



FRIENDS OF CALLAN PARK  
PO Box 238  
ROZELLE NSW 2039  
[www.callanpark.com](http://www.callanpark.com)  
[focp.admin@gmail.com](mailto:focp.admin@gmail.com)

## Friends of Callan Park Submission:

# A 50-Year Vision for Greater Sydney's Open Space and Parklands

## A Discussion Paper

30 September 2020

*Friends of Callan Park acknowledge the Traditional Owners, the Wangal and Gadigal peoples of this country on which Callan Park and Broughton Hall stand. We pay respect to the Elders past and present, acknowledging them as the traditional Custodians of knowledge for these lands.*

Australian Garden History Society identifies Callan Park & Broughton Hall as *Landscapes at Risk*

FRIENDS OF CALLAN PARK 1998 – 2020

ALMOST 22 YEARS OF COMMUNITY ACTIVISM • ADVOCACY • ACHIEVEMENT

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Friends of Callan Park (FOCP) re-affirms its long-held position that the future of Callan Park is best assured by:

- Maintenance and adherence to the Callan Park (Special Provisions) Act 2002
- Holistic management of the entirety of the Callan Park and Broughton Hall site
- The establishment of a Callan Park & Broughton Hall Trust with representation on its board of Indigenous community and local residents
- Adequate funding to maintain and enhance the parklands, protect and restore heritage buildings and provide some modern mental health services

Current management and funding proposals for Callan Park clearly do not meet those preconditions and in some important respects appear to represent a retreat from their implementation. We urge the NSW government to commit to those objectives which FOCP will continue to advocate and pursue with community support.

FOCP's priorities in the past have involved successive campaigns over almost 22 years to engage the community to protect Callan Park when its future as an integrated working heritage parkland has been threatened. FOCP's advocacy and passion for this remarkable cultural landscape persists, as does our forensic knowledge of its complex history and values. With the local community, we will continue our efforts to make a strong and positive contribution to a vibrant future for Callan Park.

FOCP appreciates that Callan Park has been formally recognised by NSW government as one of the 'jewels in the crown' of Sydney's essential green infrastructure alongside other iconic parkland sites, although we remain concerned that only a portion of Callan Park is included in the GSP's remit. We also appreciate the recognition of Callan Park's importance as a site of historical significance and value to our First Nations people.

We take this opportunity to comment on the creation of the Greater Sydney Parklands agency (GSP) to manage 5 major sites across Sydney including, however, just 62% (38ha) of Callan Park - and the *50 Year Vision for Sydney's Open Space and Parklands Discussion Paper* (Discussion Paper).

We understand that the Planning Minister's intention in the creation of the GSP was to help achieve the objectives of the Premier's Priorities for green space, articulated in the NSW Government Architect's *Framework Document – Greener Places 2020* and to recognise key elements of the Greater Sydney Commission's Green Grid.

FOCP is keen to engage with a transparent management process for Callan Park. In our view that is only possible providing the state government, GSP and DPIE respect the legislative protection of Callan Park and note critical concerns we have – including the unknown funding, governance and management structure for Callan Park and the fragmentation of the site.

FOCP is concerned to learn about and understand the potential impacts the creation of this new GSP agency will have on the future and the safeguarding of Callan Park.

FOCP herewith comments on the broad detail contained in the Discussion Paper and articulates our Vision for the site.

## **FOCP HAS FIVE MAJOR CONCERNS REGARDING THE GSP:**

- 1. Callan Park (Special Provisions) Act 2002: no guarantee the Act will not be changed; no forensic examination of what IS possible under this valued legislation**
- 2. Lack of holistic management**
- 3. Absence of information about desirable governance & management processes & regulations**
- 4. Absence of community involvement, participation & consultation**
- 5. Modern mental health services: no recognition of the scope for locating modern mental health services in retained, suitably adapted buildings**



### **1. CALLAN PARK (SPECIAL PROVISIONS) ACT 2002 MUST BE UPHELD**

The community and FOCP welcomed the Callan Park (Special Provisions) Act 2002, its objectives and safeguards for Callan Park and Broughton Hall. The community and FOCP have been repeatedly assured by the Minister, Rob Stokes, that the Callan Park (Special Provisions) Act 2002 will be upheld and respected.

We were alarmed to hear the comments from the GSP Chair, Michael Rose, that the Act would be examined to see that it is '*fit for purpose*'. In the same meeting with FOCP and in response to our questions, Mr Rose also said that (the GSP) '*... should not be seen as a back-door way around the Act*'.

The Callan Park (Special Provisions) Act 2002 was enacted in order to protect the site from commercialisation, sale or subdivision in recognition of Callan Park's special and enduring value to the state and population of NSW (and beyond) – this is not a local issue.

