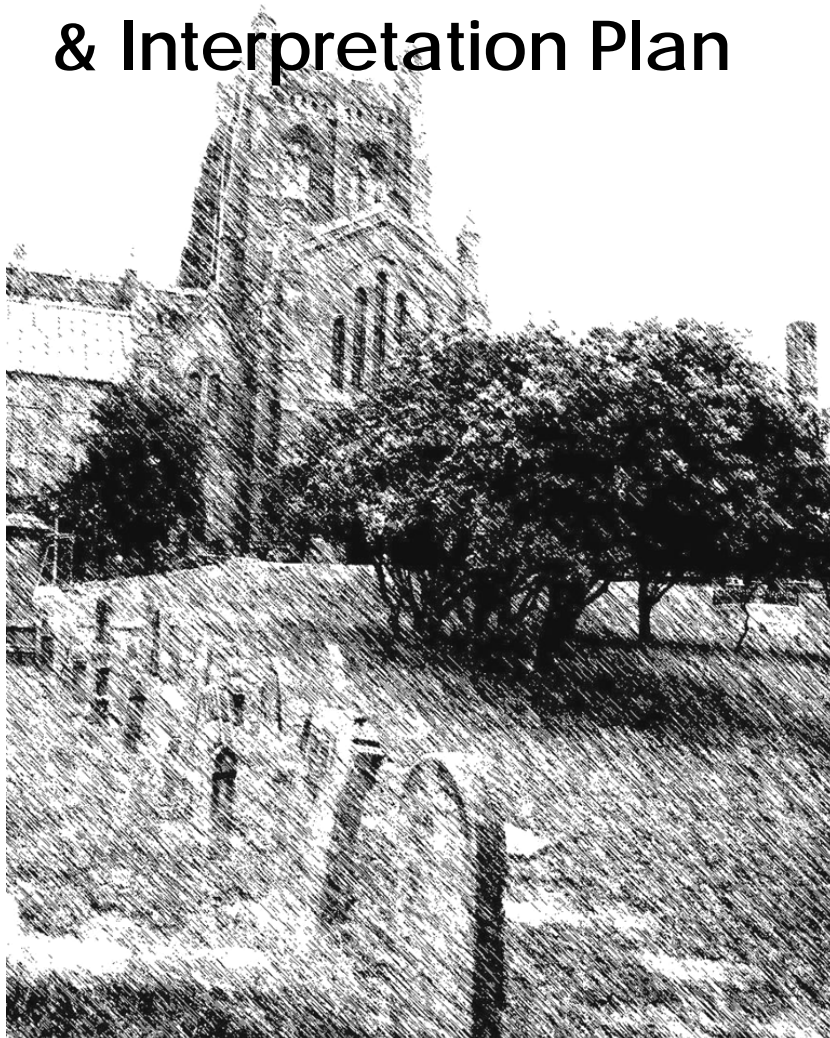


Cathedral Park Newcastle

Conservation Management & Interpretation Plan



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Enquiries

For information about this document contact:

The City of Newcastle

Phone: +61 2 4974 2785

Published by

The City of Newcastle

282 King Street, Newcastle

Phone: +61 2 4974 2000

Post: PO Box 489

Newcastle NSW 2300 Australia

E-mail: mail@ncc.nsw.gov.au

Web: www.newcastle.nsw.gov.au

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY¹

Cathedral Park has outstanding cultural, social and scientific significance to the City of Newcastle. Uniquely, it is both parkland and a place of human burial; a place where recreation and heritage conservation occupy the same space.

Cathedral Park can offer a dynamic experience to visitors; as a place of learning and interaction with the city's history and stories, and as a place for relaxation and recreation, within walking distance of the city centre.

The park has a unique set of attributes that make it both fascinating and historically important. It is a place of remembrance for the surviving descendants of the 3300 individuals buried in Cathedral Park, and is acknowledged as a site of outstanding archaeological importance. The remains could yield information about public health, living standards, disease, and the cultural and religious practices of the 19th century. It is located adjacent to one of Newcastle's most iconic buildings, the Christ Church Cathedral, a destination that attracts thousands of visitors each year. The park offers outstanding views of the city, the harbour and the eastern coastline.

This plan explores a series of options for improving the presentation of the park while offering opportunities for visitors to engage with its history and stories.

It is recommended that the surviving cemetery monuments are managed as artefacts and used as segues to the history of the city. Within this context the monuments are to be stabilised off site and then returned to the original site of burial. This plan establishes that it is critical to reset the monuments to their respective plots if the former burial ground is to be acknowledged on site. These actions are critical if the heritage significance of the park is to be fully revealed.

This plan recommends the following approach:

- Each monument is to be returned to the position shown on the survey plan

¹ This document was written by Sarah Skillen and Sarah Cameron of the City of Newcastle in 2007. The plan was updated in August 2012, following exhibition and adoption of the Cathedral Park Master Plan, and republished in September 2013.

- Each monument is to be stabilised using expert guidance prior to its return to known site of burial. Monumental conservation is to be informed by heritage best practice.
- Any landscape design for the park should support the resetting of monuments to the positions surveyed in 1966.
- Improvements to landscaping and facilities are to be designed and executed to the highest standard of public domain planning and urban design.
- Heritage interpretation is to be incorporated into the landscape design.
- The burial register is to inform a memorial for the site to satisfy the *Christ Church Newcastle Cemetery Act, 1966*.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Objectives

The purpose of this plan is to identify directions for interpreting and conserving Cathedral Park. In recognition of the park's significant value to the community as both a park and a heritage item, this document will:

- Provide a brief historical context of the site;
- Analyse the physical evidence of the site;
- Review the management and maintenance of the site;
- Determine the heritage significance of Cathedral Park;
- Provide guidelines for conservation management, and importantly, the future presentation and interpretation of the site.

Understanding the heritage values of Cathedral Park will guide the development of the Master Plan for the site. A thorough understanding of the history of Cathedral Park is required to ensure it is managed by council in accordance with its heritage significance.

1.2 Scope

The scope of this project is as follows:

- Research the history of the Cathedral Park;
- Describe the current condition of Cathedral Park;
- Assess the heritage values of the site and prepare a statement of significance;
- Provide recommendations for care and preservation of surviving cemetery artefacts;
- Formulate policy guidelines for management of the Park in the context of its heritage significance.
- Suggest a plan for interpreting the site that will form the basis of a landscape master plan.

1.3 Study Area

Cathedral Park comprises the former burial ground of Christ Church, and the site of the demolished house "Mulimbah".

