

HISTORIC PARK AND OPEN AIR MUSEUM

NEWCASTLE N.S.W.

FOREWORD

The historic Park and Open Air Museum concept outlined in this document is proposed for public land at Newcastle East. This proposal will integrate the colourful Aboriginal and convict history, the distinctive landscape and the heritage architecture of the area.

The entire foreshore area was designated as a reserve for public recreation prior to 1857, but since that time has been alienated for commercial use, railway marshalling yards, housing and for the Zaara Street Power Station. Most recently a large section of this land was alienated by the Housing Commission.

After a long campaign over many years, the State Government has at last released the remaining section of the land for public open space and parklands. The land is now vested in the Newcastle City Council and the Newcastle community has the responsibility to ensure that there is no further alienation and that the land is conserved and landscaped for the benefit of the people for all times . LT. JOHN SHORTLAND

EYE SKETCH: Original held in Hydrographic Department, Ministry of Defence, Taunton, Somerset, U.K.

AN EYE SKETCH OF HUNTER'S RIVER

"I judge this River".....

Hunter's River

Judge this River lays NNE line bon to Inites

ipt ;+ Vanded ; - " Fresh

"Discovered this river Sept 10, 1797, in our way to Port Stevens".

NOTE: Aboriginal tribal groups on the Stockton peninsula and at Newcastle. Marked "Natives".

These initials are preserved to be these of liest John Shortland, R. N. the con of Lieut John Shortland, R.N. who returned to England in 1783 In the Alexander"

HISTORIC PARK AND OPEN AIR MUSEUM

NEWCASTLE N.S.W

THE CITIZENS FORESHORE COMMITTEE HAS CREATED A MASTER PLAN TO INTEGRATE THE HERITAGE ITEMS AT NEWCASTLE EAST WITH A PARK AND LANDSCAPE PLAN THAT REFLECTS THE NATURAL AND CULTURAL HISTORY OF THE AREA.

- * THE HISTORIC PARK - This proposal deals with the specific site promised to the City for public open space by the previous Labor government 1987 and released by the present Liberal Government 1989. The Historic Park highlights the potential for the development of the heritage and recreational values of the land.
- <u>* THE OPEN AIR MUSEUM</u> is a broader theme that has been developed to create an awareness of Newcastle's unique past, its distinctive landscape, heritage buildings and colourful history.

A simple documentation of the evolution of this part of the City is proposed and conservation of important archaeological, architectural, and industrial artifacts.

THE PROPOSAL IS DIVIDED INTO EIGHT SECTIONS. EACH SECTION HAS A DOUBLE PAGE SPREAD WITH ITS OWN DESCRIPTIVE TEXT AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

<u>1.THE FOREWORD</u> sets the scene of the original landscape and the earlier Foreshore Reserve prior to 1857. The alienation of the reserve and the final successful efforts by the people of Newcastle to obtain the land is also detailed.

<u>2.THE PREFACE</u> outlines the unique opportunity presented to the City and the National significance of the proposal. It acknowledges the Newcastle City Council's resolution of the 11th.of August 1987, to zone all the land 6(a) for parkland to be added to the existing Foreshore Park.

<u>3. THE SETTING</u> shows that the historic park and open air museum is situated in the National Estate Conservation area at Newcastle. The concept includes the total area and all its heritage items. The specific park site contains the nationally important convict stockade and lumber yard and remnants of the railway use of the site. The historical activities associated with the park and its environs give the area an overall impression of a unique sense of place.