The objects of the Act are:

- to ensure that the whole of Callan Park remains in public ownership and subject to public control, and
- to ensure the preservation of the areas of open space at Callan Park that were in existence immediately before the commencement of this Act, and that extend to and include the foreshore of Iron Cove on the Parramatta River, and
- to allow public access to that open space, including that foreshore, for public recreational purposes of both an active and a passive nature, and
- to preserve the heritage significance of Callan Park, including its historic buildings, gardens and other landscape features, and
- to impose appropriate controls on the future development of Callan Park.

**FOCP wishes to make it abundantly clear that we will – with the community – vigorously oppose any suggestions of changes to the Act.**

2. **HOLISTIC MANAGEMENT OF THE ENTIRE CALLAN PARK & BROUGHTON HALL SITE IS IMPERATIVE - THE CREATION OF THE GSP DOES NOT DELIVER THAT**

***a significant cultural landscape that must be understood and managed in its entirety***

The fact that various entities have (or have had) responsibility for different aspects of care and different geographic areas of Callan Park have all been significant impediments to the development or adoption of an overarching strategic governance and management plan for Callan Park. Various agencies and government entities have had or do have responsibility for care and control including Sydney Harbour Foreshore Authority; Office of Environment & Heritage; DPIE; Inner West Council; Sydney Local Area Health District; NSW Health as landowner and Health Administration Corporation as lessor.

The new GSP agency has been handed responsibility for just 62% or 38 hectares of the 61 hectare Callan Park and Broughton Hall Conservation site. The community has no knowledge of the boundaries of the portion to be managed by the GSP.

The remit of the GSP to manage only a portion of Callan Park **is in contravention of one of the key recommendations** in the *Kirkbride Block and Convalescent Cottages, Callan Park Conservation Management Plan, Vol 1 – Executive Summary* prepared by GML Heritage (endorsed by the Heritage Council 28 July 2020):

*The Kirkbride Block and Convalescent Cottages represent the historical core of the late-nineteenth-century Callan Park Asylum, and the associated buildings and landscapes have been previously assessed as being of exceptional heritage significance. While this CMP has been prepared with specific reference to the Kirkbride Block and Convalescent Cottages at Callan Park it closely **considers their place within a significant cultural landscape that must be understood and managed in its entirety.** This cultural landscape extends back prior to colonisation and should be considered as part of the wider Aboriginal harbour landscape, with its range of tangible and intangible connections.*

Introduction, p1

The government's recognition of the integrity of the whole site (which "must be understood and managed in its entirety") is also a common thread to earlier conservation management plans.

In response to FOCP's questions about this structure which fragments this unique heritage site (with the inevitable conflicts of interest it implies) we have been advised that an MOU is being 'worked on' between DPIE and NSW Health and that in some cases, there will be 'joint precinct management'. These vague assurances of co-operation between the Ministries do not inspire any faith that best practice management principles will be followed or that the best interests of Callan Park will be served by the creation of the GSP and this triangular arrangement.

In addition to this concern about management fragmentation, FOCP have been given no information that guarantees that the GSP agency will have a life beyond the current government. We are concerned that this ad hoc agency will be one more in a long line of government entities that it will not necessarily have the power, scope, budget or core historical knowledge and expertise to plan and deliver an holistic **50 year Vision** (or even a five year plan).

FOCP is concerned that the (untested) management structure being proposed is not suitable for Callan Park. We request urgent clarification regarding the nature and scope of any agreements between DPIE, the GSP and NSW Health and an explanation as to why an holistic management structure for the site has not been enacted, which we believe will be essential to creating a true 'vision' for the site.

### 3. ABSENCE OF INFORMATION ABOUT GOVERNANCE & MANAGEMENT PROCESSES & REGULATIONS

The community has worked hard to secure Callan Park and Broughton Hall and calls upon the government to engage transparently and fulsomely with the community in all future planning for Callan Park.

The community has very high expectations of government about anything that affects the environment and heritage – and especially at Callan Park. The Callan Park legislation allows for a community consultation committee and FOCP calls on the government to form such a committee.

**Callan Park (Special Provisions) Act 2002** refers specifically to regulations to facilitate the management of Callan Park. FOCP calls on the GSP to formulate such regulations at the earliest opportunity.

#### 10 Regulations

(1) The Governor may make regulations, not inconsistent with this Act, for or with respect to any matter that by this Act is required or permitted to be prescribed or that is necessary or convenient to be prescribed for carrying out or giving effect to this Act.

(2) Sections 5 and 6 of the *Subordinate Legislation Act 1989* apply to or in respect of any regulation made under this Act in the same way as they apply to or in respect of a principal statutory rule (whether or not the regulation is a principal statutory rule within the meaning of that Act).

### 4. COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT HAS BEEN CIRCUMVENTED

We note the comment on page 7 of the Discussion Paper *'During COVID-19, with the community's focus on dealing with the pandemic, traditional consultation in the preparation was postponed'*.

FOCP is concerned about any 'postponement' and is uncomfortable with the construction over several months of a GSP board which has no formal representation for either Callan Park or Fernhill. FOCP is also concerned at the absence of any practical consideration of the need for a Community Consultation Committee to represent the site-specific interests of Callan Park.