Cathedral Park is classified as *Community Land* under the Local Government Act 1993. The real property address is 93 King Street, The Hill, Lot 1 DP 36886. The park is zoned RE1 Recreation in Newcastle Local Environmental Plan 2012.

1.4 Heritage Listings

NSW Heritage Act 1977 – State Heritage Register

- The Christ Church Cathedral, Moveable Collections, Cemetery and Park are affected by a listing on the NSW State Heritage Register, Item no. 01858, 28 June 2011, gazette No. 64, page 4647.

Newcastle LEP

- Cathedral Park and Cemetery is identified as an Archaeological site of State Significance in the Newcastle Local Environment Plan 2012;
- The site is located within The Hill Heritage Conservation Area - Local Environment Plan 2012;
- Christ Church Cathedral, is listed as a Heritage Item of State Significance - Local Environment Plan 2012;
- Listed on State Heritage Inventory held by the City of Newcastle - record number 2170295.

National Trust Register

- The land is affected by a listing of the 1993 National Trust Register

Plan of Management

- Cathedral Park is identified as a culturally significant place in the *Heritage Places Strategic Plan and Plans of Management 2000* – Cathedral Park section;

1.5 Acknowledgements

It would not have been possible to define the heritage significance of Cathedral Park without the research of Brian Engel and Margaret Roulston, published by the Newcastle Family History Society Inc in 2010. We wish to thank Dr Engel for giving us a copy of his research database and the Society for allowing us to mine their comprehensive publication on the site.

For his wisdom and expertise in relation to converted cemeteries we gratefully acknowledge the assistance of Dr George Gibbons, Cemeteries Officer (former) of the National Trust of Australia (NSW).

We also thank the following for their invaluable contribution to this document:

Dr James Rigney, Dean, Christ Church Cathedral
Cemeteries Committee of the National Trust of Australia (NSW)
City of Newcastle staff, Judy Barnard, Sandra Wood, Susan Ryan, Barry Marriot

University of Newcastle Cultural Collections
Newcastle and Hunter District Historical Society Inc
Suzanne Martin
Dr Rosemary Bunker
Descendants

2.0 HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

Cathedral Park comprises two portions of land that were acquired by Newcastle City Council at different times. For this reason the historical overview has been divided into two parts. Part 2.1 contains the historical background to the burial ground portion, summarised from various historical sources, including the City of Newcastle archives and records, and the archaeological report prepared by Austral Archaeology in 2004.



*Figure 1 -
Lycett, Joseph,
ca. 1775-1828.
Newcastle, New
South Wales,
nla.pic-
an7690948
National Library of
Australia.
Early pictorial and
documentary*

evidence, such as this painting, show the Church on the hill, and its dominant site above the town.

Part 2.2 outlines the acquisition of this land by Newcastle City Council and its conversion to a Rest Park. Part 2.3 provides a historical background to the Mulimbah cottage site in the north west corner of the park, compiled from a report by Eckford Johnson Partners Pty Ltd in 1990 and Council records.

2.1 Christ Church Burial Ground

Despite the establishment of a permanent settlement at Newcastle from 1804, there was no formal place of burial until 1817. Engel writes that originally burials would have been performed randomly on vacant land or near dwellings (Engel 2010, p.299). Writing in the Newcastle Morning Herald in 1898, Huntington reported that colliers were buried behind the Cathedral as early as 1802. More reliably perhaps is an entry in the Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser of 29 April 1804, which refers to the burial of a seaman near the site of the first church. There are several other mentions of burials near to the present day Christ Church in occasional newspaper reports of the period.

The burial ground was officially proclaimed by the Commandant, Captain James Wallis, in 1817. A three and a half acre church yard was set aside for burial purposes on the

slope next to the church. In 1818, Governor Macquarie visited Newcastle in the company of Rev. William Cowper to open Christ Church as the first church outside Sydney. On 2 August 1818, Cowper performed several baptisms and marriages and these records are now held in the Colonial Secretary's papers.

Government Town

The site was fenced and the area allocated for burials reduced when the town was surveyed in 1822-23 by Henry Dangar. The plan for the town was based on a grid system, with a rectangular site designated for church and burial ground, flanked to west and east by rows for housing facing onto Wolfe and Newcomen Streets.



Figure 2 – Christ Church and burial ground. Image courtesy Newcastle Region Library



Figure 3 - The old Christ Church after removal of the tower (post 1868). Image courtesy Newcastle Region Library

Development & Expansion

The Christ Church burial ground was the only one in Newcastle until the Presbyterian, Roman Catholic and Wesleyan Methodist burial grounds opened at Honeysuckle Point near Cottage Creek in the 1840s. The Christ Church burial ground continued to be used for Anglican burials.

By 1859 the site was reduced to 1 acre, 3 roods and 6 perches, with King Street forming the northern boundary. In 1869 King Street was lowered and levelled and a stone retaining wall constructed on the boundary of the burial ground.



Figure 4 - The original Christ Church with footings laid out in preparation for the construction of the new Cathedral, c.1885. The fenced burial ground at left. Image courtesy Newcastle Region Library.

The second half of the 19th century was a period of rapid growth in Newcastle. A large number of burials date from the decade between 1860 and 1870. As Newcastle grew, the space limitations of the burial ground, together with the perceived risk to health arising from the proximity of burials to a large population, prompted moves to open a new general cemetery outside of the city.

Closure & Neglect

Burials ceased in the early 1880s when the Sandgate cemetery was opened, and for some years the Christ Church graveyard fell into disrepair. Throughout the first half of the 20th century it became increasingly more neglected as the descendants of those in the cemetery themselves passed away. This was particularly so because the role of the site as a burial ground was no longer current, and those buried there were all but gone from public memory.



Figure 5 - The eastern portion of the burial ground in 1925, and the unfinished Christ Church Cathedral. Image courtesy of Newcastle Region Library.



Figure 6 - A view of the burial ground in 1934, with harbour and city below.

Image courtesy of Newcastle region Library

During the 1930s and 40s various uses and possibilities for developing the area were suggested but none came to fruition. In 1958 Newcastle City Council approached the Dean and Trustees of the Church, seeking to turn the burial ground into a “rest park for public use”. The following photographs, taken in the early 1960s, show how overgrown and poorly maintained it was at that time and the deteriorated condition of many of the graves.



Figure 7 - The overgrown burial ground in 1961. Hannell monument at right. Image courtesy of Newcastle Region Library.

