week - 28% of respondents)
- an appreciation of the view (49% of respondents)

Asked what attributes they most liked or disliked about the reserve, users focussed much more on the positive aspects of the site than those they believed to be its shortcomings. The surveys indicated that users' favourite elements and aspects of the Reserve were:

- the ponds and fish (70% of respondents)
- the open lawn areas (45% of respondents)
- the view (60% of respondents)
- its availability and close proximity (77% of respondents)
- its well-kept state (70% of respondents)
- a relatively quiet and secluded place (44% of respondents)

A quarter of interviewees expressed appreciation of the park's existing design. Only about half were able to identify design elements which they thought could be improved, and only 6% raised more than three negative factors about the reserve's existing layout. Of these factors, the largest number of responses concerned:

- lack of shade;
- exposure to the street, and
- insufficient planting.

15% of interviewees disapproved of the new sandstone edging around the northern fish pond; the rest had not noticed it.



There was a substantial difference in interviewees' knowledge of the site's historical association with *Elizabeth Bay House*, with about one third of them being unaware that the Reserve land once made up the central core of its landscaped grounds. Two-thirds of interviewees - irrespective of whether they were aware of the historical link between the two - believed the Reserve did not relate particularly well to *Elizabeth Bay House*. However, 53% thought the Reserve did not need to relate to the mansion, believing it had its own well established identity.

Nearly all interviewees noted that the Reserve maintained important views to the Harbour, and few thought these were being interrupted by internal reserve plantings. Very few were concerned that persons sitting on the park benches just below Onslow Street had their views blocked in places by the height and density of the planting (particularly the *Philodendrons*) within the central bed. Even fewer had considered the desirability of maintaining views to *Elizabeth Bay House* from the Harbour so that it could continue to be appreciated as a marine villa, as it had been in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. For the majority, who mostly used the larger, lower lawn, the sense of being within a 'garden room' which had a rear 'wall' of dense greenery that gave them a sense of privacy and security, was more important.

Nine out of ten interviewees believed South Sydney Council was doing a satisfactory job in maintaining the reserve. However, most of those did suggest various proposals which they would like Council to consider in future plans for the Reserve.

These proposals generally coincide both with those put forward to the consultant by the Friends of the McElhone Reserve, and with the consultant's own analysis and findings arising from the detailed site investigation, which are outlined in section 3.0 above.

## 6.0 Community Consultation

Prior to the consultative meeting with interested local residents at *Elizabeth Bay House* on 22 January, the consultants received a number of individual communications about their concerns and proposals for the Reserve. Nearly all of these had been identified in the park use survey and discussions held previously. Perhaps the only new items were:

- A more explicit recognition of the original role of the Reserve's open space relationship with *Elizabeth Bay House*, and an emerging belief that whatever else remained of the original famous garden of Alexander Macleay should be identified, conserved, and interpreted in a public way, e.g. through signage. (The Historic Houses Trust has already prepared a proposal in this regard, which has been forwarded to Council for its consideration.)
- The need to consider ways in which the Reserve and the House might be more closely associated in the public mind and considered - perhaps even managed - as inter-related elements.
- The need to encourage more birdlife and frogs into the Reserve.
- The need to improve lighting in the Reserve, and relate it in some way to the House.

## 7.0 Heritage Assessment

### 7.1 Basis of Assessment of Heritage Significance

From the above research, site investigation and analysis, together with a detailed understanding of the community's esteem for, and concerns about, the Reserve, the consultants were able to formulate an assessment of its heritage value, or cultural significance. In doing so, they found it was necessary to take into account its three principal phases, namely:

- i. its original role a forecourt to *Elizabeth Bay House*
- ii. its role as a municipal park
- iii. its role, functions, and degree of community esteem today.

However, the considerations in phase iii. are essentially covered when addressing the nature of heritage criterion concerning a place's "strong or special association with a particular community or group" – see below, and is not addressed separately from phase ii.

The system of assessment used is based on the principles of the *Burra Charter* of Australia ICOMOS, drawn up to guide the assessment, conservation and management of sites and relics. The NSW *Heritage Act 1977* (as amended in 1999) is the governing legislation, and is implemented through the *NSW Heritage Manual and Assessment Guidelines*. The actual criteria for the assessment of heritage significance are set out below.

## 7.2 Nature of Significance Criteria:

The various nature of heritage values and the degree of this value are appraised according to the following criteria:<sup>17</sup>

- an item's importance in the course, or pattern of NSW's cultural or natural history;
- an item's strong or special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in NSW's cultural or natural history;
- an item's importance in demonstrating particular aesthetic characteristics valued by a community or cultural group;
- an item's strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons;
- an item's importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period;
- an item's potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of NSW's cultural or natural history;
- an item's possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of NSW's cultural or natural history;
- an item's importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of NSW's
  - cultural or natural places; or
  - cultural or natural environments

To be assessed as having heritage significance an item must:

- meet at least one or more of the nature of significance criteria; and
- retain the integrity of its key attributes.

Items may also be ranked according to their heritage significance as having:

- Local Significance
- State Significance

## 7.3 Statement of Significance

The state historic themes with which the Reserve is associated are:

- |                |                |            |               |
|----------------|----------------|------------|---------------|
| a. land tenure | b. environment | c. persons | d. recreation |
|----------------|----------------|------------|---------------|

The significance of each of the two historical phases of the Reserve was assessed separately, and then a rating given for the level of heritage significance of the Reserve today.

### 7.3.1. Forecourt to Elizabeth Bay House

The terraced platforms of the McElhone Reserve have a high degree of historical significance as the centrepiece of a landscape composition created between 1827 and 1835 above Elizabeth Bay as a

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<sup>17</sup> NSW Heritage Assessment Criteria, as adopted from April 1999.

forecourt to the elegant House of that name by Alexander Macleay, who as Colonial Secretary of NSW, was one of the most senior officials in the colonial administration at that time.

The composition of *Elizabeth Bay House* and its forecourt has aesthetic significance for demonstrating the best characteristics of 'the picturesque', a landscape style much valued by the upper classes and landed gentry of Britain in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. The grassed forecourt was designed to set off the House and enable it to be viewed from the Harbour as an imposing marine villa in a picturesque setting. The forecourt also has aesthetic value for facilitating the enjoyment of views to the north-east, down the Harbour past Clark Island to the Heads.

Having been used for social events by the Macleay family even before the House was built, and as the centerpiece of the famous landscaped garden, the forecourt to *Elizabeth Bay House* had social significance for its special association with the colonial elite.

The forecourt also has significance for demonstrating a high degree of creative and technical achievement in its design and construction in this early period of settlement. The creation of generous platforms through skilful earthworks and terracing, the clever insertion of stairways, and the elegant design of these and the retaining walls were notable achievements at the time, and were much admired.

The continued existence of the grassed forecourt of such an important early colonial mansion so close to the city is now rare and constitutes an important aspect of NSW's cultural history. It and the House retain the integrity of their key attributes, although only fragments of the famous gardens that once surrounded them still exist.

#### 7.3.2 The McElhone Reserve

Although the site gains much of its historical significance from its 19<sup>th</sup> century use, it also has historical significance as one of the first public parks designed and constructed by Sydney City Council after World War II as part of its policy to enhance the environment of the city and its environs adopted in 1948.