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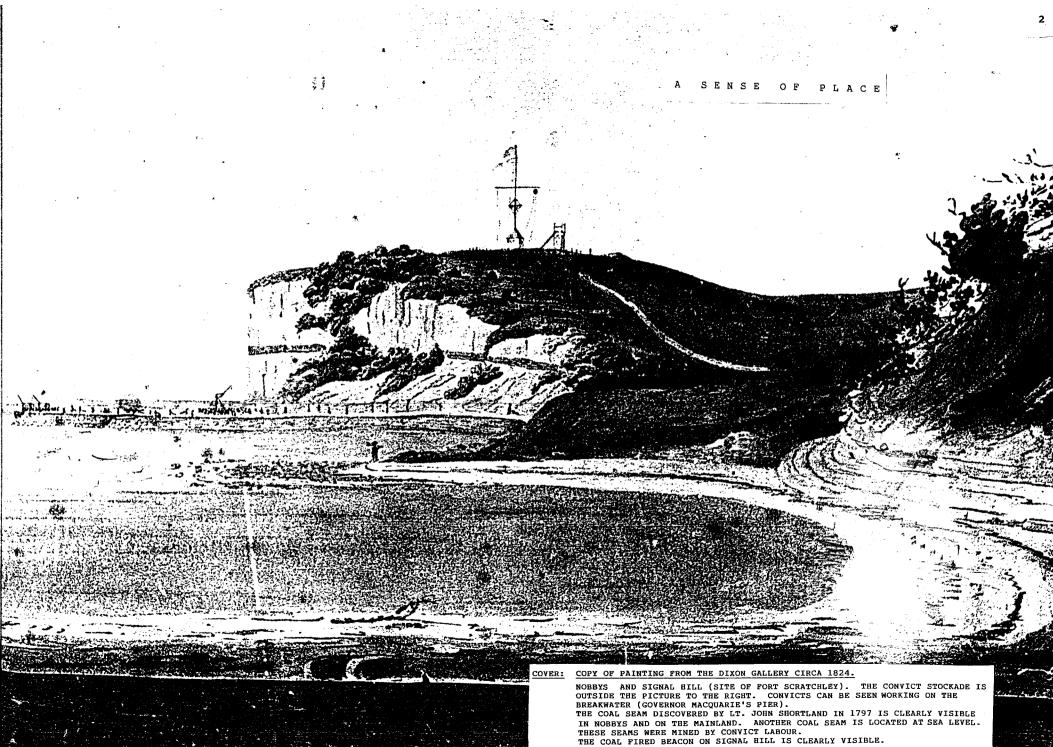
<u>4. THE ANALYSIS AND DESIGN PRINCIPLES</u> reflect the sense of place, the evolution of the site and its relationship to the residential and commercial areas. Important vistas to and from the site are identified and a Heritage Axis established .Links between the carparks and activity areas are shown.

5.THE PEDESTRIAN FLOW PATTERN is translated into a diagram distributing motor traffic to the periphery and showing curving arrows connecting activity focal points. The Heritage Promenade is proposed as the principal pedestrian thoroughfare giving physical expression to the heritage axis which links the important historic features. The need for care in providing pathways and landscaping in the Stockade area that is in sympathy with its convict past is stressed. The need to protect dynamic views and changes of level is reiterated. No hedges or buildings on the edge of the park that obstruct views to and from the park.

<u>6.THE LANDSCAPE DESIGN</u> plan sets out the planting pattern and indicates the emphasis that should be given to foliage arrangements. The design and plant species will reflect the natural ecology of dune and river margin and formally delineate pedestrian flow pattern. Vistas to and from the park are featured and remnants of the railway occupation of the site are illustrated.

7. THE SITE describes the area which is approximately three hectares including the archaeological stockade. The soil profile at six locations in the park is detailed. The importance of the remnant sand dune slopes which will form an attractive landscaped backdrop to the park is emphasised. A suggested list of suitable plant species for this site is also provided. Illustrations of the envisaged uses for the Bond Store and Warehouse on the heritage axis are shown. A comparison is made between Newcastle's foreshore park and Sydney's botanic gardens. The Botanic Gardens is sixty five hectares in area and fully maintained at State Government expense. Newcastle's Foreshore with the new area will be approximately ten hectares.

<u>B.THE CONCLUSION</u> states that the Historic Park and Open Air Museum presents Newcastle with an exciting opportunity to make maximum use of its rich history, architectural diversity and distinctive landscape. It also provides copies of important documents - previous Labor government's promise, 7th Aug 87, the Lord Mayor of Newcastle's Minute determining that the land be zoned for open space, 11th Aug 87, and the letter from the office of the Premier of N.S.W advising the release of the land, 10th May 89. The Historic Park and Open Air Museum provides a unifying theme that will complete the transformation of this once derelict waste land and provide an attractive setting for this historic Newcastle area.



HISTORIC PARK AND OPEN AIR MUSEUM.

NEWCASTLE N.S.W.

PREFACE

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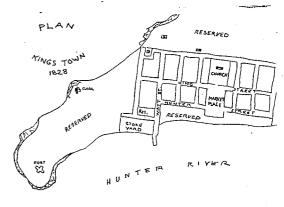
The City of Newcastle has been presented with a unique opportunity to create an Historic Park and Open Air Museum at the mouth of the Hunter River. The general area is of special significance to the Hunter Region and the State. It is the focus of the European history of the Region and the site of Aboriginal occupation, and contains important landscape features and historic buildings. The area has also been the location of important historic events including the discovery and mining of winnable coal in Australia.

The Historic Park and Open Air Museum will contain nationally important links with our Aboriginal and convict past and with the establishment of the City of Newcastle, which was Australia's second colonial settlement.

The original site of the convict stockade, which was located on the southern side of the Hunter River east of the present Customs House, is included in these lands. The area to the east and north of the stockade site was part of Newcastle's original harbourfront recreation reserve, which was alienated by the Commissioners for Railways in 1857.