Cemetery Conversion Act

In 1961, church authorities agreed to long held requests by the Council to allow Council to acquire the cemetery for conversion to a public park. In order for the church lands to be subdivided to enable a transfer and conversion to occur, a special Act of NSW parliament was passed, giving the majority of the land to Council for conversion to a public ‘rest park’. The balance of the land was vested with the Trustees of the Newcastle Diocese, who leased the eastern portion to the Newcastle Club. Council undertook the work to create an at-grade car park for the Newcastle Club.

The Christ Church Cathedral, Newcastle, Cemetery Act 1966 (Appendix B) was passed in mid 1966. The Act contained conditions which legally bound both parties to undertake

certain works. The Minister for Lands was appointed arbitrator in any disputes between the Council and the trustees.

Conditions of the Act were:

- Photographic record of surviving monuments;
- Record all inscriptions, linked to the photographic register by number;
- Burial plan/ survey of monuments;
- Removal of headstones if council chose to remove them;
- Allow descendants the option of removal of remains and/or monuments;
- Creation of a pathway to the cathedral from the park;
- Erection of a memorial;
- Erection of a fence on the east and west boundaries to the church lands;
- Landscaping and use as a park.

In turn, the church trustees were required to allow Council access to church land for any purpose related to the building of the park or its maintenance in perpetuity.

Site recording

As a condition of the Act, the site was officially recorded – each gravestone was photographed, its inscription recorded and location surveyed and plotted on a plan.



Figure 8 - The former burial ground prior to park conversion, 1962.

Removal of gravestones

Council was required to give three months public notice that the headstones were to be removed; to allow for removal of headstones and to allow exhumation of burials. Only

one request to remove a headstone was received by the 1967 deadline.² A list of headstones with legible inscriptions was collated with the intention of preserving them in a memorial wall, however this never eventuated. Instead, 84 gravestones were lifted and placed along the eastern boundary of the site, facing west. The other headstones were used for retaining walls, both in the park and at Blackbutt Reserve.

Hannell Monument

The most substantial monument, to James and Mary Hannell, was retained in the centre of the upper section of the site, on Church land. The retention of this monument provides an accurate datum for future surveys, as it remains in its surveyed position of 1966.

Park Construction

Construction work on the new rest park began in 1969. A new entrance through the stone wall onto King Street was created, along with a ramp, steps and a waterfall feature, and general landscaping. Apart from the lower portion of the site in the vicinity of the water feature, the extent of ground disturbance is unknown.

Figure 9 - The landscaped section of the King Street side of the park, c.1972. Image courtesy of Newcastle Region Library.

2.4 Christ Church Cemetery Burial Registers

In 2010, the Newcastle Family History Society Inc published the Christ Church transcriptions and indexes to baptisms, marriages and burial registers in a single volume³. This publication has made available an extensive amount of information about the cemetery that was previously unknown. In particular, the research indicates that the total number of burials in the park exceeds 3300, with the earliest in 1802 and the last legal burial in 1884. Several “illegal” burials were made after closure in 1884, including that of Elizabeth Hannell.

The only known burial plan of the cemetery was made in 1966 by Newcastle City Council, just prior to its conversion. Of the 3300 recorded burials contained in the burial register, only 258 monuments survived in 1966 when the survey was made. So, in the absence of the systematic removal of below ground interments by Council, it is reasonable to conclude that the majority of burials survive, with some localised exceptions. Significant disturbance is evident in images dating from 1972, in the vicinity

² The sole headstone removed was that of Archibald Clunes Innes, which was moved to the Anglican Cemetery in Port Macquarie by the Port Macquarie & District Historical Society. The burial of Innes was not disturbed and it remains in Cathedral Park.

³ ISBN: 9781875916597 (pbk)

of King Street (in the vicinity of the waterfall and retaining walls) and adjacent to the Newcastle Club carpark where extensive cut and fill is known to have occurred.



Figure 10 - The new rockeries and retaining walls, 1972.



Figure 11 - A view of the Cathedral and newly converted Rest Park, 1972.

2.5 Mulimbah

The smaller portion of land making up Cathedral Park, in the north-western corner, is the site of the former house “Mulimbah”. Following the implementation of the 1823 Town Plan, lots 124-127, on the corner of King and Wolfe Streets, were bought in 1836 by an early settler, Simon Kemp, who came from England in 1827 to work for the Australian Agricultural Company. He made significant contributions to the early development of Newcastle as an innkeeper, entrepreneur, as a foreman in the convict construction of the breakwater to Nobbys in the 1830s and 40s, and as an alderman of Newcastle Council in the 1860s. He was elected mayor of Newcastle in 1866. In the early 1840s Kemp built a house on the site, called Mulimbah. The origins of the name are unclear, however it is thought it is in reference to an Aboriginal name for the area.



Figure 12 - Mulimbah in February 1891, with the burial ground visible.

After the death of Simon Kemp and his wife Mary Anne (both were buried in the Christ Church burial ground), their daughter and her husband, a Parnell, continued to live in the house.



Figure 13 - The Parnell family outside their home Mulimbah in 1891.



Figure 14 – A neglected Mulimbah and the overgrown Cathedral burial grounds in 1951.

The only other family to live there was the Croft family, and by 1947 it had fallen vacant. The Anglican Diocese purchased it in 1953. The house was demolished in about 1954, but after a number of abortive attempts to redevelop the site, it was transferred to Newcastle City Council in 1987 as part of an exchange of properties, and now forms the north western section of Cathedral Park.

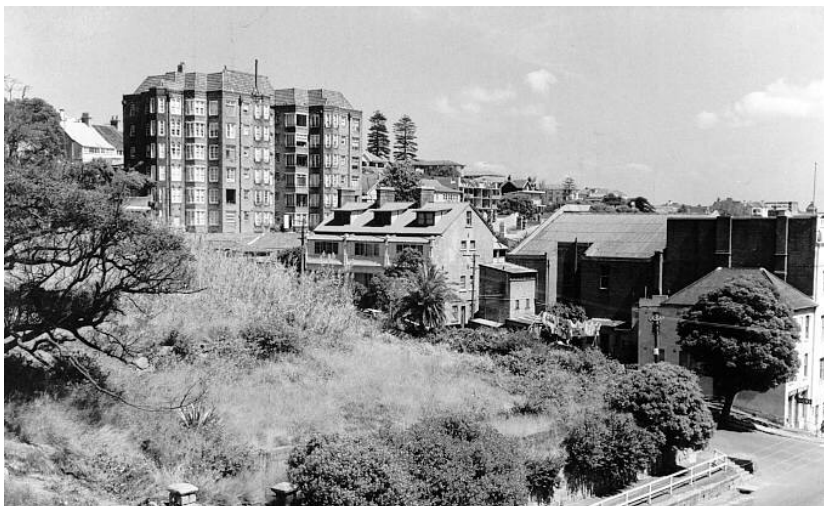


Figure 15 - 1972 - site of former Mulimbah cottage.