The Reserve also gains additional significance through its association with the work of Ilmar Berzins, the first qualified landscape architect to be appointed to the Council (and in Sydney) in 1950/51. It is one of the early park designs of Berzins, who over a career of 35 years designed many of the best-known parks in Sydney and rose to the position of Director of the Department of Parks and Recreation that Council.

The Reserve demonstrates a high degree of creative achievement in the early 1950s, recognizing its original forecourt role while creating a self-sufficient, sociable space of several grassed rooms, furnished with ponds, rich perimeter plantings, and sandstone stairways, paths and bridges. Over the years, with maturing vegetation, these have melded into a particularly satisfying aesthetic composition.

The Reserve has a strong and special association with the resident community of Elizabeth Bay for whom it is their principal local park and haven for passive recreation and reflection. It is also held in esteem by the wider community, reflected for example in its use as a setting for wedding photos and as a stopping point for tourist buses.

The Reserve also has value through demonstrating the principal characteristics of municipal park design in Sydney in the early post War period, and the influence, through Berzins, of some aspects of the modernist movement in landscape design, as distinct from the traditional Victorian/Beaux Artes designs.

The Reserve possesses a rare combination of 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century landscape styles and elements which – as the recent destruction of several parks designed by Berzins demonstrates – have become endangered.

The Reserve retains the integrity of its key attributes and satisfies many of the 'nature of significance' criteria used for determining heritage significance. While, on its own, it would readily warrant a rating of 'local significance' and be included in the heritage schedule of the local environmental plan, the combination of its special association with the designed landscape and curtilage of *Elizabeth Bay House* makes it of State significance. Since the House itself is listed on the Register of the National Estate and on the State Heritage Register, this would appear to be an appropriate step.

## **8.0 Conservation and Management Issues**

It follows that, given the ranking of the Reserve as a place of State heritage significance, every effort should be made to conserve its key fabric and design. In shaping a conservation policy to achieve this outcome it is, however, necessary first to take into account the following range of issues.

### **8.1 Issues**

Although there is no developmental threat to, or likely loss of municipal ownership of, the Reserve, and although there is a remarkable degree of support for it and its continuance, there are still several issues of a detailed nature which need careful consideration. The principal of these is the way in which South Sydney Council manages its landscape heritage items. To elaborate, there needs to be, first, an understanding and recognition of what heritage is in terms of landscape – not just buildings – and what Council's responsibilities are in terms of ensuring the correct protection and conservation of heritage landscape places. Second, this understanding and acceptance of conservation responsibilities needs to be translated all down the chain of command to those in the field, and including especially contractors, who are undertaking regular or periodic maintenance and repair of heritage items. Third, there is the need for the latter persons to consult up the line, particularly with those officers in Council responsible for heritage conservation. Fourth, there is the need for improved and continuous consultation with Reserve users and the local community. Proposals for dealing with these issues are elaborated upon in section 10 below.

If the recommendation that the Reserve be listed on the State Heritage Register as a place of State significance, then there is a statutory obligation to consult the Heritage Council before any changes – other than routine maintenance – are made to it. The provisions of the Heritage Act 1977 also apply.

There are also financial issues involved. Particularly because the Reserve is assessed as an item of State Significance, it should be granted adequate budgetary resources to ensure that its requirements for proper conservation are adequately met.

### **8.2 Constraints**

The principal constraint on Council's management of the Reserve in future would be the need to respect its heritage values and to ensure that daily actions taken in respect of it are consistent with the protection and conservation of those values. These values not only concern its fabric, historical layout, and traditional plantings, but also its visual and aesthetic qualities. These are, of course, all inter-linked, and have much to do with the degree of community esteem and evaluation for the Reserve.

Another constraint would appear to be the vigilance of the local community and Reserve users in monitoring and protecting what they regard as the important values of the Reserve.

A third constraint would be the need to consult the Heritage Council to gain approval for any significant changes proposed for the Reserve.

### **8.3 Opportunities**

Once this report has been finally adopted by Council (after appropriate consultation and amendment), it should provide clear guidance for the future conservation and management of the Reserve, including

'desired outcomes', defined plant palettes, and well-defined lines of responsibility. This framework should provide a good opportunity for the optimal management and conservation of the Reserve.

There are, however, broader opportunities. These lie in the options to re-create closer links between the Reserve and *Elizabeth Bay House*. These links could include:

- something as simple as placing a stairway against the original terrace wall along Onslow Ave., (without making any cut or change to that wall) and making a break in the 'estate' fence in order to facilitate direct access between the front portico of the House and the Reserve. (Such an action would, of course, be reversible, if later conservationists were to consider a better solution);
- placing a plaque or signage in an appropriate place in the Reserve which would depict the original function of the Reserve as the core of Alexander Macleay's grand landscaping scheme for *Elizabeth Bay House*;
- establishing a formal liaison between the Curator of *Elizabeth Bay House* and South Sydney Council to increase co-operation and coordinate the presentation, use and management of the Reserve as the original forecourt open space for *Elizabeth Bay House*. This would have particular implications for its planting regime and the protection and framing of views between the House and the Harbour;
- implementing the results of possible future, more detailed investigation into the actual siting of original plantings within the original Macleay estate and refinement of the palette of plantings for use within the Reserve;
- removal of that section of Onslow Ave. which runs in front of *Elizabeth Bay House*, and extension of the lawns of the Reserve directly up to the platform of the House; or, **alternatively**
- re-creating a carriagedrive in that section of Onslow Ave. which runs in front of *Elizabeth Bay House*, narrowing its present width, re-surfacing it with a brown gravel topping and removing modern kerbing, footpaths and fittings, and edging it with lawn instead;
- introducing a lighting scheme that would have the effect of uniting the House and the Reserve visually, with the fittings being more in character with the style and character of the two elements.

The above suggestions are only broad-brush only, and would need further consideration and refinement. They represent various levels or degrees of intervention, which would require in some cases careful consultation with, and the prior agreement of, other authorities. They need not be undertaken simultaneously, but could be implemented step by step over a period of time in the event that support for them reaches the stage where action and funds are forthcoming.

## 9.0 Conservation Policy

In the light of the above, the conservation policy should seek to preserve the McElhone Reserve as a place of State significance, in tandem with the conservation and interpretation of *Elizabeth Bay House*.

It should have the dual aims of conserving the Reserve as the original grassed and terraced open space forecourt to *Elizabeth Bay House* and as a well-designed and maintained municipal park designed in 1950-53 by Sydney City Council's first qualified landscape architect and implemented by its (then) newly established Parks and Gardens Section.

The policy should be to conserve and, where appropriate, restore or reinstate the original layout and sandstone fabric of the Reserve in accordance with Ilmar Berzins' designs and intentions, as shown in the original drawings and depicted in photographs at the time (see figs. 15, 18, 19 & 23, and Appendix A). This includes the preservation of the Macleay period sandstone retaining wall adjacent to Onslow Avenue and the later retaining walls, stairways and paths built in the 1950s.

The policy should also respect the designer's intention that the rockery above the ponds should be seen to achieve a natural modulation of the slope above the ponds, as well as to express, and appear to be derived from, the natural sandstone topography of the site. It should also respect the designer's intention that the edging of the ponds be either small bush rock (if backed by a garden bed, to contain soil) or by mown grass running right up to the water's edge, if backed by an area of lawn.