The interests of the other major parks in the agency (Centennial & Moore Parks; Parramatta Park and Western Sydney Parklands) have been accorded the respect they deserve with former Directors from each parkland appointed to the GSP Board. These directors bring site-specific intelligence and knowledge to inform the Board's planning priorities and decision-making processes for these three sites.

**Sydney Harbour Federation Trust 2001** – Part 8 – also refers extensively to community consultation; this example could be adopted at Callan Park.

FOCP and our community of supporters value highly the extraordinary and unique aspects of Callan Park, which are not merely limited to appreciation of this place as a 'park' (even though it is formally not gazetted as parkland). Callan Park has a rich Indigenous history which – along with evidence of Indigenous association – have been largely ignored. Callan Park's cultural history as a place of psychiatric care (including its military and wartime associations) and the changing architectural responses to changes in psychiatric care and practice appear to have been ignored.

Callan Park and Broughton Hall are more than a simple 'massive green space'. A sensitive and nuanced response to the unique values of Callan Park is required, in tandem with the GSP's 'metropolitan' focus.

The lack of community and stakeholder involvement is completely at odds not only with community expectations but also ignores Principle 4 of the *Greener Places Framework – Participation*<sup>1</sup>:

*'Participation relates to a planning process that is open to all and incorporates the knowledge and needs of diverse parties. It involves stakeholders in the development and implementation of neighbourhood, local, district, and regional green infrastructure plans and actions'*

*'Greener Places advocates for **community involvement as well as participation** across government agencies including at State and local levels. Creating a network of green infrastructure requires collaboration from multiple agencies and user groups. Shared knowledge and resources will benefit the long-term planning of green networks throughout NSW'.*

Callan Park (Special Provisions) Act 2002 refers specifically to the establishment of a Community Consultation Committee: FOCP calls on the government to form such a consultative committee to assist forward planning and management by the GSP of Callan Park.

#### **Callan Park (Special Provisions) Act 2002**

##### **8 Community consultation committee**

The regulations may establish and provide for the functions and procedures of a community consultation committee for Callan Park.

FOCP understands that DPIE and GSP are examining interim measures for the management of Callan Park, including the potential for Callan Park to utilise some Centennial Park Trust regulations. **FOCP believes this arrangement is worth considering assuming the current DPIE staff onsite, with possible additions, continue to work at Callan Park exclusively.**

FOCP's role as a major stakeholder and (together with the community) 'custodians' of Callan Park and Broughton Hall for more than two decades - is recognised by the NSW government, and particularly DPIE under the leadership of Minister Rob Stokes. Since Mr Stokes' appointment as Minister, FOCP has enjoyed a period of welcome high-level consultation and productive engagement and involvement in decision-making for Callan Park.

FOCP continues to advocate for a Callan Park & Broughton Hall Trust to be established. In the absence of a discrete Trust, FOCP seeks an assurance that the interests of (and knowledge about) Callan Park will be equally represented at GSP Board level.

**We request that a formal representative Community Consultation Committee be put in place to guide and inform decision-making about priorities and planning for Callan Park with direct access to the GSP CEO. And in the same way as the three other parklands are represented, the Chair of the Callan Park CCC will have a position on the GSP Board.**

---

<sup>1</sup> Framework Document – Greener Places 2020 – Government Architect NSW – page 38

## 5. SCOPE FOR MODERN MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES TO BE LOCATED IN CALLAN PARK

The health values of parklands must not be obscured in any context for the GSP 'Vision' statement, particularly in light of the pandemic's impacts on people's mental health. Strategies to improve (and maintain) individuals' mental health could materially contribute to achieving three of the NSW Premier's priorities.<sup>2</sup>

- *Reduce preventable visits to hospital by five per cent through to 2023 by caring for people in the community.*
- *Reduce street homelessness across NSW by 50 per cent by 2025.*
- *Reduce the rate of suicide deaths in NSW by 20 per cent by 2023*

Callan Park, with its historical legacy as an asylum, a military hospital, a psychiatric hospital, and now as a place of passive and active recreation, respite and contemplation for the whole community, must not be disconnected from that cultural and social history by utilising a planning context that does not include 'mental health'.

This particular value is critical to the community's priorities for Callan Park; not only that future planning 'embraces the history' but also recognises the potentials for enhancing mental health and wellness at Callan Park in a substantive way. A further articulation of FOCP's Mental Health agenda is contained within the FOCP Vision section that follows.

Following are some comments regarding the Discussion Paper.

---

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.nsw.gov.au/premiers-priorities>

## 50 YEAR VISION – DISCUSSION PAPER – COMMENTS

### 1 GENERAL COMMENTS

#### ▪ INVESTMENT AND FUNDING

The Discussion Paper offers no specific information about how the operations of the GSP will be funded in order to plan and implement the Vision (which has not yet been articulated) or to establish (for example) A Centre for Excellence for Parklands (p29).