3.0 SITE REVIEW

The park covers a total area of 0.94 ha, bounded by King Street, Wolfe Street, Christchurch Cathedral grounds and the Newcastle Club grounds, comprising central section (former burial ground) 0.7 ha with frontage to King Street, and western section (former Mulimbah cottage site) 0.24 ha with frontage to King and Wolfe Streets. A fall of 20 m from the high point below Cathedral to the north, and north-west to King Street give general falls of around 1 in 5 across the site. Pedestrian access from the lower side of the park is steep. Given these grades, the provision of disabled access would be extremely difficult.

3.1 Site Use

The current use of the site is open space recreation.

3.2 Built Elements

Roads/Paths

Concrete footpaths and steps with metal handrails, leading from the King Street entrance, were constructed during the phase of park development in the early 1970s. The paths have lifted in places due to soil movement/tree root action.

Fence/Gate

The site is bounded to the north and west by high sandstone retaining walls. The eastern edge adjoining the Newcastle Club car-park is bounded by a mesh and barbed wire fence. The park also features a series of terraced areas, supported by 1970s style landscaping rocks. Many of these retaining walls are damaged and require attention.

A set of wrought iron gates originally installed in Maitland Town Hall in 1890 were presented to Newcastle City Council in 1971 for erection in the King Street entrance to Cathedral Park. These gates were later returned to Maitland City Council for re-instatement at the Town Hall. There are presently no gates in the park.

Buildings

There are no buildings in the park. However, the footings and archaeological remains of the former house "Mulimbah" in the north-western corner of the park survive under the surface, and are an important historical feature of the park.

Picnic Tables/Seats

There are a number of seats, picnic tables and rubbish bins provided throughout the park. The maintenance and upgrade of these provisions appears to be minimal, as illustrated in the following photographs.



3.3 Monuments

Cemeteries are an expression of community. The changing styles, designs, symbolism and iconography of grave memorials usually parallel developments of other cultural values, beliefs or philosophies.



The inscriptions on grave monuments can contain considerable information relating to social history, genealogy, and demography. Analysis of materials used and design of graves and monuments also provides information on the source of available raw materials and the local crafts and industry (stone masons, iron foundries, lime and cement industries, brick making and ceramics). Layout of graves can reveal the way a cemetery developed, or indicate relationships among those interred.



The significance of monuments is greatly reduced if they are removed from their context. It is the National Trust's policy, in accordance with Article 9 of the Burra Charter, that grave markers should not be relocated or rearranged except in exceptional circumstances. In particular, monuments should not be placed in artificial rows.



Due to the conversion of the Christ Church burial ground to a public park, the original layout of graves is no longer physically evident and many headstones were destroyed in the process of converting the cemetery into a park.

However, prior to park conversion, the inscriptions and locations of the 258 headstones in the Christ Church burial ground were recorded and photographed. An accurate survey plan was also made by council's surveyors. Given this, it is possible to identify the locations of the burials and reinstate the headstones for each of the recorded burials. Although only 84 headstones are currently extant in the park, it is feasible to reinstate them to their burial location based on the survey and the photographs made in 1966. An accurate revival of a reasonable proportion of the original layout is therefore feasible.

Design styles & Symbolism

The monument design styles found in Cathedral Park include examples of both Georgian and Victorian architectural styles. The demand for individual graves marked by the work of specialist monumental masons had its origins in England in the Georgian era. Georgian styles are characterised by simple forms, and include headstones with sculpted semicircular or pedimented tops. In the Victorian era, new funeral customs were adopted. Funerals took on the character of an elaborate and complex event, of which the placing of elaborate and complex monuments on graves was part. Late Victorian styles featured arched or gabled tops, embellished with architectural devices such as crockets, cusps, columns, corbels or buttresses. Classically inspired draped or garlanded urns were also commonly used as headstone surmounts or appear on top of substantial pedestals or columns. Many symbols were used on monuments, some of which had several meanings. Some notable symbols on the remaining headstones in Cathedral Park include: obelisk, scroll, wreath, urn, shroud, shield, floral emblem, rope, column, hand, cross, and an angel.

Construction materials

The majority of the relocated monuments in the park are constructed from sandstone, with some examples of white marble.

Condition

The surviving monuments are in varying conditions and degrees of deterioration, largely due to their age, material and exposure to the elements. In urban environments, weathering is accelerated by atmospheric pollution caused by car exhausts and industry. Sandstone is very porous and is particularly susceptible to moisture absorption. The coastal environment of Newcastle and the amount of salt in the air would be contributing to an increased rate of deterioration.

The monuments are in a critical stage, where the need for urgent completion of repairs must be recognised. Once monuments have lost their structural integrity, deterioration usually increases. In general, the longer a damaged monument remains in disrepair, the more difficult repair becomes. The main problems in the overall condition of the monuments are:

- Biological activity - lichen, mould or mildew found on surface
- Blistering/flaking/scaling/powdering - small or isolated areas missing or loose surface
- Delamination - stone splitting off in layers
- Erosion - sections of stone worn off, usually from wind or water
- Fragmentation - sections of stone broken into many parts
- Soiling - surface is covered with dirt
- Tilted/fallen/sunken – stone not in original alignment or partly below surface





Grave Surrounds

In the era in which this burial ground was in use timber picket and decorative wrought iron grave surrounds were popular. Old photographs indicate the use of grave surrounds, and evidence a high degree of accomplishment that may have been the work of local foundries and blacksmiths. None of these decorative railings survive intact after their destruction during park conversion.

3.4 Archaeological Deposits/Burials

As a former burial ground, the site contains significant archaeological deposits which contribute to the significance of the site and have the potential to yield information not available from other sources. This would include health and diet in the 19th century, infant mortality and public health. The site should be treated with dignity and respect as a sacred space, and with minimal disturbance of sub-surface features.