The policy should also respect the intentions of the designers to preserve the important views out to the Harbour by planting low shrubs, ground covers and water-edging plants around the ponds and within the rockery behind them in the central sector of the Reserve, and to have larger shrubs and some taller, canopy trees around its edges to frame the views and define its boundaries.

The policy should aim to achieve a judicious balance between the competing needs to screen out or at least visually soften, large areas of built form (such as nearby apartment blocks), to maintain important views between the House and the Harbour, to provide more shade, and to foster within the Reserve a desired sense of partial enclosure and privacy.<sup>18</sup>

The policy should also foster, by means of signage and practical measures, an understanding of the original roles and relationship between the Reserve and the House so that present and future generations will be able to appreciate their full significance.

## 10.0 Implementation

The implementation of the above policies will require a combination of the adoption of new strategies at Council level (including particularly managerial/administrative arrangements), and also of new practical measures (in terms of works and maintenance programs).

### 10.1 Council measures

The measures which Council could usefully adopt should be designed to ensure that:

- i. Councillors are fully informed of the heritage status of the Reserve and what the conservation of its heritage significance actually entails;
- ii. all Council officers who have responsibilities towards the Reserve understand the essential principles of conserving heritage fabric (both hardworks and plantings) and that no changes are to be made without first carefully reading the conservation policy and considering the effect on that fabric;
- iii. landscape officers of the Council assume a direct, clear responsibility for providing conservation advice and management guidance for field staff looking after this (and other) heritage Reserves;
- iv. Council landscape architects, or consultants and/or contractors appointed by them, are not given authority to decide on aesthetic or maintenance issues in accordance with their own creative instincts and aesthetic preconceptions without first reading this Report and taking into full account its implications and recommendations;

<sup>18</sup> By partial enclosure is meant people's instinctive need to have an assurance that their back is protected (by a hedge, forest, wall or hedge) but that they have a clear view out in front of them. 'Privacy' is mainly for sun-baking.

- v. clear guidelines are established for the desired outcomes to be achieved by those responsible for detailed maintenance of the Reserve;
- vi. The need, with regard to decisions of planting schemes, to select plants from within an agreed palette of plants based on specific themes and visual requirements;
- vii. Contractors and their workers are not given the authority to make decisions on alterations or replacement of hard works without prior consultation with, and permission from, the Council officer responsible for the supervision of heritage controls over landscape items.

## 10.2 Community Liaison

Next, there is the need to maintain a good dialogue about the Reserve between Council, Reserve users and the surrounding community, so that they can be kept well-informed and given the opportunity to comment – in advance – upon any changes Council or its ground-staff propose to make to it which may adversely affect them or the Reserve's heritage (including aesthetic) values.

The community, in turn, can become the 'eyes and ears' of the Council and report any theft of valuable plants, vandalism, or other anti-social behaviour (such as 'shooting-up' by drug addicts) in the Reserve. They would also have an opportunity to inform Council's landscape officers if work actually performed by contractors or field staff does not, in their opinion, conform to the conservation principles and guidelines which Council decides to adopt from this Report.

## 10.3 Recommended works

During the first consultation with the community, numerous suggested works were identified on a display sheets and described orally by the consultant, who explained the underlying reasons for them. As a consequence of the discussion which occurred at that meeting, and subsequently with Council officers and representatives of Friends of the Reserve, these suggested works were refined and then put on public exhibition at the Council's library at Kings Cross on 8 February. These suggestions are now included as draft recommendations in this Report, and are set out on the following pages. When reading them, reference should be made to the numerical key on the site plan – see fig. 41 – which indicates the area to which each group of suggestions refers.

The Notes that appear throughout the recommended works are intended to explain the reasons for them or to raise options for consideration.

Please note that the plants with an asterisk are those known to have been acquired by Alexander Macleay and probably grown by him and/or his son at the Elizabeth Bay estate. It seems appropriate that, where suitable, these could constitute most of the palette of plants proposed for particular beds or areas within the Reserve. However, as many of his plants were grown on the rich alluvial flats near the edge of the Harbour, only some would be suitable for use in the hot, exposed site of the Reserve, with its thin, sandstone soils.

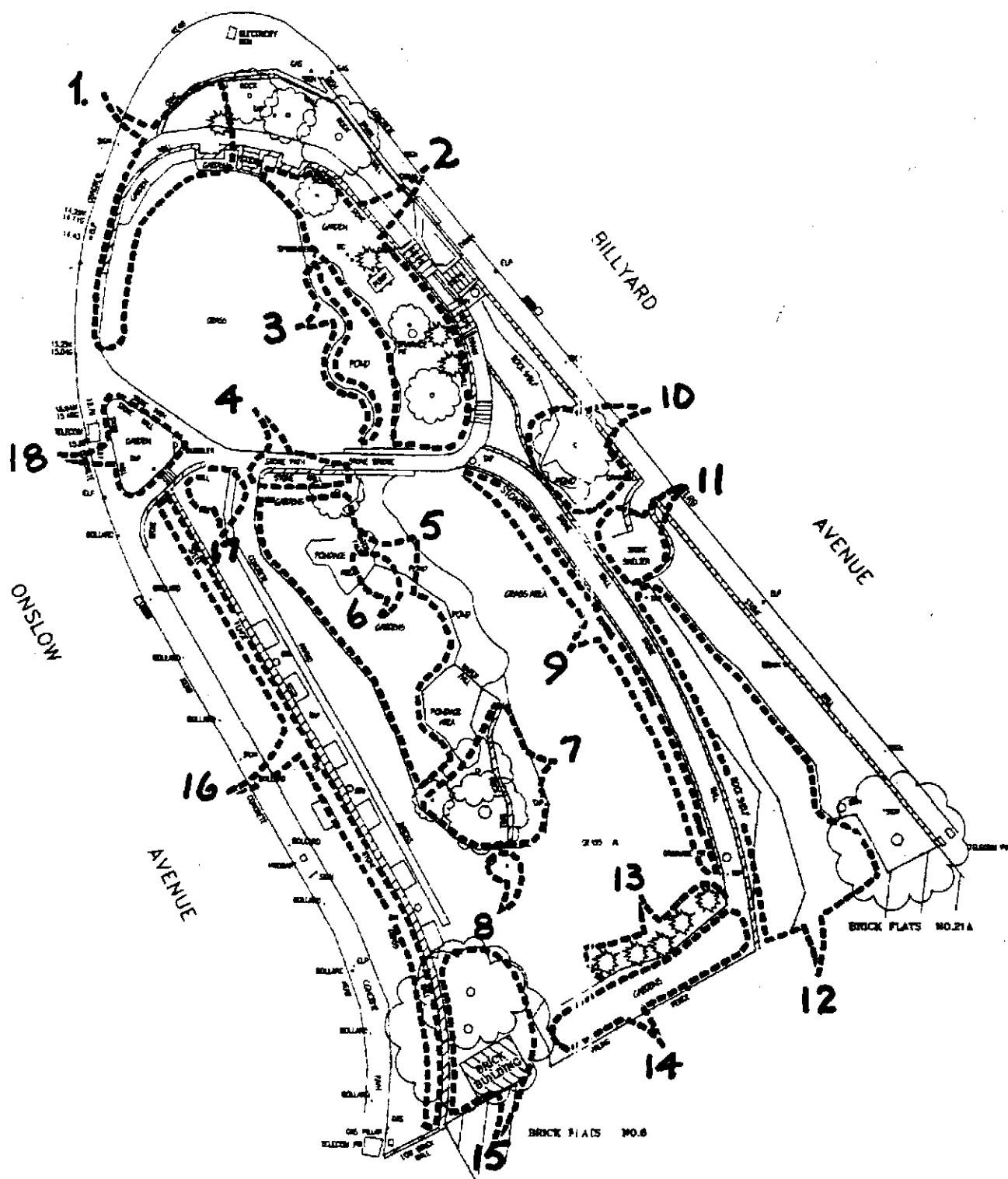


Fig. 41 The Arthur McElhone Reserve - Recommended Works Site Plan.



