Adelaide Park Lands & Squares Cultural Landscape Assessment Study

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commissioned by
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EXECUTIVE STATEMENT

There is a general community acceptance that the Plan of the City of Adelaide, as prepared and surveyed by Colonel William Light, is a significant attribute of the City of Adelaide. Within this Plan are the Park Lands and Squares that are the 'green lungs' of the municipality, but also a major community resource.

To this end the Corporation successfully sponsored the nomination for the 'City of Adelaide Plan' to the Register of the National Estate, as administered by the Australian Heritage Commission, in 2004. This nomination followed extensive community consultation that enabled the development of the Park Lands Management Strategy Report: Direction's for Adelaide's Park Lands 2000-2037 (1999). But what was lacking from both the Strategy (1999) and the registration (2004) was a substantive examination of how the Park Lands and Squares had evolved and particularly what was of cultural heritage merit and significance today.

This Assessment Study (2007) provides a remarkable insight into the 'making of the Adelaide Park Lands and Squares'. It reviews the historical development of each Park Land block and Squares, considers development and management themes, identifies tangible and intangible extant cultural heritage, and assesses the cultural heritage merit of components identified. More importantly it unfolds the tapestry of how and why the Park Lands and Squares have been developed the way they have, and firmly demonstrates that while the 'Plan' itself is of major cultural significance, so too is the process of 'making the Adelaide Park Lands and Squares' as well as much of the physical evidence that narrates this 'making'.

The Assessment Study (2007) has applied a detailed historical analysis approach, reviewed in detail the historical development of each Park Land block and Square, and identified extant evidence of cultural heritage merit. Thereupon it has proposed policy and heritage recommendations, including considering the overall context and position of the Adelaide Park Lands and Squares against local, state, national and international cultural heritage criterion.

Whatever the recommendations and actions that evolve from this Assessment Study (2007), the report itself provides the answers about our relationship with the Park Lands and Squares and how it has changed, grown, and wilted over the years. It unravels the myths and narratives about the 'making' of this landscape and will remain a significant resource in its own right.
CONTENTS

0.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY 3

1.0 INTRODUCTION
1.1 BACKGROUND
1.1.1 Project brief
1.1.2 Authorship
1.1.3 Study area
1.1.4 Acknowledgements

1.2 METHOD
1.2.1 Terminology
1.2.2 Understanding the place
1.2.3 Methodological framework
1.2.4 Report structure
1.2.5 Assessment framework
1.2.6 Rankings of cultural significance

1.3 CONTEXTUAL INFORMATION
1.3.1 Topography
1.3.2 Vegetation
1.3.3 Existing heritage registrations
1.3.4 Landscape management planning

1.4 DEVELOPMENT OF THE ADELAIDE PARK LANDS & SQUARES: A BRIEF CHRONOLOGY
1.5 Chronology of Key Staffing in the Corporation
1.5.1 Mayors of the City of Adelaide (1840-1919)
1.5.2 Lord Mayors of the City of Adelaide (1919-present)
1.5.3 Town Clerks of the City of Adelaide (1869-1965)
1.5.4 City of Adelaide Parks & Gardens Personnel and their Job Titles (1852-1979)