3.5 Vegetation

African olive (*Olea africana*) trees across lower area of western section, probably self seeded from original plantings in grounds of Mulimbah Cottage;

Banksia in upper area of central section;

Fig in central section;

Palm on Wolfe Street edge of western section

Tuckeroo throughout eastern section. The Tuckeroos were planted in the late 1980s and early 1990s.

3.6 Landscape Character

The character of the Park landscape is primarily steep. With its setting immediately below Christchurch Cathedral, and outlook over the harbour, the park has the potential to be one of the most interesting public open spaces in the city centre, with historical associations of great significance dating back to the origins of the city.

Examination of images of the cemetery in the 19th century, reveals a bare hill with little vegetation. Following its closure in the 1880s, vegetation grew unchecked until the mid 20th century.

The conversion process from the early 1970s involved the construction of retaining walls, rockeries, a concrete pathway, stairs, waterfall and pond feature, and plantings.

3.7 Heritage Curtilage

“Heritage curtilage” means the area of land surrounding an item or area of heritage significance which is essential for retaining and interpreting its heritage significance. A curtilage should contain evidence of any cultural associations as well as providing a visual and aesthetic context for the item. Things to consider are design style and taste, functional uses, inter-relationships, visual links, scale and vegetation.

Items identified as significant elements contributing to the Cathedral Park site are: Christ Church Cathedral to the South, the Newcastle Club to the East, and the Segenhoe Apartments to the West. Items identified as detracting from the park are: the carpark opposite, blocking views of the inter-relationship between the church grounds and the market square and interfering with the visual links to the city and the harbour.

4.0 HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

4.1 Significance Assessment

Based on the available documentary and physical evidence, the significance of Cathedral Park is assessed as follows:

Historical Significance

Criterion (a) An item is important in the course, or pattern, of NSW's or the local area's cultural or natural history.

Criterion (b) An item has strong or special association with the life or work of a person or group of persons, of importance in the cultural or natural history of NSW or the local area.

- Cathedral Park is historically significant for its strong associations with a number of individuals and families whose lives contributed to the development of the city of Newcastle. The former burial ground contains the remains and headstones of convicts and early pioneers, numbering some 3300 internments in total.
- Cathedral Park is important for its direct historical association with the Penal Settlement 1802 - 1822, Governor Lachlan Macquarie and Captain James Wallis, the Church of England, the 1822-23 Town Plan, the phase of the Government Town 1823-1853, and the period of expansion from 1853 – 1900. It is also important for its associations with Simon Kemp, a foreman on the Breakwater and early alderman, and his house, Mulimbah, constructed in the 1840s.
- It is important as one of the earliest burial grounds in the colony, and of the period prior to the segregation of denominations in cemeteries. It is demonstrative of a period when the Church of England accepted all denominations in their burial grounds.
- The extant cemetery fabric demonstrates the religious philosophies and changing attitudes to death and its commemoration during a fixed period of the 19th century – between 1817 and 1884.
- Cathedral Park, as a cultural artefact, possesses significant documentary and physical evidence of the evolution of the place – its role as the first burial ground in Newcastle, together with its closure, neglect and conversion to a “rest park” form an important part of the story of Newcastle.
- The closure of the cemetery in 1884 provides evidence of the legal conflict between the Newcastle Borough Council and the trustees of Christ Church which led to the demise of the cemetery and its neglected state into the mid 20th century.

Aesthetic Significance

Criterion (c) An item is important in demonstrating aesthetic characteristics and/or high degree of creative or technical achievement in NSW or the local area.

- Cathedral Park contains numerous headstones which reflect a range of styles and materials of the period, the skill of local stonemasons, and the tastes, sentiments, rituals and attitudes of the local community during the 19th century toward death and mortality.
- The prominence of the Park on the hill and its position adjacent to the Christchurch Cathedral lends itself to an overall aesthetic significance.
- The demarcation of the boundaries with high sandstone retaining walls are a significant historic feature and contribute to the character of the site.
- Although the cemetery landscape has been compromised, the act of conversion to a park effectively preserved the open space on the northern side of the Cathedral, and consequently the town plan laid out in 1822-23 by surveyor Henry Dangar is still legible.
- Visual links with Newcastle harbour, and the proximity of the park to the commercial centre of Newcastle is an important aspect of the nature, history and significance of the site.

Social Significance

Criterion (d) An item has strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group in NSW or the local area for social, cultural or spiritual reasons.

- The site of the burial ground and the remaining cemetery artefacts on the site are of special spiritual significance to the descendants of those interred there.
- The site of the burial ground provides an important link to family for the descendant community. It is valued as a place for family history research among the descendant community.
- Cathedral Park has strong associations for social, cultural and spiritual reasons with the past and contemporary community of Newcastle, an area settled early in the development of the colony of New South Wales.

Research/Technical Significance

Criterion (e) An item has potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of NSW's or the local area's cultural or natural history.

- Cathedral Park is a significant cultural landscape with strong potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of the cultural history of Newcastle and New South Wales.
- The burial ground was one of the earliest in NSW and contains interments which date to the earliest phase of European occupation of Australia.
- The site has considerable interpretive and educational potential as a resource for the study of subjects such as landscape design, funerary monuments, town planning, social history and genealogy.
- The archaeological deposits of human remains have strong potential to reveal significant information, not available from documentary sources, about Newcastle's early population – their general health, diet and disease, life expectancy, physical appearance, growth rates, origins and relationships, trauma and occupational stress as well as the potential to yield information on burial practices and patterns and funerary rites.
- The footings and remains of Mulimbah represent one of the few examples of Georgian architecture still remaining in Newcastle.

Rarity

Criterion (f) An item possesses uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of NSW's or the local area's cultural or natural history.

- The Christchurch burial grounds, in its original form, would have been highly significant as the earliest European burial place in Newcastle, and as one of the earliest in NSW and Australia.
- By virtue of its early date of commencement, historical associations and surviving monuments, the site possesses rare aspects of NSW's cultural history. However its conversion to a park, and subsequent removal and relocation of gravestones from their original location has detracted from its significance.
- Cathedral Park is rare as a burial ground in an urban city environment containing undisturbed burials dating from the convict era. It is one of the oldest that is still accessible and undeveloped.
- Cathedral Park is amongst a small group of converted cemeteries, believed to be about 10 to 15 in NSW and is uncommon for this reason.

Representativeness

Criterion (g) An item is important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of NSW's or the local area's cultural or natural places, or cultural or natural environments.