## RECOMMENDED WORKS

### Area 1

- Existing annual plantings to be removed.
- Garden bed abutting lawn to be widened to 1.8 metres and extended south along the footpath to the junction between the footpath and the stone path north of the triangular garden bed. It could curve around slightly to the east, to foster the sense of enclosure.
- Bed to be excavated to 0.5m, filled with good topsoil, and have drainage pipes and irrigation lines installed.
- 3 super advanced small/medium trees to be planted within bed. They need to be fairly dense, evergreen, hardy, have a good form, & with enough canopy to provide worthwhile shade. Suggested species are:

#### a. Natives

Blueberry Ash (*Elaeocarpus reticulatus*)  
 Water Gum (*Tristania laurina*)  
 Lillypilly (*Acmena smithii* or *Syzygium* sp.)\*  
 Lemon scented Myrtle (*Backhousia citriodora*)  
 Ivory Curl Tree (*Buckinghamia celissima*)  
 Tuckeroo (*Cupaniopsis anacardioides*)  
 Norfolk Is. Hibiscus (*Lagunaria patersonii*)\*  
 Firewheel Tree (*Stenocarpus sinuatus*)\*  
 Possibly Apple gum (*Angophora costata*) or  
 Scribbly Gum (*Eucalyptus haemastoma*)

**NOTE 1:** The use of natives can be justified on the basis that the vegetation on the north-west side of the Macleay gardens was mostly natives - the original indigenous trees - see for example the 1856 photo of the rock shelter with gum trees behind it. However, gums may not provide enough screening & shade, could become too big, and have unpredictable shapes.

#### b. Exotics

Strawberry Tree (*Arbutus unedo*)\*  
 Kaffir Plum (*Harpephyllum caffrum*)  
 Tree Hibiscus (*Hibiscus tiliacea*)  
 Persian Lilac (*Melia azedarach*)\*  
 European Olive (*Olea europea*)\*  
 Keurboom (*Virgilia capensis*)

**NOTE 2:** Exotics can be justified on the basis that they are drawn from the palette of plants that Macleay imported and planted in his garden.

**NOTE 3:** Plants identified as being included in Macleay's plant lists are marked with an asterisk.

One tree should be planted near the south-eastern end of the extended bed. The second one is to be located at the northern end of the bed, immediately west of the inset seating area and the third in the middle of the bed, equidistant from the other two.

- A double row of *Russelia equisetiformis* could be planted for the length of the bed, or for part of it. Other low bordering shrubs could be *Lantana montevidensis*, *Cistus* (Rock rose), *Kniphofia*, *Hebe* sp., *Winter Iris* (*I. unguicularis*), *Strelitzia reginae*\*, or the smaller versions of *Phormium tenax*\*. (The use of *Agapanthus*, *Dietes Clivea* and *Doryanthus* should be avoided as they are so common today that they would be regarded as contemporary, i.e. not period, plantings.)

### Area no.2

- One of the two easterly Magnolias should be lifted and transplanted into the empty corner of the bed at the junction of Onslow and Billyard Avenues.
- Second easterly Magnolia and two flowering peach trees should be lifted and transplanted to the north-west end of the bed. The purpose of this is to open views to harbour while screening out the blocks of flats.
- Existing small Azaleas should be removed and bed should be excavated to a minimum depth of 600mm throughout the garden bed & filled by new quality topsoil. Proper drainage and irrigation to be fitted.

New large species of Azaleas (or alternative suitable shrubs\*) should be planted to provide 1.2 metre high backdrop to the pond and screen out roofs of houses in Billyard Ave. below.

**NOTE 4:** Alternative suitable shrubs could be  
*Abelia grandiflora* (uniflora?)\*  
*Escallonia rubra* or *macrantha*\*  
*Raphiolepis* 'springtime'  
*Eleagnus pungens maculata*  
*Euonymus japonicus*\*  
*Viburnum tinus*\*

**NOTE 5:** It is not necessary to have the same single plant to form the hedge. One, or perhaps two in the above list could be used as well.

- Bush rocks within this bed should be re-laid in their original position along the north-eastern edge of the pond, in place of the new sandstone edging, which is to be lifted (see below).
- An opportunity can be taken to plant colourful edging plants just behind the bush rock and in front of the new hedge.

These should be ones which harmonise with the hedge plants and could include:

- . Hemerocallis
- . Bilbergia nutans
- . Arctotis hybrids
- . Osteospermum sp.
- . Erigeron karwins.
- . Zantedeschia aethiopica

### Area no. 3

- Existing sandstone edging to pond to be removed, & replaced with a thin steel plate to hold pond membrane in place, and original lawn edge extended on top of the plate up to the water's edge, as shown in earlier photos.
- Lawn will need to be carefully graded so that run-off from this surrounding 'garden room' does not all flow straight into the pond. Also, the lawn on its southern edge abutting the inner path needs to be lowered so that water does not puddle along the path.

### Area No.4

- Low retaining wall abutting the bridge should be removed and an informal rockery (using bush-rocks closeby) put together informally in its place (see earlier photos for guidance). However, to control water and soil run-off from the adjoining garden above it, a small discreet, kerb wall (rock concreted together) and an ag. line should be laid (both carefully concealed) behind the rockery to collect and direct water away from the path below. The rockery should be inter-planted with perennials and small shrubs usually found close to water – e.g. irises arum lilies, rushes, cyperus, etc.. See also list of plants suggested for area 5 below.
- Existing grass slope and concrete stepping stones should be retained.

### Area 5

- A judicious balance needs to be achieved for planting along this central bed, to respect:
  - . the fact that in Macleay's time, this was maintained as grassed open space, in order not to interfere with, or detract from, appreciation of the elegance of his mansion; no plantings were put here (see early photos)
  - . the need to maintain uninterrupted the view corridor between the House and the Harbour, and the presentation of the House as a marine villa in a picturesque setting.
  - . Berzins' design intention in 1950-53 that this be a *rockery* which negotiated the change of level between the upper and middle slopes of the Reserve and which maintained the view corridor between Harbour & House;

the 1950s plans showed only low rockery plants and reeds close to the ponds; this was confirmed by both a photograph of the late 1950s – early 1960s and by the horticulturalist who worked with Berzins;

the subsequent overlays of plantings in the late 1960s and through the 1970s associated with the SMH garden competitions and 'greening of Sydney' programs;

the fact that older users of the Reserve from this period have come to accept this as the proper condition/planting regime of the Reserve;

that contemporary users gain a sense of security and privacy from the 'wall' of planting behind and upslope of the ponds; it also appears as a natural green backdrop to the ponds;

that persons sitting on the park benches just below Onslow Ave. find it difficult to enjoy the view to the Harbour through the dense vegetative screen;

that persons standing on the portico, or looking through the windows of *Elizabeth Bay House* appreciate the planting because it screens out views of the rooftops of buildings below Billyard Avenue and focuses the view directly on the Harbour beyond.