The return of the remnant areas of the original harbourfront reserve, together with the addition of the reclaimed wetlands which had also been used by the rail authorities, has presented the City and the Region with the opportunity to create an Historic Park and Open Air Museum of national status.

The Newcastle City Council resolved to rezone these lands to zone number 6(a) Open Space and Recreation on August 11, 1987 (see appendix), and these lands, together with the adjacent historic buildings and their associated activities, now have the potential to be transformed into a unique Historic Park and Open Air Museum.



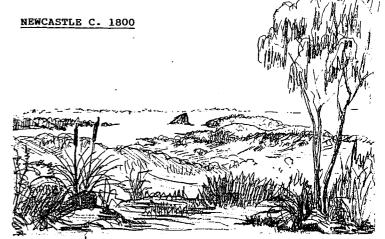
NEWCASTLE

Captain Cook in the "Endeavour" sighted a small clump of an island at the position of Nobby's on May 10th, 1770.

In 1797 convicts stole a government boat from Broken Bay and headed north. Lieut. John Shortland was sent in pursuit. He entered "a very fine river" which he named "Hunter's River" after the Governor of the colony. Shortland took samples of coal from Flagstaff Hill.

In 1801 "Lady Nelson" under Lieut. Grant and with J.F. Platt, an experienced miner, was sent to investigate the possibility of mining coal along Coal River as it was then called. Following favourable reports, Governor King sent six soldiers and twelve convicts to make a settlement at "King's Town" but the settlement was abandoned when mutiny broke out.

In 1804 the permanent settlement of Newcastle was established under Lieut. Menzies.



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(Pre-Railway Construction) circa 1840 Showing - THE STOCKADE SITE

Foreshore Public Recreation Reserve

Recreation Reserve Corridor from the Stockade to the Hospital. _

Early siting of the Customs House and site reserved for future (present site) -

- The Gaol (now motel)

(Original in Newcastle Public Library)

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HISTORIC PARK AND OPEN AIR MUSEUM.

NEWCASTLE N.S.W.

THE SETTING

The proposed Historic Park and Open Air Museum is situated within the boundary of the Newcastle, National Estate Conservation Area and is the historic focus of the Hunter Region. A number of historic buildings are immediately adjacent to the proposed parklands. These include the Menkens designed Bond Store in Telford Street, the former John Bull Warehouse in Stevenson Place, the Customs House and the former Stationmaster's cottage.

The proposed Open Air Museum extends from the park to feature the massive fortifications of Fort Scratchley, the unique Newcastle landmark Nobbys, the convict built Breakwater, the site of the first coal mining in Australia beneath Flagstaff Hill, and the historically interesting Newcastle East residential area.

When Lieutenant John Shortland entered the mouth of the Hunter River in search of escaped convicts in September 1797, he discovered winnable coal outcropping on the side of Signal Hill and recorded Aboriginal encampments on the southern and northern sides of the river in the rough eve chart he prepared of the entrance to the river mouth.

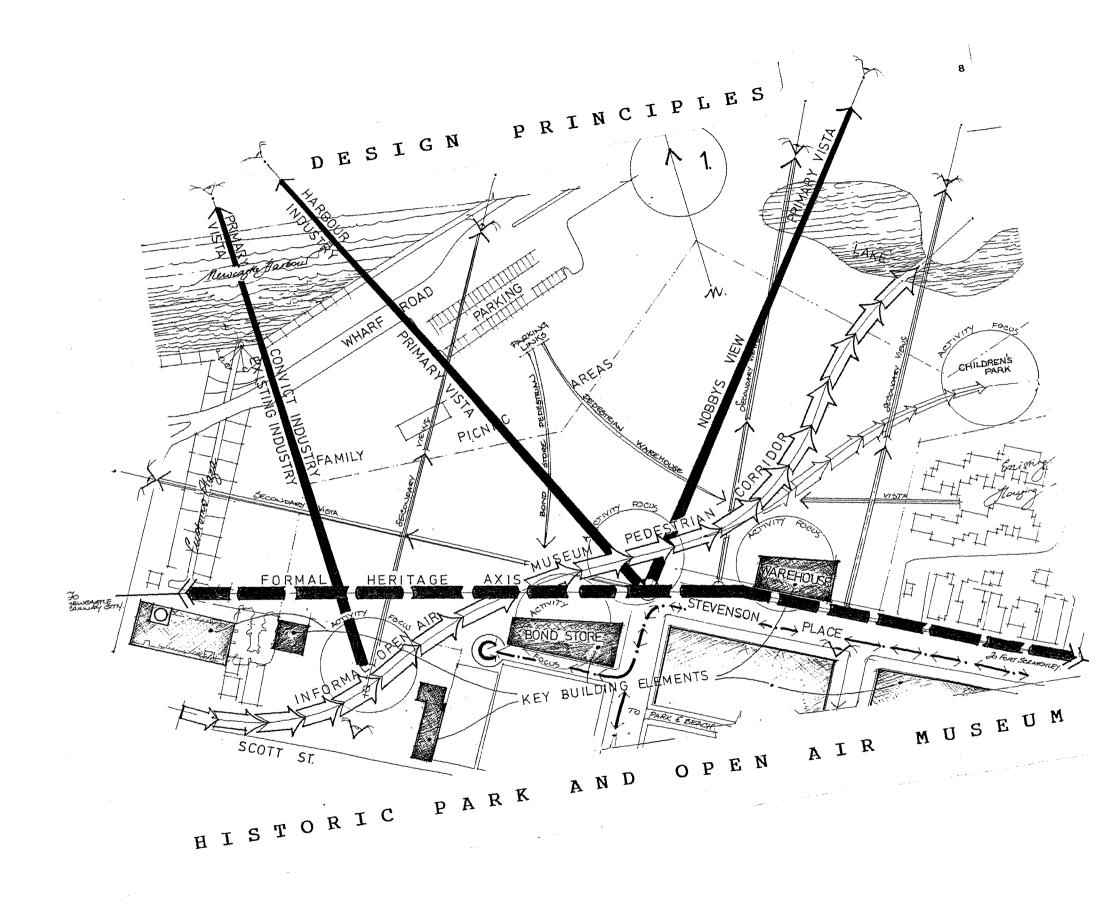
The area of the proposed park landscaping includes the original harbour foreshore reserve, the remains of the dune system to the south, and the area to the north which is mainly reclaimed wetlands.