- The monuments still extant in the park, while not in their original layout, are representative of the European settlement and development of Newcastle.
- The site of the former burial ground is the only space of its kind in the Newcastle CBD.
- The gravestones are not only monuments to individuals, but are also representative of community tastes, fashions and customs of the period, and of the craft and trade of stonemasonry of the period.
- The burial ground represents a commemorative landscape inscribed with layers of meanings and memories, both individual and collective, private and public.

Integrity

The integrity of the physical and documentary evidence must be such to enable a sound analysis of the significance of a place. Loss of integrity or condition may diminish significance. Different components of a place may make a different relative contribution to its heritage value.

- The original fabric of this site has been altered significantly, however it retains some monuments and all or most burial remains. The place retains integrity sufficient to enable a sound analysis of its significance.
- The integrity of the below ground burials remains extremely high, except for the northern landscaped section containing the water feature which has most likely been disturbed during construction of this feature.

Grading of Significance

No.	Item/Description	Location	Heritage rating	Comment or heritage recommendations
1	32 standing headstones and 52 horizontal gravestones moved to east boundary of site from former location in burial ground	Eastern boundary adjacent to Newcastle Club carpark	Exceptional to High	Should be carefully conserved and maintained. Suitable re-instatement or redesign of the immediate landscape is recommended to prevent further damage during maintenance.
2	Stone monument to James Hannell 1813-1876 and wife Mary Hannell 1819-1884	Southern boundary, central	Exceptional	As the only monument retained in-situ it should continue to be carefully conserved and maintained.
3	Sandstone retaining	Northern and	High	No changes to sandstone

	walls to King and Wolfe Streets	western boundaries		walls facing except for maintenance and repair.
4	Remains of footings, steps and site works of Mulimbah Cottage	North western section of park	High	Should be carefully conserved, maintained, and interpreted.
5	Fig tree and Date Palms	Throughout	Moderate	Prune and feed per horticultural best practice guidelines.
6	African olive (<i>Olea Africana</i>), Banksia, Tuckeroos	Throughout	Intrusive	Such plantings should be removed to revive the sense of sparseness.
7	Waterfall, pond, rockeries, bush rock retaining walls	Throughout	Intrusive	Remove or conceal.
8	Lamp posts ⁴	Lower portion	Low	Explore lighting options. Posts can be removed if required.
9	Burials, archaeological deposits	Throughout original burial plot	Exceptional	No excavations for any reason should be undertaken in this site without an archaeological permit. A specialist archaeologist should be present during such work.

4.2 Statement of Significance

As one of the earliest European burial sites in the country, and as part of the centrepiece of Henry Dangar's plan for the town of Newcastle, Cathedral Park is central to an appreciation of the early history of Newcastle and the development of the Hunter Region. It is historically significant for its association with the earliest phases of European settlement of Newcastle: first, as a penal colony, then government town, and then during its expansion and coalmining phase. As a burial ground, it contains the physical remains, both below ground and in the form of grave monuments, of those interred there. As such it continues to be a sacred place for descendants and the broader community alike. As artefacts of the former burial ground, the remaining grave monuments have the potential

⁴ Several cast iron lamp posts in Council's works depot were removed from Birdwood Park in 1970 when King Street was extended. It was intended that these posts would be erected in Cathedral Park. Works have not been carried out to execute this and the posts remain in the depot.

to evoke the spiritual and contemplative ambience of the place. Cathedral Park has been assessed as having a high level of local significance and a moderate level of significance to the State of NSW.

4.3 Constraint and Obligations

Physical constraints arising from the significance of the site are:

- No alterations to the boundaries, fabric, setting or uses of the site should be made without reference to this plan and consideration of its heritage values.

Obligations arising from the statement of significance are:

- The site and the fabric of significance should be conserved, in accordance with the principles embodied in the Burra Charter.
- The history and significance of the site should be interpreted to the public.
- The original burial ground boundaries should be preserved.
- The boundaries of the burial ground provide the physical evidence of Henry Dangar's 1828 plan for Newcastle and no further changes should be made that alters the park boundaries.
- The site should be treated with dignity and respect.

5.0 CONSERVATION POLICY

Cathedral Park should be conserved as a place of outstanding heritage significance and as a place of enjoyment and contemplation for the City of Newcastle. The overall intent is for the site to remain undisturbed. Planning for the site should be linked to significance as a cultural landscape. The preservation and maintenance of the surviving features of the former burial ground is paramount to the retention of the significance and to an understanding of the original use of the place as a site of human burial.

The primary objective of this Conservation Policy is to maintain and protect the cultural significance of the site. The following policy objectives are intended to guide the management of the Park.

5.1 Fabric and Setting

- Retain all historic monuments
All remaining grave monuments, regardless of condition, should be retained in the park.
- Re-instate monuments to recorded burial position
All monuments that are in a stable condition and can be identified on the burial plan of 1966 be reinstated to the position as shown on that plan. All burial positions should be verified by survey on site prior to resetting of monuments.
- Repair monuments
All monuments that are broken, deteriorated or damaged should be repaired under the guidance of a specialist conservator. The monuments that are laying flat in the ground should be re-instated in an upright position as a matter of urgency.
- Conserve archaeological features
No excavations should be carried out on this site without the advice of an archaeologist, including the area of the former burial ground and the Mulimbah cottage site in the south west section of the park.
- Retain historic landscape
All historic landscape features, such as the sandstone walls, identified in the assessment of significance should be retained and conserved.
- Maintain historic landscape features
Develop a monitoring and maintenance schedule specifically for the Park's historic landscape elements, eg perimeter sandstone retaining walls, to ensure

their longevity. Take a preventative maintenance approach with regards to the perimeter walls.

- Retain/remove historic trees and planting
Identify and retain trees with historic significance. Identify and remove trees with little or no significance.
- Maintain historic trees and planting
Develop a monitoring and maintenance schedule specifically for the Park's historic trees to ensure their longevity.
- Remove self seeding species
Identify and remove all self seeding species that cause maintenance problems.
- Retain and enhance visual links
Remove trees which detract from the view corridor of the city and harbour that have no historic significance. Remove trees that are located over or adjacent to the site of a known burial where it is feasible to reinstate the headstone.

5.2 Use

- The current use of the place as a public park, as prescribed in the Christ Church Cathedral, Newcastle, Cemetery Act 1966, is appropriate to its heritage significance. There should be no change in use of the site or changes to the boundaries.

