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Parramatta City Council

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THE CONTEXT

Parramatta lies at the geographic centre of Sydney's metropolitan area, it is the largest employer outside of Sydney's CBD and the gateway to the booming western district which is home to 34% of the Sydney workforce. Parramatta is becoming denser, buildings are getting taller and transport to the city is improving bringing more and more people into the city.

A revised planning framework in 2007 supports a higher concentration of residents, businesses and workers in Parramatta. This alongside its location within the 'global arc' has made the social and economic development of Parramatta city a state-significant priority. The city has a changing demographic and rapid population growth. The residents of Parramatta and Western Sydney are younger than the Sydney average, more culturally diverse and increasingly highly skilled and educated. Approximately 50% of those residing in Parramatta's catchment were born overseas with Chinese, Indian, Arabic, Korean and other Asian ethnicities being the most prevalent cultural groups. Parramatta's new residents show a strong preference for urban living with demand for apartments close to transport and other city amenities resulting in a surge of residential construction activity and changes in the retail, food and services mix within the CBD.

The city must balance its growth with the retention and enhancement of significant historical sites. Parramatta is one of the most historic places in Australia with a rich tapestry of Aboriginal and non Aboriginal cultural and built heritage. Parramatta has a number of historic sites and buildings including Parramatta Town Hall, Lennox

Bridge, St John's Cathedral and Parramatta Park which houses Old Government House, the subject of this study.

Old Government House is Australia's oldest surviving public building and was the residence and offices of 12 prominent governors of New South Wales, from 1788-1856. Here decisions were made about the control and administration of the colony and management of convicts.

It was also where agricultural production in Australia and town planning commenced, and the site of some of Australia's earliest astronomical and botanical endeavours. Today the Georgian style house remains, with some of the surrounding landscape. The Old Government House and Domain is one of eleven sites that together form the Australian Convict Sites which was inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List in 2010.

Parramatta has a number of large developments in the pipeline including the vision for the Westmead Precinct Proposal which lies to the north west of Parramatta Park and Auto Alley to the south east of the Park.

While new development is vital to this rapidly growing City, it must be balanced against the need to protect the integrity of Old Government House and Domain. This project creates a methodology which will allow proposals for any new developments to be assessed against visual impacts on the Old Government House and Domain's World and National Heritage Values.



LOOKING TOWARDS THE CITY FROM OGH COURTYARD



PARRAMATTA RIVER WITH OGH VISIBLE ATOP THE HILL



LOOKING SOUTH EAST ACROSS THE BROAD LAWNS OF THE GOVERNMENT DOMAIN

THE PROJECT

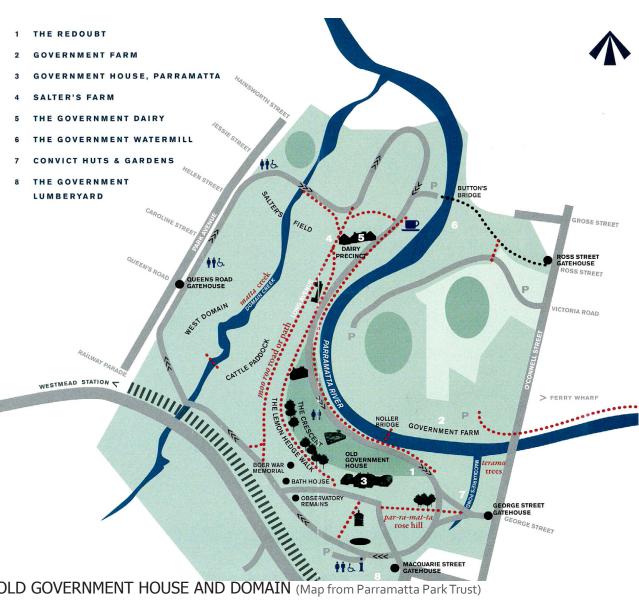
The purpose of the project is to undertake a study of the relationship of future development in Parramatta City to the World and National Heritage listed Old Government House and Domain (OGHD), with the key objectives being to:

- Identify, document and describe important views and settings (particularly in relation to areas outside the boundaries of Parramatta Park).
- Create future development guidelines to determine if future development is likely to have an impact on heritage values.
- Review draft planning controls, and potentially development concepts, in light of the identified views and settings, and future development guidelines.

The project is being undertaken within the context of significant growth and development in Parramatta City, together with the recognition by Council of the importance of protecting and managing its heritage assets.

STUDY AREA

While the focus of the study is the World and National Heritage listed OGHD, it is particularly important to identify important views and settings from outside the boundaries of Parramatta Park. As such, consideration of the heritage values of the OGHD precinct has been undertaken from Westmead, the western edge of Parramatta CBD and the wider city environs. Consideration has also be given to potential and known future development sites.



OLD GOVERNMENT HOUSE AND DOMAIN (Map from Parramatta Park Trust)

CONTEXT PLAN



"The natural landform dominated the views and landmarks of early European settlement at Parramatta, and the views from individual buildings and places were a consequence of the landform and landscape and the siting of land uses. Decisions about siting of land uses were not arbitrary".

(Views Study, 1997, page 9)