**The compromise** proposed to acknowledge and take into account all these competing factors is as follows:

- ensure that the maximum height of all shrubs does not exceed 2-2.5 m.
- ensure that some permeability is achieved so viewers on park seats can enjoy views to the Harbour.
- ensure that viewers in the Reserve *and* on the Harbour can continue to enjoy views to the House and experience it as a *marine villa* in the way it was originally intended.

**NOTE 6** It is not proposed that all existing plantings be removed in order to install those listed below. What is being provided is a *palette from which replacement or infill plantings can be made on a gradual, progressive basis.*

**NOTE 7** Because this central bed lies directly in front of *Elizabeth Bay House*, which is a very sophisticated European-derived cultural artefact, and because Macleay did not use native plants within this forecourt, it is considered inappropriate to use them here. Instead, only ornamentals used during the 19<sup>th</sup> century are being proposed.

- Planting close to the ponds should consist of those that normally grow close to water such as:  
*Arum lilies (Zantedeschia aethiopica)*  
*Water loving Irises e.g. I. ensata*  
*Cyperus involucratus*  
*Restio sp. & Isolepis nodosa*  
 Many Bromeliads, e.g. *Billbergias*  
 However, all of these must all be able to enjoy full sun and tolerate strong winds.
- Plantings one row behind these edging plants can be a little taller, but not more than 1m. These can include:  
*Rock roses (Cistus sp.)*  
*Day lilies (Hemerocallis)*  
*Russelia equisetiformis*  
*Kniphofia sp.*  
*Strelizia reginae\**  
*Phormiums (lower variety)\**  
*Hebes (lower species)*  
*Cannas*  
*Eriostemon myoporoides\**  
*Yucca filamentosa\**  
*Cotoneaster horizontalis*  
*Juniperus confertus & horizontalis*
- Plants in the back row (i.e. closest to the upper terrace, near Onslow Ave.) should not exceed 2-2.5m. at most. They could include:  
*Abelia grandiflora\* or schumanii*  
*Portwine Magnolia (Michelia figo)\**  
*Osmanthus fragrans\**  
*Nerium oleander\**  
*Dracena\* (selected species)*  
*Hedychium gardnerianum*  
*Choisya ternata*  
*Ricepaper plant (Tetrapanax papyrifera)\**  
*Polygala myrtifolia*  
*Nandina domestica*

### Area 6

- Existing *Philodendron* needs to be judiciously pruned to lower its height and allow some visibility through it. This should be done in stages – phased over several months to judge the result.

### Area 7

- Existing conifer and coral tree should be Removed. A *Frangipani (Plumeria acuminata Lutea\*)* or *Orchid Tree (Bauhinia purpurea\*)* could be planted in lieu of the coral tree.
- Recently made lower bed north of old rock wall should be removed. The bed should be returned to its earlier narrower size and curving shape, and the regained space turfed.

### Area 8

- A lighting consultant should be commissioned to design layout and quantity of lighting units for the reserve. Existing thick concrete light pole should be removed and replaced – not in the same location – by a smaller cast iron model which relates better to the style of Elizabeth Bay House and would still suit the Reserve.

### Area 9

- In view of poor performance of hedges along this wall, existing bed ought to be excavated to a minimum depth of 600mm and filled with high quality topsoil. At the same time, an irrigation system and proper drainage should be installed.
  - If it is wished to restore the previous *Photinia* hedge, then the soil should contain a substantial proportion of loam with some clay content in the subsoil. Other possible hedging plants could include:  
*Escallonia rubra\**  
*Raphiolepis 'Springtime'*  
*Viburnum tinus\**  
*Abelia grandiflora\**  
*Strelizia reginae\* + Phormium tenax\**  
 (just possibly) *Osmanthus* again
- NOTE: There does not need to be only one plant in the hedge. There could be substantial runs of, say, 3 compatible plants, as the bed is a lengthy one.

### Area 10

- Golden *Robinia* to be removed because it is out-of-character with period plantings and increasingly will block views to the Harbour.
- Existing *Buxus* hedge should be removed, small pond cleaned, and surrounding area planted with low plants associated with water edges and damp places. These include  
*Cyperus involucratus & papyrifera*  
*Restio sp.*  
*Isolepis nodosa*  
*Juncus usitatus*  
 Native ferns such as *Christella*, *Doodia*  
*Blechnum* and *Asplenium* species  
 Many of these grow naturally in damp areas and would fill in this useless space in a way Nature would do at the bottom of rock benches. One could also include *Bauera rubioides\** (used by Macleay) and *Macrozamia communis*.

### Area 11

- Existing Bougainvillea needs to be pruned periodically, and adventitious *Celtis* must be removed from the roof of the stone shelter.

### Area 12

- Large rock benches should be cleared of all weeds and inappropriate and adventitious plantings (except the *Ficus*) and developed as a rockery garden.
- The lawn from this area should be removed, as it is not used and being so close to Billyard, lacks privacy. The area should be incorporated into the rockery garden.
- When the existing Poplar becomes senescent or succumbs to storm or termites, it should be replaced by a substantial native tree such as *Waterhousea floribunda*.

**NOTE:** There is an opportunity to make this an entirely native plant rockery, such as one may find at the base of a rock bench in the bushland around Sydney. This would make a symbolic reference to the original native vegetation, and by incorporating it into the overall Reserve we would be adopting the Japanese technique of reproducing in microcosm the elements present in the wider landscape.

The alternative is to select rockery plants from the lists of Macleay's collection. However, it may be difficult to find sufficient of them to use in this hot, exposed, rocky situation.

If the concepts of a wholly native lower garden is accepted, plants could be drawn from the following palette of small shrubs and herbaceous plants:

- Dianella caerulea* & *Lomandra* sp.
- Patersonia longifolia*
- Grevillea sericea*, *linearifolia*, *buxifolia*, *speciosa*, & *capitellata*.
- Lambertia formosa*
- Actinotis helianthi*
- Persoonia pinifolia*
- Rulingia hermannifolia*
- Acacia myrtifolia*
- Eriostemon* species
- Epacris* species

- Hibbertia* species
- Pimelea* species
- Dillwynia*, *Pultenea*, *Oxylobium* and *Gompholobium* species.
- Macrozamia communis*

### Area 13

- 5 existing Crepe Myrtles to be retained in present location.

### Area 14

- Line of new tall screening trees should be planted along southern boundary fence of the Reserve.

*Option 1* - Re-instatement of Poplars, using *Populus simonii* (said to be both rust-resistant and non-suckering). It may be essential to excavate rock to depth of 1m. to make deeper soil bed and install appropriate root barriers.

*Option 2* - Densely massed Alexander palms, interspersed with *Strelitzia nicolai* and *Rhapis excelsa*.

**NOTE:** Option 2 could be used further to the north, in the gap between the upper and lower apartment blocks and near the top of the rock bench and even at the bottom.

- Shrubs could be planted in front of the Poplars or Palms, drawn from the same Palette of plants as for Area 5.