5.3 Interpretation

- Investigate, prepare and implement a detailed plan for interpreting the site, considering all aspects of its history, significance, use and landscape.
- Develop and install consistent, well designed, and visually unobtrusive interpretive media which does not obscure or reduce the cultural significance of the place.
- Produce a high quality, cost effective interpretive publication to complement on-site interpretation, and to link the site with other relevant places.

5.4 Management

- Conduct all future management and decision making processes with reference to the park's heritage significance.
- The park's zoning as open space and its legal classification as community land should continue in perpetuity.
- Develop and implement a set of clearly defined protocols or guidelines for the maintenance of the area immediately surrounding the headstones.

- Monitor the conditions of the surviving heritage items to ensure their condition is not affected by maintenance or management issues.
- Obtain specialist conservation advice when planning to undertake major work on the site involving changes to items with heritage significance.
- Ensure all major works carried out on the historical elements of the park are adequately researched and documented, and filed for future reference.

6.0 INTERPRETATION GUIDELINES

6.1 Objective

Cathedral Park, on the site of Newcastle's first European burial ground, has substantial cultural significance and the potential to be the focal point of interpreting the earliest European settlement of the region, and the birth of the city. The site has spiritual and community significance, and is also a significant archaeological site.

Interpretation in the context of this plan is the explanation of the history and significance of the place to visitors. The overall objective is to present the park as a cultural artefact in an inviting, safe and informative way. The following section provides a brief outline of the relevant themes and stories – including history of the monuments, the people, the city and the park, suggestions for the employment of interpretive strategies, and design guidelines.

6.1 Audience Analysis

In order to understand the nature of the potential audience, further research and analysis would be required. Opportunities exist in linking the park visitation with the Cathedral, which currently attracts 80,000 visitors annually. There are regular coach groups, tours by arts groups, RSL, and community groups visiting and it is favoured as a free attraction, particularly by senior citizens.

6.2 Identification of Themes

The following historical themes, drawn from the thematic inventory of the Heritage Council of NSW, are considered relevant to the site and could be used to draw out stories of interest to visitors:

- Convict
- Environment – Cultural Landscape
- Birth and Death
- Persons
- Religion
- Technology
- Industry

6.3 Interpretive Strategies

A variety of strategies and media is available for interpreting heritage places. Items to consider when developing interpretive material include: the resources available, the

audience, condition and significance of the place, and utilisation of media that is visually sympathetic to the character of the place. Planned interpretation for the site could include, but is not limited to, the following:

- Newcastle as a Penal settlement
- Aboriginal life in the 19th century, Aboriginal country, Awabakal / Worimi language, traditional owners
- Threlkeld and Biraban; relationship; contribution
- Infant mortality
- Religion
- Conflict between Council and Church during the 19th century
- Life and Death and public health
- Industry and shipping
- Notable people – Hannell, Kemp, Mary Martin

6.4 Interpretive Media

Interpretive installations should be designed with the audience in mind. The identification of personal stories and narratives is important to engage visitors and to make personal connections, rather than only relaying dates and dry facts. It is envisaged that this site could be effectively interpreted in an interesting way using a combination of the following:

Signage

On site signage could include a combination of directional and interpretive signs, designed and placed in an unobtrusive way, that complement the character of the site.

Directional - at key entry points and internal pathway intersections

Interpretive - carefully designed and worded, with evocative images illuminating the text.

Publications and on-line

An online exhibition could cover topics including:

- Date of establishment relative to the town or settlement
- Materials used in monuments, links with local quarrying, and any historical trends
- Interesting monuments or inscriptions
- A plan showing location and extent of original burial ground.

Tours

A series of themed walking tours could be developed in association with a local historian/storyteller. These tours could be marketed to the tourist office, backpackers, hotels, etc, and could include daytime tours to coincide with bus trips to the Cathedral, and night time ghost tours in the style popular in many European cities.

Trails

The site has an important connection to other heritage places in Newcastle, particularly the convict sites, and hence could be incorporated and linked into a broader heritage trail, by way of a self guided brochure.

Public Art

A possible interpretive technique is the use of artistic media to interpret the site. An artist with a particular interest in history could be engaged to develop an installation in the park that is evocative and thoughtful, and lends itself to creating meaning for visitors and connections with the history of the site. Park furniture could be replaced with artistic versions constructed from materials more suited to the specific environment and its historical character, eg, sandstone, wrought iron, wood.

Landscape Design

The objective of landscaping the site would be to realise and reconcile its potential to reveal layers of memory and meaning. A possible method of interpretation for the park is the re-instatement of gravestones to their original positions throughout the site, in an attempt to address their current unsympathetic presentation.

7.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

The key recommendations for managing the park are as follows:

- Conserve all surviving monuments;
- improve presentation and functionality;
- In so far as is possible, reinstate the layout of monuments based on the available evidence
- align maintenance protocols with heritage best practice;
- interpret the site;
- investigate funding opportunities.

7.1 Care and Conserve Monuments

The following recommendations are made in order to prolong the life of the monuments. The 84 monuments remaining in Cathedral park contribute heritage significance to the park. The care of monuments is based on heritage best practice, as follows -

Repair & Rejoining

Damaged monuments should be repaired following conservation advice and assistance from an experienced conservator or monumental mason.

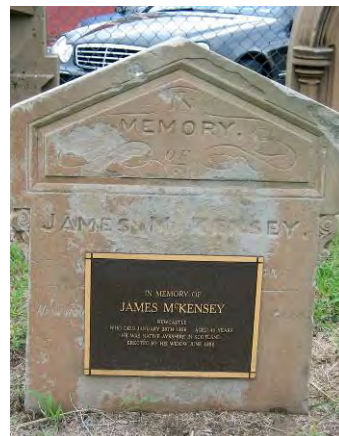
Cleaning

Cleaning should only be undertaken with the advice of an experienced conservator or monumental mason. The value of cleaning should be weighed against the loss of patina and character.

Inscriptions

New plaques should never be attached to the front face of a monument.

It is recognised that descendants may wish to re-inscribe inscriptions, however it is noted that all inscriptions have been recorded and are available in the local library.



Grave surrounds

As there are no grave surrounds remaining in Cathedral Park, any re-introduction of fencing or railing around grave monuments should be done in a manner sympathetic to the original and based on photographic evidence.

Re-instatement



If further landscaping is to be carried out at cemeteries or burial sites which have previously been converted, the National Trust recommends that it should redress any damage previously done to the cemetery.

The re-instatement of grave monuments in their original positions is recommended as an option in cases where there are accurate surveys of a site prior to its conversion. This is the case with Cathedral Park where the 1966 survey can be used as a reference point for surveyors and archaeologist to accurately pinpoint the location of burials.