FOCP expects that governments will continue to invest in improving and maintaining parklands and other public green infrastructure assets, particularly at Callan Park, as outlined in the **Framework Document – Greener Places**<sup>3</sup> as an economic imperative and to enhance health and well-being outcomes for citizens.

*Future investment in parks and recreation will play a vital role in NSW's ability to attract business and create jobs.*

And

*Collaborative action across State government departments and agencies will be required to ensure Greener Places is reflected in different parts of the statutory framework and in policy and decision-making processes. Collaboration across all levels of government will ensure the right funding is in place to support green infrastructure and that it is implemented as efficiently as possible.*

Indeed, increased government investment in infrastructure projects has been hailed as a critical aid to the country's recovery from the economic crisis caused by the pandemic.

#### ▪ THE GSP BEYOND THIS GOVERNMENT

FOCP notes (as in our previous comment) that the Discussion Paper contains no information which guarantees that the GSP agency will have a life beyond the current government. We request elucidation as to how the GSP can make and implement a planning framework for Callan Park and all the parklands in the agency which spans 50 years.

#### ▪ THE HIERARCHY FOR CARE AND CONTROL RESPONSIBILITY

There is no information about the relationship between DPIE and the GSP and no explanation as to how responsibilities and authority over individual places will be shared with other entities (such as the Greater Sydney Commission for example) or what responsibility for oversight the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces will have.

FOCP seeks information and clarification about these important matters.

---

<sup>3</sup> Framework Document – Greener Places 2020 – Government Architect NSW, pages 34 and 47

## 2 SPECIFIC COMMENTS

### **Discussion Paper [page 10]: People in their landscape**

We note reference to the *Greater Sydney Outdoor Study* (2018) in which the following response rates from over 7000 people are quoted: 77% of people love relaxing in open spaces; 85% of people love walking, hiking, jogging or running in open spaces; 75% rate landscape and natural environment as a top priority.

FOCP draws the GSP's attention to respondents' obvious preference for passive and active recreation and exercise in their own time. That is, in open spaces that are NOT set aside or prioritised for organised or structured sport. We also note that in subsequent studies (referenced on page 10) 45% of people spent more time in public space than they did before the COVID-19 restrictions, reflecting the need for space that is always available to them.

Local and State governments have a track record of investing vast sums in providing sporting facilities for the people of Sydney. We would encourage the GSP Board to recommend similar investment allocations to parkland infrastructure that reflects the need for open space and passive recreation that can be used by ALL people, particularly in metropolitan Sydney's increasingly densely populated suburbs.

### **Discussion Paper [page 14]: Sydney's iconic trails and parklands over time**

This timeline makes no reference to Callan Park. This omission demonstrates a lack of recognition of Callan Park's place in Indigenous history, overlooks the heritage significance of Callan Park from its earliest colonial history onwards. Recognition of its historical context is crucial and a first step to any effective ongoing stewardship of Callan Park. The timeline in the Kirkbride & Convalescent Cottages CMP<sup>4</sup> details some of Callan Park and Broughton Hall's history for the GSP Board's information (Attachment 1).

### **Refers to Strategic Directions (general)**

FOCP cannot comment on the four Strategic Directions in the document as they contain examples of projects rather than specifics.

We look forward to a comprehensive elucidation of these four directions in due course.

.....

---

<sup>4</sup> *Kirkbride & Convalescent Cottages, Callan Park - Conservation Management Plan 2020, page 7*

.....

Friends of Callan Park (FOCP) and the local community have protected Callan Park for the past twenty-one years against threats of sell-offs and privatisation by successive governments and advocated for much needed restoration and conservation works at the site.

In the past two years FOCP has engaged in a productive relationship with DPIE through the current Planning Minister, The Hon Rob Stokes, who recognises FOCP as a major stakeholder. Having fulltime staff working at Callan Park, and direct access to the office of the Minister has allowed FOCP to communicate collaboratively with government about a range of issues of relevance to the community and important for the management of Callan Park.

To date, Minister Stokes has respected the Callan Park (Special Provisions) Act 2002 and 'kept the faith' with the community as a result. DPIE has created the Draft Landscape Structure Plan (DLSP) which details some prioritisation of works required at Callan Park and allocates a 'down payment' budget of \$10 million.

Concurrent to the consultation period for the DLSP, Minister Stokes released ***A 50-Year Vision for Greater Sydney's Open Space and Parklands – A Discussion Paper*** and announced the creation of a new city-wide agency, the **Greater Sydney Parklands** (GSP) to manage five existing iconic parkland sites across the city, including Callan Park. Minister Stokes has said that the objective of this new agency is to *'...champion the vision and holistically plan for and expand great open spaces and parklands in partnership with communities and local councils'* and that *'The Greater Sydney Parklands Agency will coordinate and manage existing and potentially new NSW Government-owned open spaces and parklands'*.