### Area 15

- New canopy trees to be selected and planted near here to succeed larger *Robinia* which is in senescence. The new trees would need to be super advanced. It may be necessary to remove the larger, more senescent one at the rear first, in order to let sufficient light in to allow a new tree to get underway. Possible replacements could be one of:

- Pinus pinaster*\*
- Weeping Lillypilly (*Waterhousea floribunda*\*)
- Holm Oak (*Quercus ilex*)\*
- Cape Chestnut (*Calodendron capensis*)
- Kaffir Plum (*Harpephyllum caffrum*)
- Plum Pine (*Podocarpus elatus* or *falcatus*)

### Area 16

- Suggest that *Plumbago auriculata* hedge proposed to be planted along steel fence on the eastern part of the grass verge bordering Onslow Ave. not be adopted.

### Area 17

Retain existing grass slope – do not add steps.

### Area 18

- Annuals in triangular garden bed to be removed.  
Bed to be re-planted with massing of tall, bold herbaceous plants such as *Canna indica*, *Iresine herbsti*, *Kniphofia hybrids*, *Cyperus involucratus*, *Celosia cyanus*, *Lantana montevidensis*, *Artemisia absinthium*, *Senecio cineraria*, *Strelitzia reginae*, dwarf *Phormiums*, *Lambs ears (Stachys byzantina)*, *Yucca filamentosa*, *Agave attenuata*, Dwarf purple *Cordylines*.

**NOTE:** Taller plants should be put in the centre of the bed, with lower ones next, and trailing low plants around the edges.

## **APPENDIX A**

(Plan of the first stage of design development for the McElhone Reserve, prepared in September 1950 by the new Parks and Gardens section of Sydney City Council).

Refer to separate A2 laminated plan titled 'Proposed Park'.

## **APPENDIX B**

Site & Visual Analysis Plan  
prepared by Mayne-Wilson & Associates,  
Conservation Landscape Architects,  
January 2001.

Refer to separate A1 laminated plan.

# **APPENDIX C**



**COUNCIL**

**13 September 2000**

2022997

JKE-PWS

3.

A petition was received by Councillor Mallard, with approximately 200 signatures appended from residents of the North Ward requesting Council remove the upgrading work in respect of floral displays undertaken in McElhone Reserve, Elizabeth Bay, and be replaced with the taller shrubs and trees which used to be there.

Received.

*M. Mallard*  
*15/9/2000*

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Name	Address
Y BAILLIEU	31/36A MACLEAY ST, POTTS POINT
T. Green	41/36A Macleay St Potts Point
J. SIOUW	41/36a Macleay St Potts Point
D. Timperio	19/3 Clement St, Rushcutters Bay
M. Coleman	41/36a Macleay St Potts Point
A. NORTH	9/1 ONSLOW PLACE EIB. BAY
B. Smith	25/4 Macleay St Potts Point
D. Bent	4/1 ONSLOW AVE Elizabeth Bay
S. Stancu	4/1 ONSLOW AVE Elizabeth Bay
L. T. O'Brien	25/4 Macleay St Potts Point
R. Border	15/10-12 Clement St, Rushcutters Bay
S. M. CASEY	89/12 MACLEAY ST POTTS POINT
M. MOORE	6/15 BILLYARD AVE ELIZABETH BAY
A. BUNCE	7/129 HARRISON'S RD North Runway 2006
S. Barclay	7 George St Macleay
S. WONG	12/4 CLAPTON PL, DARLINGHURST
L. Brynen	12/4 Clapton Place Darlinghurst
M. LEAD	10/8 ONSLOW AVE ELIZABETH BAY
D. Gleeson	17/101 Huron Rd, Eliz. Bay
N. Druiz	5/45 MACLEAY ST. POTTS POINT
Keith Smith	25/4 Macleay St, Potts Point NSW 2011
K. WEIR	30/6 ONSLOW AVE, Elizabeth Bay, 2011
R. Lave	337 Bank St Waverley 2016
G. Anderson	1/36A Macleay St Potts Point 2011
L. Poulos	207/3-5 Greenmore Ave. Potts Point. 2011
G. Leveson	263 BULWARRA RD ULTIMO 2007
K. LEVESON	4
J. BROPHY	34/25 BILLYARD AVE ELIZABETH BAY
M. COPPLESON	24/23A BILLYARD AVE ELIZABETH BAY
C. Cully	5/127 Darlinghurst Rd, Darlinghurst
C. SARTAIN	102/85 MACLEAY ST POTTS POINT
C. BRADLEY	AS ABOVE
I. HERRY	AS ABOVE

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Name	Address
Nathan Spence	8/7-9 Victoria St, Darlinghurst
Caroline	11/71 Elizabeth Bay Rd.
KAY/ HYE	9-12-16 BILL YARD AVE E. Bay
Mark Barrett	37/5-15 Farrell Ave Darlinghurst
John Jayne	37/5-15 Farrell Ave Darlinghurst
Michael Neal	12/36A Macleay St, Potts Point
Carolyn M. Conlon	12/36A Macleay St Potts Point
PAUL LOUETT	32/17 WYDE ST Potts Point
STEVE PHILLIPS	1A/12 ONSLOW AVE ELIZABETH BAY
JEFF DUFF	21/25 ELIZABETH BAY RD. ELIZABETH BAY 2011
DOUGAL MITHERSON	72/12 WYDE ST POTTS PT.
N. CARVISI	2-L BIRTLEY PL, ELIZABETH BAY, 2011
Loanne Grant	18/16 Macleay St Potts Point 2011
Julia Nelson	18/16 Macleay St Potts Point 2011
ROSENE SAKS	17/15 Elizabeth Bay Str. Eliz. Bay 2011
MARK SHAPIRO	17/15 Elizabeth Bay Str. Eliz. Bay 2011
CHRISTOPHER GRANT	9/20 SAINT NEOT AVE POTTS POINT 2011
PATRICK BOWE	5/20 MACLEAY ST. POTTS POINT 2011
IS.M Lodge	1/22/21 BILLYARD AVE ELIZ BAY 2011
J. S. BRIEL	20/142 MACLEAY ST 2011
C. HOECKER	16/16 MACLEAY ST POTTS PT. 2011
Ananda Bhat	19/6A Greenknow Ave Potts Point
K. Hughes	10/6A Greenknow Ave Potts Point
BRIAN SEWELL	36/1/6A MACLEAY ST POTTS POINT 2010
EVELYN SEWELL	61/36A MACLEAY ST, POTTS POINT 2010
Betty Keop	1303/7 Rockwall Cr Potts Point 2011
Rachel Young	701/85 Macleay St Potts Point.
Mervyn Neth	1/8 Clapton Place Darlinghurst 2010.
Vato Barnett	404/115 Macleay St POTTS POINT
Rick Hall	" " " " " "
Michael Marshall	7/25 ELIZABETH ST RD ELIZABETH BAY 2011
ERIN BRANNIGAN	3/1 ONSLOW AVE. ELIZABETH BAY 2011