1.6 RESEARCH RESOURCES

2.0 CONTEXTUAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE ADELAIDE PARK LANDS & SQUARES 31

2.1 ABORIGINAL (PRE-EUROPEAN) HISTORY OF THE SITE 32
2.1.1 Introduction
2.1.2 The Kaurna People
2.1.3 Kaurna places

2.2 ADELAIDE PARK LANDS & SQUARES 33
2.2.1 Introduction
2.2.2 William Light survey (1836-37)
2.2.3 George Francis years (1849-65)
2.2.4 William O'Brien years (1861-74)
2.2.5 Richard Schomburgk years (1865-91)
2.2.6 William Pengilly years (1867-83)
2.2.7 John Ednie Brown years (1878-90)
2.2.8 Edwin Smith years (1879-88)
2.2.9 1st Interregnum (1883-99)
2.2.10 Owen Smyth[e] years (1886-1923)
2.2.11 Lewis Cohen years (1890-1923)
2.2.12 Ebenezer Howard years (1896-1940s)
2.2.13 Wattle Day League Movement (1898-1940s)
2.2.14 August Pelzer years (1898-1932)
2.2.15 Charles Glover years (1917-25)
2.2.16 A Stanley Orchard years (1935-39)
2.2.17 2nd Interregnum (1939-79)
2.2.18 William Veale years (1947-65)
2.2.19 3rd Interregnum (1979-2004)
2.2.20 Adelaide Park Lands Preservation Association (1903+)
2.2.21 Park Lands Management Strategy Report: Directions for Adelaide’s Park Lands 2000-2037
2.2.22 Adelaide Park Lands Act 2005

2.3 ADELAIDE BOTANIC GARDEN AND BOTANIC PARK 64

2.4 ADELAIDE ZOOLOGICAL GARDENS 66

2.5 GOVERNMENT HOUSE DOMAIN 69

2.6 ADELAIDE OVAL 71

2.7 UNIVERSITY OF ADELAIDE (NORTH TERRACE CAMPUS) 73

2.8 UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA (CITY EAST CAMPUS) 76

2.9 CONTAMINATED SITES 78
3.0 HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE ADELAIDE PARK LANDS & SQUARES

3.1 ADELAIDE PARK LANDS & SQUARES

3.1.1 Piltawodli/Park 1 82
3.1.2 Padipadinyilla/Park 2 103
3.1.3 Kandarilla/Park 3, Kangattilla/Park 4 & Ngampa Yerta/Park 5 107
3.1.4 Nanto Womma/Park 6 114
3.1.5 Kuntingga/Park 7 and Barnguttilla/Park 8 125
3.1.6 Tidlangga/Park 9 133
3.1.7 Warnpangga/Park 10 138
3.1.8 Tainmunda/Park 11 150
3.1.9 Tainmunda/Frome Road Park/Park 11A 170
3.1.10 Karrawirra/Park 12 178
3.1.11 Kadlitpinna/Park 13/Rundle Park 217
3.1.12 Mullawirraburka/Park 14/Rymill Park 226
3.1.13 Itryamaitpinna/Park 15 238
3.1.14 Bakkabakkandi/Park 16 247
3.1.15 Tuttangga/Park 17 265
3.1.16 Wita Wirra/Park 18 274
3.1.17 Piyarrilla/Park 19 285
3.1.18 Kurrangga/Park 20 294
3.1.19 Walyo Yerta/Park 21 310
3.1.20 Minno Wirra/Park 21W 323
3.1.21 Wikaparndo Wirra/Park 22 335
3.1.22 Wirranendi/Park 23 343
3.1.23 Tambawodli/Park 24 361
3.1.24 Narnungga/Park 25 375
3.1.25 Tarndanyya Womma/Park 26 384
3.1.26 Tulya Wodli/Park 27/Bonython Park 435
3.1.27 Palmer Gardens/Pangki Pangki/Park 28 480
3.1.28 Brougham Gardens/Tandotittinga/Park 29 488
3.1.30 Hindmarsh Square 500
3.1.31 Hurley Square 513
3.1.32 Light Square 523
3.1.33 North Terrace 535
3.1.34 Tarndanyangga/Victoria Square 571
3.1.35 Wellington Square 596
3.1.36 Whitmore Square 605