The historical activities associated with the land area and the attractive views to significant historic buildings, and the Newcastle skyline capped by the Christ Church Cathedral, give an overall impression of a unique sense of place.





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HISTORIC PARK AND OPEN AIR MUSEUM.

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PEDESTRIAN FLOW PATTERN:

Projected pedestrian traffic flow lines have been translated onto a pedestrian flow diagram and represented as a series of curving arrows connecting activity focal points.

Vehicular traffic is encouraged to use the principal roads such as Wharf Road, Watt Street and Scott Street. Car traffic is to be discouraged within the Newcastle East residential area and particularly from Bond Street.

The flow diagram demonstrates the importance of the Heritage Axis. Convenient links to and from the Wharf Road parking area are provided for the Bond Store and Warehouse.

The Heritage Axis will need to provide an attractive promenade to carry the bulk of pedestrian traffic and also allow for other activities, outdoor stalls and perhaps tent pavilions on special occasions.

The Heritage Axis would also need to be available for light service traffic and access to the Customs House and Warehouse within suitable limits.

The diagram indicates the necessity to establish an attractive stairway near the Menkens designed Bond Store, linking the lower levels of the Store with the Stevenson Place level.

This Heritage Promenade will be the principal pedestrian thoroughfare to provide interesting views in, around and across the site from Stevenson Place and the park level. The diagram also indicates the need for other connecting stairways and a ramp at the eastern end of the former John Bull Warehouse.

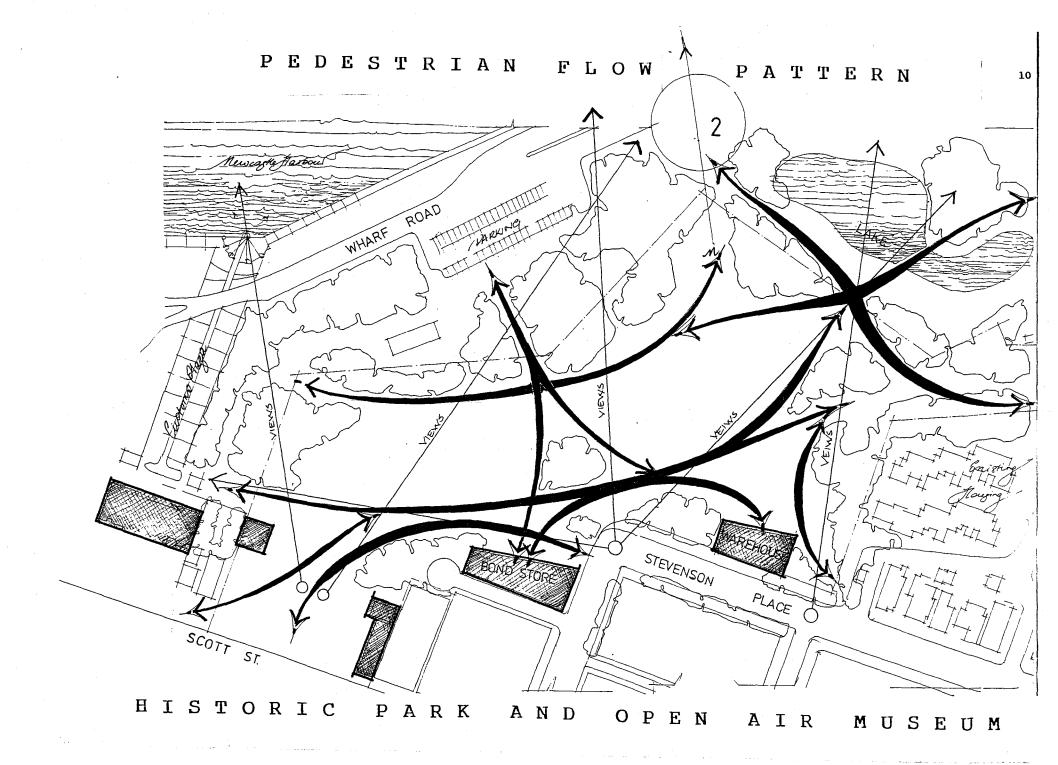
Special attention will have to be paid to the provision of pathways across the stockade site and its landscaping in sympathy with its historic convict past.