Callan Park is an essential landscape amid the 'green necklace', those parks, government institutions, open space and Crown land around Sydney Harbour's foreshore.<sup>5</sup>

FOCP welcomes the announcement that Callan Park has been recognised as one of the 'jewels in the crown' of Sydney's essential green infrastructure.

FOCP believes the recognition of Callan Park's importance as a site of exceptional historical significance and value to our First Nations people is imperative.

---

<sup>5</sup> AILA NSW Landscape Heritage Report, Vols 1 & 2, Sydney Harbour, Christine Hay, Colleen Morris, James Quoye, June 2018, p5

## **DRAFT LANDSCAPE STRUCTURE PLAN (DLSP) – A GOOD FIRST STEP**

FOCP welcomes the NSW government's commitment to a \$10m budget allocation to begin some important improvement and enhancement works at Callan Park, outlined in the DLSP. Broadly speaking, the practical scope of this plan is limited to the waterfront area and will entail some demolition work of redundant buildings with little or no heritage value to open up the waterfront, improve viewlines and improve foreshore accessibility.

The DLSP also includes plans for critical safety improvements along the Bay Run to provide separate pedestrians and cyclists pathways and to remove vehicular access to this area. Other improvements will include removing some internal roads and establishing pathways for enhanced pedestrian access to the site.

**It is clear that the \$10m budget will not be sufficient to implement the full scope of the DLSP.** FOCP has expressed in principle support for the DLSP. FOCP's submission (Attachment 2) includes comprehensive responses and recommendations on every aspect of the plan.

### **IN OUR VIEW, THESE ARE THE KEY ENABLING FACTORS THAT WILL PRODUCE OPTIMAL OUTCOMES AT CALLAN PARK OVER THE NEXT 1-5 YEARS:**

- Holistic management of the 61 hectare site, including the Kirkbride and Broughton Hall 'precincts' and removal of government 'silos' that would (continue to) obstruct progress due to conflicts of interest and lack of shared vision
- Adherence to the Callan Park (Special Provisions) Act 2002
- Adherence to the recommendations in the Callan Park & Kirkbride Conservation Management Plans (2002, 2011, 2020) and the Burra Charter when planning for Callan Park
- Establishment of a Callan Park stand-alone Trust to ensure that planning and expenditure needs are prioritised by the GSP Board and CEO

### **OR**

In the absence of such a Trust, creation of a formal and effective model for community consultation and involvement in ongoing planning and management of Callan Park, which aligns with Principle 4 - Participation - in the *Greener Places Framework Document*.

- Adequate recurrent funding for maintenance and security across the entire parklands
- An annual capital works budget beyond the 'down payment' of \$10m to implement the works outlined in the DLSP and beyond
- Identification and vigorous pursuit of new revenue streams and funding sources within the policies and permitted uses expressed in the Act. Generated potentially from:
  - more leased buildings on site
  - events (cultural and social)
  - establishment of a Foundation for philanthropic contributions (and broader consideration of government policies that will facilitate and encourage Social Impact and Profit for Purpose investing)
- Creation of a considered list of designated priority projects to be completed over a prescribed period.
- Priority for the community's preference for passive recreation space which is available to all.
- A planning mindset and formal policies that respond to and respect the indigenous, social, cultural, military and medical history of the site and thereby celebrates Callan Park as a place of asylum, respite and contemplation.

**GIVEN THESE ENABLING FACTORS AND IN AN IDEAL WORLD, FOLLOWING IS OUR ‘WISH LIST’ FOR CALLAN PARK IN THE FUTURE**

**Prioritisation and Implementation of the Landscape Structure Plan with costings**

After consideration of the public consultation submissions by the Minister we seek:

- A revised list of staged priority works with commencement dates for each stage.
- Cost estimates attached to each stage of the project that falls within the \$10m budget allocation.
- For projects and stages that are identified but not achievable within the \$10m budget, (approximate) cost estimates for the remaining projects.
- A commitment to further budget allocation with approximate time frames.

We note works underway:

- DA lodged for the Garry Owen Summer House/B494 at Callan Point
- Works at Gardener’s Cottage/B494 (presume not included in \$10m budget)
- Works at Main Gates on Cecily Street (presume not included in \$10m budget)

Detailed discussion and commentary regarding priority projects identified by DPIE/supported by FOCP and some recommendations of our own are listed in FOCP’s submission to the DLSP. Here are some expanded notes. We expect that some of these works may occur concurrently.

