



Australian Institute of
Landscape Architects

The Hon. Rob Stokes, MP
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RE: WEST HARBOUR TUNNEL AND WARRINGAH EXPRESSWAY UPGRADE

Application Number: SSI-8863
Assessment Type: State Significant Infrastructure
Development Type: Road transport facilities
Local Government Areas: North Sydney
Inner West
Exhibition dates : 29/01/2020 - 30/03/2020

AILA NSW President and AILA (NSW) Landscape Heritage Committee wish to continue dialogue with you regarding minimising the impact of the West Harbour Tunnel on the “seminal” park, designed by Bruce McKenzie, Yurulbin, Birchgrove.

The current situation of Sydney’s traffic congestion is well-recognised and, understandably, tunnelling forms a major part of easing this pressure if we are to design infrastructure with minimal impact on landscape quality. As an organisation which identifies and celebrates inspirational landscape heritage, we commend this objective of the West Harbour Tunnel and Warringah Freeway Upgrade.

Recently AILA was contacted by a distinguished member expressing concern about the impact on Yurulbin. This impact is described in Table 14.3 of the Western Harbour Tunnel and Warringah Freeway Upgrade Environmental Impact Statement as ‘Major’.

In addition to the listing in the Leichhardt Council LEP, identifying it as holding local significance, and its inclusion in a Conservation area in Balmain as part of the Leichhardt Heritage Study, Yurulbin was nominated for State Heritage Significance as part of the AILA Landscape Heritage Report in December 2018.

This was the culmination of a three year, multiple award winning study, The AILA Landscape Heritage Report, prepared by Christine Hay, Colleen Morris and James Quoye. To inform the study, a stimulating forum engaged AILA members in a review of the heritage listing process and identified landscape places for potential listing. The work challenges our understanding and management of cultural landscape and applies the broader landscape thinking that distinguishes the Landscape Architectural profession.

Yurulbin is a significant harbourside park because of the continuation of the work of Bruce McKenzie’s office in returning nature back into the city in the Inner Harbour and at the same



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time referencing previous industrial uses of the harbour edge. Yurulbin is a highly conspicuous site on the Birchgrove Peninsula and within Sydney Harbour and integrated into the arrival and departure of people using the Birchgrove Ferry Wharf.

In relation to the West Harbour Tunnel proposal, the process of consultation with the original designer, Mr Bruce Mackenzie, has been investigated. It is important that the reporting of this has been done in earnest and with full confidence that the plans will revise, re-establish and reinstate the original proposal.

AILA identified the concern and to the best of our knowledge, understands how the future planning will be resolved. AILA has every reason to believe it will be carried out and eventuate, in good faith, to be an extremely valuable reinstatement of the original intent.

Yours sincerely,

Lee Andrews,

President
Australian Institute of Landscape Architects, NSW