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The Citizen's Foreshore Committee support the creation of the historic ruins on top of the re-interred originals along lines of Jamestown, Virginia, U.S.A.

Jamestown has been subject to considerable professional criticism but the concept may provide a solution in the Newcastle setting. It would involve little if anything by way of standing structures and therefore not interfere with the sweep of the park or the panorama of its late 19th century backdrop while at the same time both providing a visible, tangible 'ruin' for public interpretation and securing the original data for posterity.



HISTORIC PARK AND OPEN AIR MUSEUM.

NEWCASTLE N.S.W.

LANDSCAPE DESIGN.

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Four principal open spaces and a central Heritage Promenade are proposed. The Heritage Promenade cuts across the site from east to west and provides a visual and physical connection between the Customs House and the former John Bull Warehouse. The Heritage Promenade will open on to the Convict Stockade site to the south, and on to lawns and landscaping to the north.

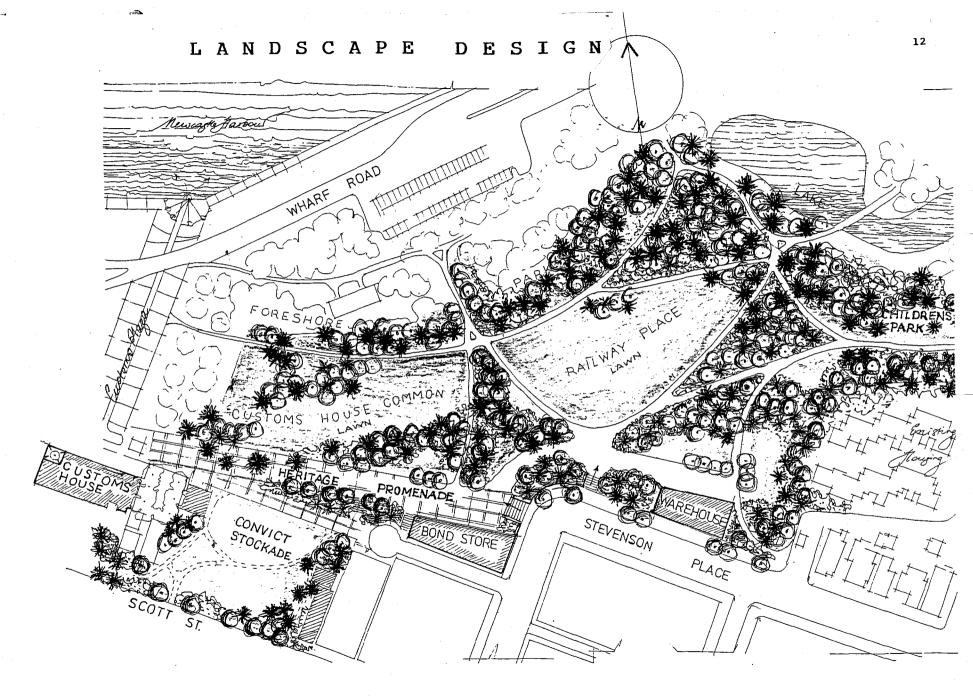
Views to and from The Promenade are of great significance and landscaping must be designed to allow for the free open and uncluttered vistas across the site, particularly from Stevenson Place and the Convict Stockade. The open areas will provide meeting places and rolling lawns with landscaped margins and banks. The design allows the historic buildings and features to stand free and unashamed.

A Children's Park adjacent to the Housing Department's building complex will feature some of the railway buffers and other remnants of the railway occupation of the site.