**Stage One: Opening up the foreshore**

- Closing Waterfront Drive to vehicular traffic
- Upgrades to the Bay Run with separate and distinct walking and cycling paths
- Creation of Waterfront Green at the end of Wharf Road for passive recreation
- Remediation and conversion of Repatriation Ward B/B497 to community group and sports group building
- We recommend refurbishment of the Cane Room/B512 for general community use and/or a social enterprise café or business to be appropriately tenanted
- Build new car parking area at Wharf Road (transfer parking from the foreshore)
- Convert Building 503 for use as an amenity block

**Demolitions – agreed by FOCP**

- Hastings House/B505
- Palm Court/B514
- Linen Services/B201
- Small building (un-named) previously used as social and recreation club by veterans/B511

**Stage Two: Create safe pedestrian & cycle access - reduce car access in centre of site**

- Establishment of pedestrian path networks, removal of some roads, remediation of other roads for safe vehicle and cycle use. Separate pathways for cycles and people. Introduce appropriate speed and safety controls.
- Consider making pathways through the Central Green cycle free so that paths are safe for elderly, disabled, small children and their families.

- Reassess design principles for all new pathways through Central Green slopes, which should be meandering rather than angular. and accessible to all.
- Connect path network from Central Green slopes to Balmain Road.

**Stage Three: Callan Point - a significant place connected to the Wangal and Gadigal people; remediation, restoration and protection works**

FOCP acknowledges the significance of this place for its associations with Wangal and Gadigal people and notes the presence of middens and the endurance of remnant native vegetation on Callan Point. FOCP strongly recommends that the GSP will consult Indigenous Elders about this area and any plans for it. Some priorities for this area are:

- Preserve and protect Aboriginal middens and rock carvings and shelters
- Consider reducing the footprint of Flanders House/B495 (remove additions/retain and refurbish original building and kitchen facilities) and explore potentials for repurposing as a First Nations Cultural Centre.
- Works at Garry Owen Summer House/B494 (To proceed concurrently with Stage 1)
- Retain and enhance inter-war Garden Pavilion/B486 for seating and contemplation
- FOCP recommends continued access for works to remediate, replant and restore remnant bushland tracts at Callan Point by the volunteer group Callan Park Bushcare. We commend Callan Park Bushcare's submission to the DLSP and refer DPIE and the GSP to it for detailed recommendations about regeneration in this area.

**Other**

- Construct Children's Playground adjacent to Waterfront Oval near Repatriation Ward G/B496. FOCP supports this activity when funds permit.
- Dog walkers are major users of the site and there is a need to identify on/off leash areas so that all users can enjoy passive recreation equally. The subject needs to be managed by putting a plan together using the Companion Animals Act and regulations if appropriate.

## **Priorities Outside the Landscape Structure Plan**

FOCP understands that the GSP has been handed responsibility for 38 of Callan Park's 61 hectares. It remains our strong view that a successful and sustainable future for Callan Park will be contingent on its holistic management. For that reason, and because we have been asked for our 'vision', we include this and other recommendations currently outside the remit of the GSP.

### **Priority 1: Conserve and secure the future of The Kirkbride Complex**

Ideally our preference is for Kirkbride to be tenanted by a leading tertiary education, cultural or arts institution or gallery or museum which generates significant lease revenue for ongoing and expert care and maintenance of the buildings, gardens and curtilage.

Any potential lease should meet the following criteria:

- A lessee must be fully cognisant of the aesthetic values of this architectural masterwork and appreciates that it can be a destination in itself to educate, inform and delight visitors.
- A lessee will not restrict public access to this exceptionally significant heritage property (even if the intended use does not include regular visitors).
- Any surplus lease revenues be allocated to capital works at Kirkbride or elsewhere at Callan Park.

### **Priority 2: Keep the green spaces green & improve the biodiversity**

FOCP believes an audit of all the tree specimens at Callan Park and Broughton Hall should be commissioned: Callan Park has more tree species than Central Park, New York. There should be a tree inventory available to the public and value placed on those elements of 'green infrastructure'.

Many projects could be initiated to improve, revegetate and conserve the garden and landscaped areas of Callan Park as well as native or remnant vegetation areas which could be regenerated.

We assume that the DPIE staff on site at Callan Park will produce a comprehensive list of 'botanical' projects, together with timelines and costings. Improvement of habitat for native species should be a key priority (including improvements to tree pruning to allow for hollows rather than ugly stumps ill-advisedly left across the landscape), as should eradication of feral cats particularly in the Convalescent Cottages. Heritage aspects of all garden landscapes must be considered before any works or re-plantings are considered.

No artificial turf should ever be laid at Callan Park.

### **Priority 3: Restore and Repurpose Buildings to protect them from further decay**

As a general comment we would say that some imagination and more creative thinking is required to assess potential tenancies whilst still adhering to the principles in the Act. Outcomes from tenancies should be assessed in terms of their health, education and social benefits, rather than purely from a revenue standpoint. The WHOS Case Study is attached as an example of a successful social impact lease arrangement (Attachment 3).

Consideration must be given to a range of entities such as NGOs, CMOs, Profit for Purpose entities and Social Ventures as potential tenants which could provide good outcomes benefitting both their clients and the broader community whilst occupying buildings which are currently vacant and deteriorating - and at the same time their lease conditions require repairs and maintenance to be undertaken at tenants' costs and, most importantly, to appropriate heritage standards – and according to the recommendations and policies of the *Callan Park, Rozelle Conservation Management Plan*, Tanner Architects, 2011 and the *Burra Charter*.