4.0 ANALYSIS AND ASSESSMENT OF COMPONENTS

4.1 ADELAIDE PARK LANDS & SQUARES

4.1.1 Piltawodli/Park 1 617
4.1.2 Padipadinyilla/Park 2 633
4.1.3 Kandarilla/Park 3, Kangattilla/Park 4 & Ngampa Yerta/Park 5 638
4.1.4 Nanto Womma/Park 6 646
4.1.5 Kuntingga/Park 7 and Barnguttilla/Park 8 658
4.1.6 Tidlangga/Park 9 664
4.1.7 Warnpangga/Park 10 669
4.1.8 Tainmunda/Park 11 680
4.1.9 Tainmunda/Frome Road Park/Park 11A 687
4.1.10 Karrawirra/Park 12 690
4.1.11 Kadlitpinna/Park 13/Rundle Park 706
4.1.12 Mullawirraburka/Park 14/Rymill Park 712
4.1.13 Itryamaitpinna/Park 15 720
4.1.14 Bakkabakkandi/Park 16 727
4.1.15 Tuttangga/Park 17 745
4.1.16 Wita Wirra/Park 18 757
4.1.17 Piyarrilla/Park 19 768
4.1.18 Kurrangga/Park 20 779
4.1.19 Walyo Yerta/Park 21 797
4.1.20 Minno Wirra/Park 21W 817
4.1.21 Wikaparndo Wirra/Park 22 825
4.1.22 Wirranendi/Park 23 830
4.1.23 Tambawodli/Park 24 842
4.1.24 Narnungga/Park 25 852
4.1.25 Tarndanyya Womma/Park 26 865
4.1.26 Tulya Wodli/Park 27/Bonython Park 921
4.1.27 Palmer Gardens/Pangki Pangki/Park 28 954
4.1.28 Brougham Gardens/Tandotittinga/Park 29 962
4.1.29 Hindmarsh Square 976
4.1.30 Hurley Square 986
4.1.31 Light Square 994
4.1.32 North Terrace 1003
4.1.33 Tarndanyangga/Victoria Square 1035
4.1.34 Wellington Square 1048
4.1.35 Whitmore Square 1056
5.0 ASSESSMENT OF CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE 1063
5.1 KURNA / ABORIGINAL VALUES 1065
5.2 AESTHETIC VALUES 1067
5.3 HISTORIC VALUES 1068
5.4 SOCIAL AND SPIRITUAL VALUES 1069
5.5 SCIENTIFIC VALUES 1070
5.6 STATEMENT OF CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE 1071
5.7 RELATED STATEMENTS OF CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE FOR THE ADELAIDE PARK LANDS & SQUARES 1073
5.7.1 Register of the National Estate Statement of Cultural Significance 1073
5.7.2 Park Lands & Squares Kuruna Statement of Cultural Significance 1073
5.7.3 Park Lands & Squares Statement of Cultural Significance 1073
5.7.4 Park Lands & Squares Statement of Environmental Significance 1073
5.7.5 Park Lands & Squares Nominated Statement of Cultural Significance 1073
5.7.6 Other Statements of Cultural Significance 1073
5.8 ADELAIDE BOTANIC GARDEN AND BOTANIC PARK 1087
5.9 ADELAIDE ZOOLOGICAL GARDENS 1088
5.10 GOVERNMENT HOUSE DOMAIN 1089
5.10.1 Register of the National Estate Statement of Cultural Significance 1089
5.10.2 Park Lands & Squares Statement of Cultural Significance 1089
5.10.3 Park Lands & Squares Statement of Environmental Significance 1089
5.10.4 Park Lands & Squares Nominated Statement of Cultural Significance 1089
5.10.5 Other Statements of Cultural Significance 1089
5.11 UNIVERSITY OF ADELAIDE (NORTH TERRACE CAMPUS) 1092
5.12 UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA (CITY EAST CAMPUS) 1094
5.12.1 Register of the National Estate Statement of Cultural Significance 1094
5.12.2 Park Lands & Squares Statement of Cultural Significance 1094
5.12.3 Park Lands & Squares Nominated Statement of Cultural Significance 1094
5.12.4 Other Statements of Cultural Significance 1094

6.0 RECOMMENDATIONS 1097
6.1 NATIONAL TRUST OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA REGISTER OF SIGNIFICANT TREES 1099
6.2 CITY OF ADELAIDE LOCAL HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE 1101
6.3 STATE HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE 1115
6.4 NATIONAL HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE 1127
6.5 WORLD HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE 1133

7.0 BIBLIOGRAPHY 1139
7.1 PRIMARY SOURCES 1140
7.1.1 Supporting documentation 1140
7.1.2 Unpublished sources 1140
7.1.3 Published sources 1140
7.2 SECONDARY SOURCES 1145
7.2.1 Books 1145
7.2.2 Journal articles, encyclopaedia entries, and book chapters 1145
7.2.3 Unpublished reports and papers 1145
7.2.4 Unpublished theses 1145

END 1152