7.2 Design to enhance heritage significance

Cathedral Park comprises two distinct and separate sites - the former burial ground and the site of Mulimbah – and it is recommended they should be interpreted as such. However, it is important the physical transition between the two areas is safe and comfortable, ensuring the park is used to the full extent.

The land owned by the Trustees of Christ Church Cathedral should be approached to acquire the land between the two parts of the park that are currently physically separate. The following concepts outline the options for the landscape design -

Option 1 - Stabilise and re-set monuments to the position shown on the 1966 burial plan

Restoration is defined in the Burra Charter as '*returning the existing fabric of the place to a known earlier state by removing accretions or by reassembling existing components without the introduction of new material*'. (Article 1.7 Burra Charter, 1999). It is considered appropriate where there is sufficient evidence of an earlier state. As the burial ground was surveyed and recorded prior to park conversion, the correct location of burial sites can be readily ascertained. It is feasible to re-instate the headstones to the recorded burial position providing that the monuments are stabilised to promote their survival. It is not proposed to introduce new materials but where new footings are proposed there will be clear evidence of the new works. This approach should be the basis for the re-design of the park and to reveal its heritage significance. The monuments are to be repositioned to face east.

This is the preferred and most sympathetic option to achieve the dual objectives of heritage conservation and interpretation of the site.

Option 2 - Partial restoration

This option would involve a selective re-instatement of monuments to their original positions, based on condition of monuments and original location being suitable. It could concentrate on a particular area, for example in the vicinity of the Hannell monument, and would provide visitors with a visual reminder.

Option 3 - The minimal approach

As a minimum, new landscaping should be devised in the immediate vicinity of the monuments. It should aim to replace grass with some other ground treatment such as compacted crushed granite. All monuments laying flat in the ground should be carefully removed from the soil and re-instated in an upright position or laid flat on the new surface. Planting around the area could include grasses, bulbs or ground cover.

This is not the preferred option as it does not satisfy all of the objectives for park revitalisation and heritage conservation.

In general, the following recommendations are made in relation to design -

- The adopted Master Plan for whole site (3 July 2012) be implemented;
- Investigate funding for interpretative art installations in the Park, that assist in revealing insights about the history of the site and the city;
- Replace the aging park furniture and 1970s landscaping features;
- Plant creeper-vine along wire fence of Newcastle Club;
- Plant screening trees along northern side of King Street to give a green view rather than a view of the carpark;
- Thin the tree canopy in the park to re-instate the visual links with city and harbour. Remove intrusive vegetation and any vegetation that sits over or adjacent to a recorded burial.

7.3 Maintenance

Mechanical equipment should not be used to control weeds and grass in close proximity to any monument. All grass removal should be done by hand or by herbicide. An example maintenance protocol for parks staff has been attached at Appendix F.

7.4 Interpretation

Provide high quality interpretation that explores issues relating to Cathedral Park including changes over time, social and spiritual beliefs, economic and political influences and significance of the site to the community. The key elements of an interpretive strategy for the site could include:

- Landscape re-instatement
- Site signage
- Brochure
- Web site
- Guided tours
- Heritage trail
- Public Art

7.5 Security

Review and upgrade the lighting scheme within the park.

7.6 Risk Assessment & Disability Audit

A risk assessment should be undertaken on an annual basis to identify and correct hazards. Also, as recommended in the Heritage Places Strategic Plan, a disability audit for the site should be undertaken.



7.7 Public Comment & Community Involvement

Stakeholders should be engaged and involved in decision making about the site, particularly the Anglican Diocese of Newcastle; the Dean of Christ Church Cathedral; the Gurakai Committee; Newcastle Now; the Newcastle Family History Society; the Newcastle Club; the National Trust Hunter Region Committee; the Coal River Working Party, the Hill Residents' Group; and the Newcastle and Hunter District Historical Society; Newcastle East Public School; and Newcastle Grammar School.

The Cemeteries Committee of the National Trust of Australia (NSW) provided advice on this Conservation Management and Interpretation plan in its draft form. The committee formally endorsed Landscape design Option 1 (following) in 2011. The Cemeteries officer of the National Trust visited the site and has discussed the options for the park with council staff and has urged that the park be managed as a significance heritage outdoor museum, with the headstones managed akin to a museum collection.

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9.0 APPENDICES

Appendix A Maintenance Survey, July 2006.

Horticultural Maintenance

Cathedral Park is maintained by staff based at King Edward Park. Typical maintenance involves mowing, weed spraying, and rubbish removal but this occurs on an infrequent basis. Given the steep slope, the number of bush rock walls throughout the site, issues with mosquitos and thick tree cover, Cathedral Park is difficult to maintain.

The placement of headstones flat on the ground, together with the growth of grass, ground movement and lack of preventative management, means the headstones are rapidly degrading. The maintenance practices in the park need to ensure procedures are put in place to avoid damaging any of the headstones, including those flat on the ground. A maintenance protocol and guidelines are attached at Appendix L.

Security

The site is accessible to the public at all times, and has very little lighting at night. Its relative private and secluded position, screened by trees and high walls, means it is at times visited by vandals, drinkers and drug users, although the steep access acts as a positive deterrent.

Built Elements

Until 2007, there was no monitoring or maintenance of the surviving monuments. Since 2007, monitoring and stabilisation of the monuments has occurred. Ongoing care and stabilisation of the monuments can be funded from Council's Major Asset Presentation Program (MAPPs).

Conservation Works

The Hannell Monument, situated on Church land, is in the process of being conserved. This commenced in 2002 under a development consent issued for the removal of the upper portion of the monument, its repair and the stabilisation and repair of the crypt.

Utilities

Power and water are located within the park and there is extensive storm water management in the lower half of the central portion of the park. This creates opportunities for additional lighting or events and would enable the watering of new plantings.

Appendix B. Maintenance Guidelines

CATHEDRAL PARK MAINTENANCE GUIDELINES

The headstones in Cathedral Park are significant artefacts of the use of the park as a place of human burial.

As the headstones are masonry and in advanced states of disrepair, it is important that the headstones are treated as fragile objects that require care and maintenance.

1. Mechanical mowers and other lawn cutting machinery is not to be used in the vicinity of a headstone;
2. Use low-toxicity herbicide to control lawn and weed growth around or near headstones. Do not spray directly on stonework or when there is high wind.

Thank you for your assistance in preserving these important features for future generations.