**Exceptionally Significant Heritage Buildings that require urgent restoration works (not listed in the DLSP)**

- Garry Owen Estate Stable and Cart Shed/B701 and 702
- Broughton Hall c1841, listed on the NSW State Heritage Register in 1999
- Convalescent Cottages/B401-404

**Buildings with potential for adaptive re-use** (details in FOCP submission to DLSP)

- See notes regarding Repatriation Ward B/B497 and the Cane Room/B512 and Flanders House/B495 above
- Industrial Therapy Unit/Canteen/B207
- Psychogeriatric Ward/Ward 16/B208
- Wards 17 and 18/B209, B210

FOCP recommends re-assessment of these buildings, which we believe could be readily repurposed and would be attractive to potential tenants within the permitted uses contained in the Callan Park (Special Provisions) Act 2002.

**Priority 4: Ramp up government investment, establish a Callan Park Foundation and explore innovative funding strategies**

The \$10m committed by the NSW government to begin works outlined in the Draft Landscape Structure Plan was referred to as a 'down payment' by Planning Minister, Rob Stokes. Obviously a much greater commitment to ongoing funding is required for Callan Park if it is to reach its full potential as an essential asset for the growing population of Sydney over the next ten years (let alone the next 50 years).

Now is a 'perfect storm' of circumstances that would point to an opportunity – perhaps once in a lifetime – for government to invest in green infrastructure such as Callan Park, given the particular effects of the pandemic – both on health and the economy - and during these days of historically low interest rates.

**FOCP urges the government to commit to a significant capital works budget allocated to Callan Park, to give DPIE and the GSP real 'teeth' in implementing a proper vision for the site.**

**GOVERNMENT FUNDS CAN BE AUGMENTED**

FOCP remains concerned that revenues from large events (such as Laneway Festivals, attended by thousands of people) have never been reinvested at Callan Park. This practice must cease.

We believe there is potential for government and the GSP Board & CEO to fully explore enabling policies and potentials for philanthropists and citizens to invest in improving public parklands and

heritage assets, including Callan Park. Within the global contexts of climate change and Covid-19, there is renewed appetite for investment in improving the environment, greening our public spaces and conserving exceptionally significant heritage buildings amongst other projects that have social impacts beyond simple revenue rewards.

At the recent Global Steering Group for Impact Investment Summit, leaders from 50 countries met to discuss the actions needed for an impact-led recovery. Chair, Sir Ronald Coleman, said that philanthropy needed to play a major part in this recovery.<sup>6</sup> A Declaration made after the Summit has been addressed to G7 and G20 leaders.<sup>7</sup>

Additionally, FOCP seeks an assurance from the GSP Board and Executive that any funds generated from leases, activities or events at Callan Park will be re-invested in Callan Park and that there will be a transparent process which ensures the community is able to access relevant financial reports.

#### **Priority 5: Invest in and facilitate provision of community mental health facilities and services at Callan Park**

There have been multiple inquiries into the mental health 'system' at a federal and state level, including the recent Productivity Commission report delivered to the Australian government on 30 June 2020. Mental Health Australia, in their submission to that Inquiry said:

*The lack of community based mental health services across the country is leading people into crisis responses, with many Australians relying on emergency services for support. Expansion of Australia's community based mental health services will ensure that all Australians receive the right care, at the right time, in the right place across metropolitan, regional and rural locations.<sup>8</sup>*

This comment was echoed in multiple submissions (including by FOCP – Attachment 4) advocating for a better response from 'the system' in providing community (non-acute) transitional, day and psychosocial care and arguing that the cost of providing (or subsidising) such care would be offset by a decrease in emergency presentations to hospitals (and often the involvement of police).

The Productivity Commission's Draft Report included submissions from the NSW Mental Health Co-ordinating Council (MHCC) and the NSW Mental Health Commission (NSW MHC) who commented on the state's under-delivery of community mental health services:

*'... there are 'only a handful' of step up/step down facilities available in NSW (MHCC, sub. 214, p16) whilst articulating a key need for such services.*

(And)

*The NSW Mental Health Commission (NSW MHC 2014a, p55) has noted that New South Wales is 'overly reliant on hospitals in the delivery of mental healthcare, spending less per capita on community mental healthcare than any other State or Territory'.*

The NSW Health Minister, Brad Hazzard, announced in 2018 that the potential for Step Down services to be established at Callan Park (in the Wharf Road Cottages) was being explored. We have since been advised that this option will not be pursued by NSW Health as *'buildings on the*

---

<sup>6</sup> <https://probonoaustralia.com.au/news/2020/09/philanthropys-role-in-the-impact-revolution/>

<sup>7</sup> <https://gsgii.org/leaders-declaration-for-a-just-and-sustainable-future/>

<sup>8</sup> Mental Health Australia, Productivity Commission Inquiry into Mental Health, Draft Report Submission, January 2020. Principle 7: Expand community based mental healthcare p 6

*Callan Park site do not meet NSW Health's Model of Care for these services or pathways to independent living programs'.<sup>9</sup>*

In a letter to the Health Minister from FOCP dated 6 February 2020, FOCP sought further explanation as to how the 'Model of Care' criteria were applied when considering Step-Up/Step Down services at Callan Park. We specifically asked whether NSW Health had done any costings relating to the refurbishment of buildings at Callan Park to 'bring them up to standard' for such use. FOCP has still not received a response from the Minister.