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Name	Address
Diana Montgomery	54/1 Holdsworth Ave, Elizabeth Bay 2011
Stefan Veneziano	21/176 Elizabeth Bay Rd Elizabeth Bay
Aileen Aileen	9/3 Ouslow Ave Eliz Bay
Paul Crank	304/145 Victoria St, Potts Point
Mary Hurl	31/6 Thana Rd Elizabeth Bay 2011
Andrew Ewing	4/185 Bourke St Darlinghurst
John Bianco	Unit 10/44 Gordon St, Surry Hills 2010
Simon Kerola	"
Robert Shapere	3/5 Newmarket Rd, Darlinghurst
Ken Farrah	21 Holdsworth Ave Eliz. Bay
Barry Conn	12/1 Ouslow Ave Elizabeth Bay
Andrew Mackay	30/20 Ouslow Ave Elizabeth Bay
Dr Alex Derouin	1/21 B SULTAN AVE ELIZ. BAY
John Wapner	" 20 Villiers Ave Elizabeth Bay
Marina Pissinatti	14/11 Thana Rd, ELIZABETH BAY.
W S Walsh	6/14 Clapton Place Darlinghurst
Peter Jordan	13/42 MacCurt, St Potts Point
John Cochran	158 Warrell Rd. Earlwood
Katherine West	22 Colgate Ave Bue
John Kwan	3/16-18 Wattle Pde Surry Bay
DAVID KATON	6/27 BILLIARD AVE ELIZ. BAY.
DANIEL FLEWIS	6D 30-32 OUSLOW AVE, ELIZABETH BAY
Philipa Steiman	18-20 Darlington + Rd Potts Pt. 2011
Allen Steiman	" " " " " "
NICOLAS GRUSZKA	14/3 FARRELL AVENUE 2010 DARLINGTONHURST
STEPHANIE REES	" "
EMILY MONEW	1/6 OUSLOW AVE, ELIZABETH BAY 2011
John Callander	8/15 BILLYARD AVE " " "
Rebecca Zimen	12/100A Elizabeth Bay Road.
Simon Felton	5-4/76 Thana Rd Elizabeth Bay
Fleur Kinsella	2/20 Thana Rd

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Name	Address
Carol Bay	302/2 Birtley Place, Elizabeth Bay
Carilla Bond	302/2 Birtley Place, Elizabeth Bay 2011
MARIANNA ANAS	4/15 BILLYARD AV. ELIZABETH BAY NSW 2011
GAVIN FOLDEN	<del>2/55</del> 70 Elizabeth Bay Rd 2011
JODIE MITCHELL	15/68 ELIZABETH BAY ROAD 2011
MEGAN ALSOP	" " "
John McCance	" " "
R. VAN MONTGOMERY	1/6 ONSLAW AV " "
BRIGETTE WILKINSON	" " "
Gisela Van	114 111 Victoria Road " "
Pamela Tugan	8 Greenknowe Avenue El Bay 2011
Gaby Shortis	19 NODDS ST Sunny Hills. 2011
MARTIN MARTIN	10/83 RAMSGATE AVE BONDI NSW
Catherine Clifford	4/24 ONSLOW AVE. ELIZABETH BAY 2011
Emma Craig	29/50 Roslyn Gdns Elizabeth Bay 2011
JAMES RUMPS	19-21 ONSLOW ST, ELIZABETH BAY 2011
W. Canford	3/5 Oak Lane Potts Point 2011
L. Brennan	53/17 WYLOE STREET Potts Point.
Ruthie George M.C	63/51 ROSLYN GARD ELIZABETH BAY 2011
Jessica Connolly	Apt 20 Ashdown, Elizabeth Bay Rd 2011
GRAHAM COOPER	3/36 Macleay St Potts Point 2011
GLEN PHIBSON	2/3 ONSLOW AVE ELIZ BAY
ANNA McNeill	23/25 BILLYARD AVE ELIZABETH BAY
RUTH DANIEL	24/25 BILLYARD AVE " "
MARK MARINI	4/4 BILLYARD AVE ELIZABETH BAY
SUSAN OLIE	2/68 ELIZABETH BAY RD. ELIZ. BAY 2011
KRISTIAN JAMIESON	86 ELIZABETH BAY RD. ELIZABETH BAY 2011
JAMES HUNTER	1 BELONG CRES. BELLEVUE HILL 2023
Narelle Falting	3/1 Birtley Place Elizabeth Bay.
Sophia Chuang	1/71 Elizabeth Rd Elizabeth Bay
David Hag	1/71 Elizabeth Rd Elizabeth Bay
KEI ROWELL	43/2 WYLOE ST POTTS POINT (8354.0316-F)

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Name	Address
Alice Bourne	64/6 Onslow Ave Elizabeth Bay
Patricia Pollock	4/11 Nyde St Potts Point 2011
Alex Jurewicz	" " " "
Salma Flynn	42/25 Billyard Ave Elizabeth Bay 2011
"	" " " "
A. Vogl	Rockwall Cres Potts Point
"	Rockwall Cres Potts Point
"	3/1 Greenknowe Ave Elizabeth Bay
"	3/1 Greenknowe Ave Elizabeth Bay
Zyria Ann	12/68 Elizabeth Bay Rd Elizabeth Bay
V. D.	4/24 Onslow St Elizabeth Bay
"	4/24 Onslow St Elizabeth Bay
DAVID JONAS	16/123 MACLEAY ST POTTS POINT
Desmond Plessis	16/123 Macleay Street Potts Pt.
Angela Turner	4/2 B TUSCULUM ST POTTS POINT
JOHN TURNER	" " " " " "
Sussan Chan	30/20 Macleay St. Potts Point
Grant Stevens	" " " " " "
BARBRA LUBY	10/6 Onslow Ave Elizabeth Bay 2011
STEPHEN DAVIES	5/27 Billyard Ave Elizabeth Bay 2011
STEPHEN MURRAY	17/21 EVEREST ST ELIZABETH BAY 2011
Sarah Milled	42-1 Tewkesbury Ave, Darlinghurst 2010
Michael Benth	" " " " " "
A. M. G. INT	Not a resident but support the petition
Bernadette Bonbury	6/8 Onslow Ave Elizabeth Bay 2011
Michael Robson	21/25 BILLYARD AVE ELIZABETH BAY 2011
ANNA ROBSON	21/25 BILLYARD AVE ELIZABETH BAY 2011
Neroli M. Sherry	21/25 Billyard Ave Elizabeth Bay 2011
Melissa Smith	1/21a Billyard Ave Elizabeth Bay
GUILLAUME CHESNEAU	" AS ABOVE "
S. Kemp	62 Ocean St Woollahra
R. Cassidy	13/14 Springfield Ave Potts Point
K White	3/42 Kings Cross Rd, Kings Cross
2 Laurence	3/42 Kings X Rd, Potts Point

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Name	Address
TOM SUPPLE	8/2 EVANS RD ELIZ BAY
T. ALCOCK	15/3 ONSLAW AVE ELIZ BAY
A. RAULS	7/5 ONSLAW AVE ELIZ BAY
J. WILKINSON	15/3 ONSLAW AVE ELIZ BAY
N. MANSEUR	19 ITHACA RD ELIZ BAY
K. MANSEUR	19 ITHACA RD ELIZ BAY
C. CONNELL	3A/15 ONSLAW AVE ELIZ BAY
Allan Vella	3A/15 ONSLOW AVE Elizabeth Bay

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Name	Address
STEPHEN REED	31/53 ELIZABETH BAY RD ELIZABETH BAY 2011
ANNE HOLMES	46/17 ELIZABETH BAY RD ELIZABETH BAY
IAN HOLMES	46/17 ELIZABETH BAY RD ELIZABETH BAY
Joel Hancock	8/9 Esplanade, Elizabeth Bay.
Steven Bowden	5A/20 ONSLOW AVE Elizabeth Bay 2011