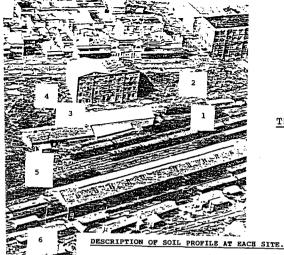
The landscape will feature ecological associations of plants that once grew in the sand dune and riverside margins - Melaleuca, Casuarina, Callistemon and Banksia. A suggested list of plants is provided. All plants must be grouped up in a natural way with each plant association providing shelter and protection for others.

Special groups of plants will be massed on the banks to provide interest and variety and allow for the uninterrupted vistas across all aspects of the site. Emphasis will be given to soil preparation in massed planting areas and the gentle grading of lawns to provide adequate drainage. This is a most important landscape principle to maintain in an area such as this.

The Housing Department housing will merge into the landscape as trees and shrubs mature and special emphasis will be given to the Warehouse and Bond Store, which will be the only buildings to dominate the park, just as they dominated the railway marshalling yard when it was operational.



HISTORIC PARK AND OPEN AIR MUSEUM



Site 1. Depth (mm) 0-600 loamy sand (high humus) 600-750 beach sand 750 -> groundwater

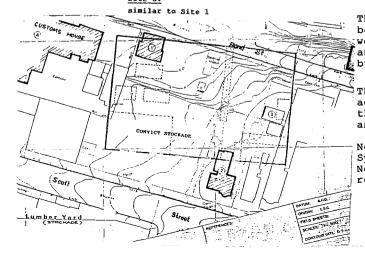
Site 2. (on sand dune) 0 loamy sand (low humus)

Site 3. 0 200 loamy sand (numerous pebbles) mod.humus 200-300 pale beach sand 300 -> groundwater

Site 4. (on sand dune) similar to Site 2

Site 5. 0-300 loamy sand (numerous pebbles) low humus 300-500 pale beach sand 500 \rightarrow groundwater

Site 6.



PROPOSED

HISTORIC PARK AND OPEN AIR MUSEUM.

NEWCASTLE N.S.W.

THE SITE.

The Historic Park and Open Air Museum is proposed over the vacant Crown Land at Newcastle East which has been vested in the Newcastle City Council by the NSW State Government. The land is approximately 3 1/8ha in area and includes the western part of Bond Street and the historic Convict Stockade (Lumber Yard) through to the Scott Street frontage.

Sand dunes originally extended from Newcastle beach through to a shallow beach area on the harbour. There were sandy shoals in the harbour.

The beach and shallows were filled over the years for the railway marshalling yards and the Zaara Street Power Station.

Most of the park will be low lying with the water table close to the surface (see description of soil profile) rising on the rear of old sand dunes to Stevenson Place and Bond Street.

The high water table would ensure the success of the water tolerant trees and heathland plants that have been suggested for the lower part of the site and the sand dune areas will provide good conditions for native hind dune planting.

It is envisaged that the Stockade (Lumber Yard) area between the present Bond Street and Scott Street will be landscaped with rolling lawns and massed planting in areas immediately outside the stockade site. The appropriately restored buildings will be sensitively landscaped to enhance their historic values.

The significance of the original land form with its dunes and beachfront is emphasised in the Landscape Design. The design would allow for views across the site from the vantage points and views out from the park to the slopes and the heritage buildings.

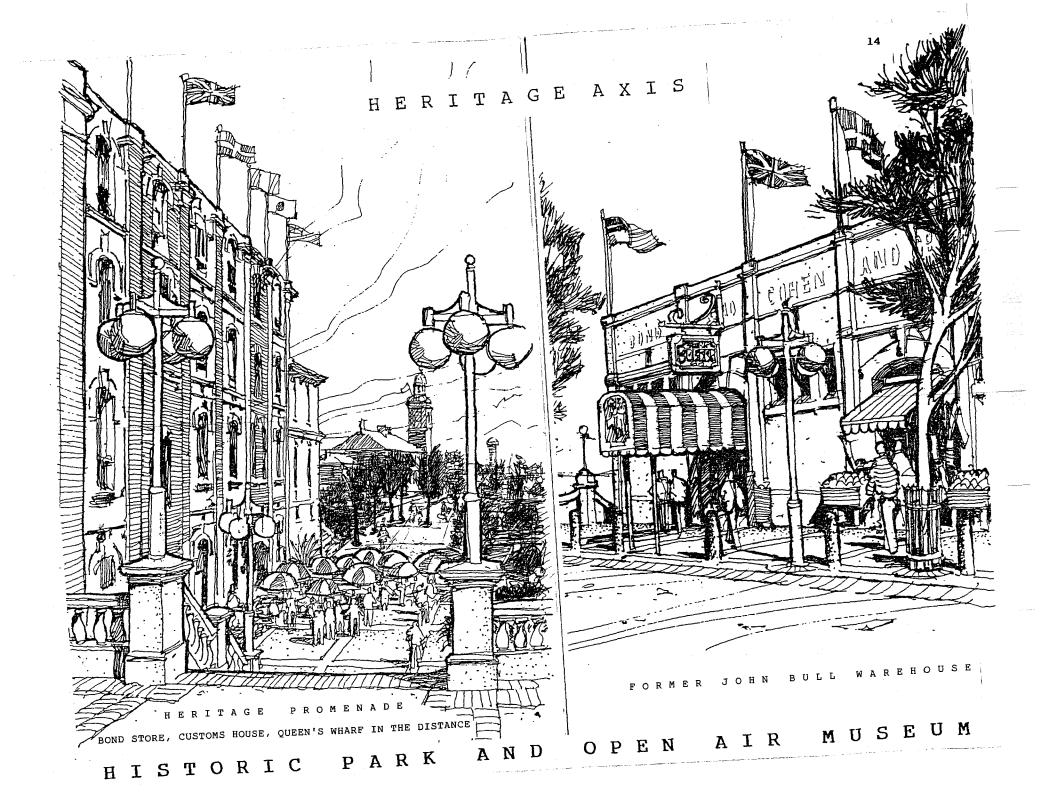
The Historic Park and Open Air Museum will make an important addition to the existing foreshore park and promenade and integrate the landscape with a green matrix unifying the built environment and the historic land form.