The broader issue – better treatment options for persons experiencing mental ill health – is more crucial now given the aftermath of the catastrophic bushfire season 2019/20 and the effects on people's mental wellbeing due to the Coronavirus pandemic. Leading mental health NGOs including Beyond Blue, Lifeline and Sane report increased risk and incidence amongst the general population, and higher demand for their services, particularly in the area of suicide prevention. Governments are investing in increased provision of mental health services and the community will expect a comprehensive response to this need, now urgent.

It is FOCP's position that since Callan Park is an asset of NSW Health, some of the buildings could be used to provide a location for the delivery of non-acute mental health services, including (for example) Step Down services for people transiting out of emergency care or periods of hospitalisation; and preventative programs such as non-residential psychosocial services and workplace training and employment for peer workers. CMOs and NGOs have expressed interest in the past, but this opportunity has not been properly considered, despite the fact that these uses align with the permitted uses designated in the Callan Park (Special Provisions) Act 2002.

### **Since the bricks and mortar exist, in the midst of a therapeutic landscape and a welcoming local community, why not invest in Callan Park for mental health care?**

The fact that Callan Park has a long history as an asylum - with purpose-designed therapeutic gardens - and a place of respite and recovery should not be subsumed or forgotten. A Statement of Historical Archaeologic Significance in the Kirkbride Conservation Management Plan<sup>10</sup> reads:

*The Kirkbride Block and Convalescent Cottages, Callan Park, represent a significant development in the history of mental health care in NSW. Historical archaeological evidence associated with construction and use of the former Callan Park Hospital for the Insane has the potential to demonstrate the development of the site and provide insight into mental health care practices through the late-nineteenth and twentieth centuries.*

The local community has consistently supported the location of mental health services at Callan Park – an opportunity that could be realised by canvassing suitably qualified mental health NGOs and CMOs to gauge current interest. Several buildings could be readily repurposed as training cafes, playing a role in recovery and also providing facilities for visitors to enjoy (currently lacking at Callan Park). Spaces for art and music therapy, meals and social programs could also be made available as part of a suite of psychosocial services and programs.

Services to support **Veterans' mental health** may also be a specific field of interest to explore. Buildings at Callan Park and Broughton Hall were auxiliary hospitals during wartime and buildings were constructed specifically for the accommodation and psychiatric care of war veterans after the war: and two nationally significant war memorials recognise that military association. Callan Park's

---

<sup>9</sup> Minister Hazzard to FOCP, 19 December 2019

<sup>10</sup> Kirkbride & Convalescent Cottages, Callan Park - Conservation Management Plan 2020, Introduction Page 1

proximity to Concord Hospital's National Centre for Veterans' Healthcare should be noted. Some buildings could be used to provide adjunct services to this facility which serves veterans and their families from across the state.

#### **OTHER COMMENTS    Rozelle Parklands and sport facilities**

FOCP notes that in close proximity to Callan Park (less than 2 km walk away) is a 10-hectare parkland site within along Rozelle Railway Goods Yards – now known as Rozelle Parklands - is being created as part of the WestConnex project and will cater for organised sports (both a rectangular sporting field and an oval for cricket or AFL). Sydney Morning Heralds 4 August 2020

The development of three sporting fields at Callan Park (licenced in 2019 to the Inner West Council) in the last decade represents the bulk of expenditure on the site to date.

The Callan Park Act specifies passive and active sporting uses. We expect there will be no further development of organised sporting facilities in the grassy fields and areas of Callan Park, and note the preference expressed by the community across all surveys for passive recreation areas within Callan Park to be retained and enhanced.

A recent survey of recreational uses in the community, *Recreation Needs Study: A Healthier Inner West* (Inner West Council Nov 2018), found walking to be the most popular recreation.

It is our firm view that any funds available to the GSP agency for expenditure at Callan Park should prioritise beautification of the grounds and parklands and restoration and improvement of its many heritage aspects (built and natural).

**Please contact me if you have any other questions.**



Hall Greenland  
President  
Friends of Callan Park

#### Attachments:

1. Timeline - *Kirkbride & Convalescent Cottages, Callan Park - Conservation Management Plan 2020*, page 6
2. FOCP Submission – *Draft Landscape Structure Plan*, 14 September 2020
3. We Help Ourselves Case Study
4. FOCP Submission - Mental Health Productivity Commission, 23 January 2020