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Name	Address
KATHLEEN M'ARTH	7/25 ELIZABETH BAY RD ELIZABETH BAY 2011
PAULA CEDA	29/117 VICTORIA ST POTTS POINT 2011
THOMAS-ANDREW	54/16 MACLEAY ST POTTS POINT 2011
SIMON MALONEY	29/117 VICTORIA ST POTTS POINT 2011
R. WAIK	13/ST ELIZABETH BAY RD ELIZABETH BAY
R CORNISH	805/184 FORBES ST. DARLINGHURST 2010
C CORNISH	805/184 FORBES ST DARLINGHURST 2010
B. D'ARCY	4/11 ONSLOW PL. ELIZABETH BAY
KATH ELLIS	12 CLARA ST. ERSKINEVILLE 2013
M. SIMS	3/1 Springfield Ave Potts Pt. 2011
S. Phillips	4/13 ONSLOW AVE ELIZ BAY 2011
D. BARROD.	6/216 BUTT RD. SUZAGAN BAY. 2011
MC BOLSTER	45 ELIZABETH BAY RD 2011
KIM ROSS	45 ELIZABETH BAY RD 2011
A.A. ZAHIR	27 ROSLYN ST POTTS POINT 2011
JAMES BURKE	21/8 ONSLOW AVENUE, ELIZABETH BAY
LIAM ST. CLAIR	22/6 ONSLOW AVENUE, ELIZABETH BAY, 2011
Taylor Abbott	21/8 ONSLOW AVENUE, ELIZABETH BAY 2011
CHRIS BORDEN	22/30A HERRING ST, POTTS POINT
K. ROCH	4/27 BILLYARD AVE ELIZABETH BAY 2011
D. BULL	10/24-26 ONSLOW AVE ELIZ BAY 2011
C. NICHOLAS	" " " " " "
M. Adamson	40/1/3 Greenknowe A. ELIZ. BAY
Tony Meares	76 Thomson St Darlinghurst 2011
Stefano Spinelli	" " " " " "
Caroline Cordor	11/31-33 ELIZABETH BAY RD, ELIZABETH BAY
ROBERTA WILSON	17/13 ONSLOW AVE, ELIZABETH BAY
MICHAEL WILSON	" " " " " "
ALEXIS HART	4/72 ELIZABETH BAY RD, ELIZABETH BAY
FIONA CHAPWICK	505 ELIZABETH BAY RD " "
JOHAN VAN STAYE	Unit 406, The Elizabeth, 2 Birley Place NSW 2011
Minnie van Staye	Unit 406, The Elizabeth, 2 Birley Place, Elizabeth Bay



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Name	Address
<del>2 Add</del>	1/53 ELIZABETH BAY RD
Kirsta Dean	1/53 "
IP Ranganell	1153 Elizabeth Bay Rd EB 2011
THOMAS WEIS	32/1 ESPANADE ELIZ BAY
Jann Caluk	14-16 Cuslow Ave ELIZ BAY
Michael Garrish	601 3 Greenlane Ave Elizabeth Bay RE/23 Ballymore Ave
St Helmington	27/53 Bilyard Ave Elizabeth Bay
SEN TIERNEY	18/52 MYRTLE ST. CHIPPENDALE 2011
A. SCHEPIS	403/12 ITHACA ROAD ELIZABETH BAY
A. Del Casale	3174 Elizabeth Bay Rd Elizabeth Bay
Stephen K. Bane	53/5-7 THE ESPLANADE, ELIZABETH BAY
	5/109 BASILATE AV BOND
Jannis Wene	25/96 ELIZ. BAY Rd ELIZ. BAY NSW 2011
UNCONGLOVER	5/5 SPRINGFIELD AVE POTTS POINT 2011
Leanne Gibson	2/18 ONYX AVE Elizabeth Bay 2011
Jyle Lamund	59/5 ESPANADE, ELIZABETH BAY 2011
JAMES DARLING	22/67 COOPERMANNE ROAD WYOMINGWOOD 2011
K Cappella	1/2 Bilyard Ave Elizabeth Bay
B. F. LOWN	1/2 Bilyard Ave Elizabeth Bay
W. LUCAS	6/51 Elizabeth Bay, Elizabeth Bay
GATHUR	11/18 Cuslow Ave Elizabeth Bay
Jamie Foster	11/15 Cuslow Ave Elizabeth Bay
CATHY CINI	53/16 MACLEAY ST POTTS PT.
Peter Outridge	53/16 MACLEAY ST POTTS PT.
Mrs Dammack	12/218 Bilyard Ave Elizabeth Bay
Emma. Short.	25 Elizabeth Bay Rd, ELIZ BAY 2011
Chris Peter Snow	12/41 Holly Exons Elizabeth Bay
Marti Kean	63/1 Holdsworth Ave Elizabeth Bay
JUDITH VUINA	24/106 PRAISEM GAY AVE, ELIZABETH BAY
Nick Dent	43/55 Elizabeth Bay Rd. 2011
Aya Nomiya	512/12 ITHACA ROAD, ELIZABETH BAY

JUDITH GREENFELL 25 above

## **APPENDIX D**

## PROPOSED QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PARK USER SURVEY

Q. 1 Do you visit or use this park often?

A. ....

Q.2 Do you mind if I ask you if you are a local resident or a visitor to the area?

A. 2 .....

Q.3 What do you mainly use the park for – strolling, sitting, sunning, enjoying the view?

A. 3 .....

Q. 4 What things do you like most about the park?

A. 4 .....  
.....

Q.5 Are there any things you don't much like about the park, or would like to see improved?

A. 5 .....

Q. 6 Are you aware this was the central part of the original garden of Elizabeth Bay House?

A. 6 .....

Q. 7 Do you feel this park: a. relates well to Elizabeth Bay House? or  
b. does not relate well to the House? or  
c. does not need to relate to the House? or  
d. maintains important views to the House and to the Harbour?  
e. should just concentrate on serving the needs of local residents?

A. 7 a. ....  
b. ....  
c. ....  
d. ....  
e. ....

Q. 8 Are you satisfied with the way South Sydney City Council is maintaining this park?

A. 8 .....  
.....

Q. 9 Are there any other comments or suggestions you would like to make about its future?

A. 9 .....  
.....

# **APPENDIX E**

## **PARK USER SURVEY**

Of the more than 50 surveyed (some were couples), practically all believed the Reserve is a beautiful, unusual and well maintained park and an essential public open space within Elizabeth Bay.

92% said they appreciated the Reserve's facilities and overall landscape layout as they existed today, and would not want to see dramatic changes to its composition.

The great majority were local residents and most said that they used the Reserve on a regular basis. Of the 13% who were not local residents, half said they used it more than once a week.

The majority said their usage was best described as 'passive recreation'. They used it for four main purposes:

1. sun-baking (49%)
2. reading (30%)
3. eating (local residents on weekends and local workers during the week) (28%)
4. an appreciation of the view (49%)

Asked what attributes they most liked or disliked about the reserve, users focussed much more on the positive aspects of the site than those they believed to be its short-comings. The surveys indicated that users' favourite elements and aspects were:

- the ponds and fish (70%)
- the open lawn areas (45%)
- the view (60%)
- its availability (77%)
- its well-kept state (70%)
- a relatively quiet and secluded place (44%)

A quarter of interviewees expressed appreciation of the park's existing design. Only about half were able to identify design elements which they thought could be improved, and only 6% raised more than three negative factors about the reserve's existing layout.