Newcastle's Harbourfront Park 10ha is small in comparison with Sydney's Botanic Gardens Domain 65 ha but when completed will give Newcastle a fine interesting harbourfront to be enjoyed by residents and visitors alike. SUGGESTED PLANT LIST FURTHER NATIVE PLANTS TO BE ADDED

	-
Angophor	a costata
Acacia	longifolia
Α.	sophorae
Α.	glaucescens
Banksia	ericifolia
в.	integrifolia
в.	marginata
в.	serrata
в.	serratifolia
в.	spinulosa
Casuarin	
c.	distyla
с.	littoralis
Cissus	antarctica
Correa	alba
Eucalypt	us botryoides
Е.	gummifera
Е.	maculata
Е.	robusta

Ficus macrophylla rubiginosa Grevillea asplenifolia buxifolia G. punicea G. juniperinum G. G. sericea teretifolia Hakea salicifolia sericea Hibbertia scandens Melaleuca armillaris Μ. ericifolia hypericifolia Μ. quinquenervia linarifolia decora Persoonia pinifolia

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HISTORIC PARK

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MUSEUM

APPENDIX

The Hon. R.J. Mulock Deputy Premier and Minister for Transport. 7th August, 1987.

77 AUG 1987 .

The Rt. Worshipful J. McNaughton, Lord Mayor. 11th August, 1987.

NEWCASTLE. M.S.W. 2302. My deer Lord Meyor.

Aidermen J. McNaughton. Lord Meyor of the City of Newcastle, City Hail. King Street.

I am writing in regard to the issue of the State Rail Authority land at Newcastle Sast End, which has been the subject of considerable public interest in the Newcastle area.

As you know, I visited the site resently and acquainted mynesh well with the ovenie surrounding the proposed disposed of the land and the sensitivity which it has stracted among the local community.

During my deliberations I also had the benefit of fruitful discussions with my collesgue. the Tressurer. Mr. Ken Booth, the Membur for Newcasils. Mr. Arthur Rade and also with Mr. Danis Nichols whom I note chaired a well stiendod public mmeting at the Newcasils City Nail last Wednesday ovening.

I have decided that in order to end any further speculation about the lend, to offer that area north of Bond Street to the Resceile City Gouncil frue of charge for resoning as open epsce parkind. This of course, would be on the besist hat the Newcesile City Council mests all costs of besulfication and upkeep and the resoval of redundant real facilities.

With regard to the area known as the Stockade site bounded by Scott and Bond Streets. you will be every that the Department of Environment and Planning has noblated that alte for persament protection under the Meritage Acidus to its Nationsiand State significance. I am therefore propared to endorse a recommendation from the State Rail Authority to hand that area of land over to in Mexicalle Cily Council as custodians, again at no cost.

In total, these percels of land are valued at about 35m, a sum which the State Mail Authority will now forego as a result of the decision to donate the land to Council. In these ofrcumstances, you will apprecise that the Government will not be in a position, nor 1 as sure you would expect 11, to contribute further to the besuifficient on programme or upkeep of the area.

- 2 -

It should be soknowledged too, that the State Rell Authority proviously doneted to Gouncil, at no cost, a further parcel of foreshore land adjoining the Western End of the Bond Streat holding.

When J was in Newcistic as far back as last year, I was very impresent at the Descritication which had taken black on the of land and I have ac doubt that its smalpension with the adjoining ares fronting the forceators will provide a magnitiant gatawy to the Munter River and will serve the best interests of in prosent and future oppulation of Newcastla.

1 look forward in due course to Council's acceptance of the proposels outlined above.

Yours eincarely,

(Std.) R. J. MULOCK

R.J. MULOCK DEPUTY PREMIER and MINISTER POR TRANSPORT LORD MAYORAL MINUTE

No. 19 11th August'87

SUBJECT: NEWCASTLE EAST

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The announcement made by the Bonourable Ron Mulock, Deputy Premier and Minister for Transport, that the State Government is prepared to made a gift to the City of the railway land east of Watt Street is acknowledged.

I recommend that:

- A letter of acceptance be sent to the Minister, noting our gratitude for his consideration.
- A letter of thanks be sent to Mr. Arthur Wade, M.P. (Member for Newcastle) for the detailed arrangements which he made with the Minister in bringing about the gift of this land to the City.
- 3 Pursuant to Section 54 of the Environmental Planning & Assessment Act, 1979, the Council prepare a draft Local Environmental Plan, proposing to recome the subject land to Zone No. 6(a) Open Services he subject land to Zone No. 6(a) Open Services he subject land to rector of planning Sectorizes he subject land to cone the draft plan for public exhibition under Section 66 of the Act.
- 4. The decision of the Minister be sent to Tract Consultants with formal instructions to prepare a draft plan for inclusion of the additional land into the Harbour Foreshore Park.
- The Harbour Poreshore Committee be requested to consult and liaise with Tract Consultants in the preparation of the new plan.

Cont...

LMRAAA

LORD MAYORAL HINUTE

No. 19 (Cost.../2)

- Advertisements be placed in the Newcastle Berald requesting suggestions for use of the additional land. These suggestions be sent to Tract Consultants.
- The Director of Planning Services be directed to prepare a report on the development of Newcastle East now that the use of the Railway land has been decided.

Alderman J.E. McNaughton LORD MAYOR The Right Hon. N.Greiner, The Premier of NSW. 10th May, 1989.

84/608 NRB.

Premier of New South Wales Australia

1 0 MAY 1989

Dear Mr. Lithgow,

I refer to your letter on behalf of the Northern Parks and Playgrounds Movement concerning the redevelogment of Grown Land at Newcastle East for open space parklands

I am pleased to inform you that in accordance with resently weated that land in Gouncil, the Government resently weated that land in Gouncil's control under the test the locs Consolidation Act. Newcastle City Council position to an Amager for the site and is in the best open space parkinds.

I trust this information silays your concerns.

Yours sincerely,

Vr. B. Lithgow, President Northern Parks and Playgrounds Morener, 13 Hiltores: Parade, Sintribus, Max 2285

Eth moon Share Office Block, Macquarie Silvert, Sydney 2000, Telephone (02) 228 5555, Telex: AA 121269, Facsimile: (02) 231 1110, Telephonic Address: MANIPACTE

AND OPEN AIR MUSEUM. HISTORIC PARK

NEWCASTLE N.S.W.

CONCLUSION

The concept of the Historic Park and Open Air Museum presents an exciting opportunity to make maximum use of the rich history, the architectural diversity and the distinctive landscape of the East End site.

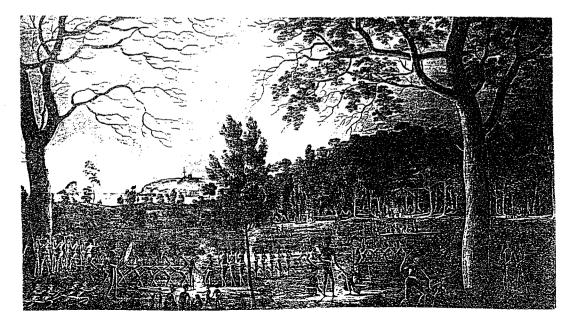
Newcastle's first century of European occupation was dominated by its penal settlement, the exploitation of its environment and the demise of its indigenous inhabitants. This century has seen the development of heavy industry and migration to dormitory outer suburbs. Over the past forty years the community has fought for and finally won back its foreshore and Newcastle East lands. The Park and its landscaping has been designed to create a wide spectrum of opportunities for recreation and will provide the framework for the future status of the city.

The historic park, with its unique Aboriginal and convict legacy sensitively interpreted, framed by splendid nineteenth century commercial buildings and terraces, with activity areas connected by its heritage axis, and unified by landscaping with appropriate native planting, will complete the transformation of a once derelict industrial waste-land into a magnificent heritage park.

The Historic Park and the Open Air Museum will lay the foundation for the regeneration of the city and will be a tangible expression of the evolution of Newcastle and of the community's needs and aspirations for the use of this land for years to come.



EXISTING CUSTOMS HOUSE PLAZA



CORROBOREE AT NEWCASTLE Painting by James Wallace Nobbys and the Coal Fired Beacon in the Background

