



## MINISTERIAL REVIEW PANEL

### PROPOSED LISTING OF “CURRAWONG”, CURRAWONG BEACH, PITTWATER ON STATE HERITAGE REGISTER

The Ministerial Review Panel and Independent Hearing and Assessment Panel for the Currawong site at Pittwater has prepared this report to inform the Minister and the Director General of its assessment of the proposed listing of the subject site on the State Heritage Register. A separate report will be prepared to assess the current development proposal for the subject site.

This report has been prepared following a detailed review of all documentation relevant to the proposed listing of the site on the State Heritage Register. This includes the proposed listing documentation prepared by the Department of Planning's Heritage Office, public hearings and the review of public and agency submissions both on the proposed heritage listing and the development proposal (in so far as these are relevant to the heritage significance of the site). In addition this report has considered additional information submitted in relation to the project as part of the Preferred Project Report (August 2008) which was prepared following completion of the public hearings. This information includes a draft Conservation Management Plan for the site prepared by Graham Brooks and Associates.

The Report recommends that the Minister list the site on the State Heritage Register.

#### 1. PRELUDE

On 7 December 2007 the Minister directed the constitution of an Independent Hearing and Assessment Panel under section 75(G) of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 to provide advice on certain aspects of the project application for development at Currawong. The Panel was also constituted under section 35 of the Heritage Act 1977 as a Ministerial Review Panel to advise the Minister on the proposed listing of the Currawong site on the State Heritage Register.

The Review Panel comprises:

Mr John Whitehouse (chair) - environmental and planning law expert;  
Mr Stephen Davies - heritage and planning expert; and  
Mr Martin Hill - property and economics expert.

The terms of reference of the Ministerial Review Panel are:

*To provide advice in relation to key issues raised in the recommendation to list the site on the State Heritage Register.” Issues to be considered by the Review Panel include:*

- *Previous presentations to the Heritage Council on the proposed heritage listing, and previous submissions;*

- *The development proposal in the context of the proposed heritage listing;*
- *Public debate about appropriate future uses for the site; and*
- *The proposed listing curtilage.*

This report is consistent with the above terms of reference with the exception of the second dot point which relates to consideration of the development proposal in the context of the proposed heritage listing. This matter will be addressed in a separate report prepared by the Panel in relation to the development proposal under the terms of reference issued to it in its capacity as an Independent Hearing and Assessment Panel (IHAP) under section 75(G) of the EP&A Act 1979.

## 2. PROCESS TO DATE

In July 2007 the Heritage Office initiated an assessment of the heritage significance of the Currawong site following a number of nominations for State heritage listing by Pittwater Council. Following this assessment a report was put to the Heritage Council and on 1 August 2007 the Heritage Council issued a notice of intention to list the site. During the notification period the Heritage Office received a total of 511 submissions including 37 submissions from individuals or organisations (including Pittwater Council, the local member Mr Robert Stokes MP, community groups and residents) in addition to 474 proforma letters. All submissions supported the proposed listing of the site. Issues raised in these submissions can be summarised as:

- Request listing of the site on State Heritage Register as a matter of urgency;
- Provided details of how the site meets the criteria for State listing;
- Identifies significance of the place including site history, heritage value of structures, social significance, association with Labor movement and identities, natural values, history of aboriginal occupation, original land grant etc; and
- Request whole of the site be listed reflecting original land grant and appropriate site curtilage.

The Heritage Office also forwarded to the Panel copies of Heritage Office documents relevant to the proposed listing of Currawong on the State Heritage Register. This information included the Heritage Office Data form on Currawong, key stakeholder submissions on the proposed heritage listing and Heritage Office and Heritage Council reports and minutes in relation to the matter. This information has been considered by the Panel in preparing this report.

In response to the public notice of the Panel hearings for the proposed heritage listing and project application for Currawong, the Panel received 294 submissions from 214 parties. The Department of Planning also received a further 81 individual submissions, 4 Type A form letters and 35 Type B form letters, 3 submissions from Government Departments, 1 from a public agency and 1 from local government (Pittwater Council). A submission was received from the Heritage Council of NSW. These submissions were also referred to the Panel for consideration. (See further details in the Panel's report on the project application.)

Issues raised in submissions to the Panel and the DoP which related to the proposed heritage listing of the site included:

- Site should be immediately listed on State Heritage Register given that it meets 5 out of 7 Criteria for listing;
- Heritage Council should oversee any future development proposals for the site having regard to heritage significance;
- No development proposal should be considered for the site until after site listed on State Heritage Register;
- Concerns were expressed that there is a conflict with the Panel (and the Minister) considering both the proposed heritage listing and the development proposal concurrently;
- To protect heritage significance site should be brought into public ownership and included in National Park;
- Significant details demonstrating heritage significance of the site including both cultural and natural values;
- No Conservation Management Plan prepared (subsequently included in Preferred Project Report); and
- Aboriginal heritage not adequately addressed and sites proposed to be destroyed.

On 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> of June 2008 the Panel held a hearing to allow members of the public and other interested parties to present their submissions in relation to both the proposed heritage listing and the major project application. 99 persons presented to the Panel at the hearing including representatives of:

- Careel Bay Pittwater Protection Association Inc.
- Surfrider Foundation
- Pittwater Council
- Pittwater Natural Heritage Association
- Avalon Preservation Association
- Brookvale Valley Community Group
- Palm Beach and Whale Beach Association
- National Parks Association (Sydney Branch)
- Association for Berowra Creek
- Royal Australian Institute of Architects
- Church Point Reserve Association
- Clareville & Bilgola Plateau Residents Association
- Friends of Currawong
- Pittwater Residents Against Inappropriate Development
- Scotland Island Residents Association
- National Trust of Australia
- West Pittwater Community Association

A full list of persons who appeared at the hearing is at Attachment 1.

The local member Rob Stokes MP also presented to the Panel raising objection to the proposed development and supporting the proposed heritage listing.

All presenters to the Panel, who raised matters of heritage, supported listing of the site on the State Heritage Register. Those that addressed the issue of curtilage recommended that the entire site be included in the curtilage consistent with the original land holding.

In addition the Proponent for the project application, Eco Villages Australia Pty Ltd, presented to the Panel at the outset of the public hearing to introduce the proposed development and present its submission on the heritage significance of the site in relation to the proposed heritage listing. The Proponent also presented at the conclusion of the hearing to provide a brief response to issues raised in the course of the hearing. In its submissions the Proponent indicated that it supported listing of the item on the State Heritage Register but that it did not concur with the Heritage Council's Statement of Significance nor the recommended curtilage. These matters are addressed in further detail below.

### **3. PROPOSED HERITAGE LISTING**

The Panel has been charged under section 35 of the Heritage Act 1977 to advise the Minister on the recommendation by the Heritage Council to list the Currawong site on the State Heritage Register. In this regard the Panel considers that it must determine the issue of listing of the site on the State Heritage Register (and the appropriate curtilage) prior to giving consideration to any development proposal for the subject site. Accordingly this report deals exclusively with the proposed heritage listing with recommendations contained herein being relied upon by the Panel in its subsequent consideration of the Part 3A Project Application for the site, the subject of a separate report.

#### **3.1 Background**

Since the late 1990s the Heritage Council of NSW has considered a number of requests from Pittwater Council (1999 and 2003) to list Currawong as an item on the State Heritage Register. However prior to 2007 it was considered that insufficient evidence existed to support State listing. In July 2007 the Heritage Office of the Department of Planning commenced its own assessment of the site and subsequently in August 2007 the Heritage Council gave notice of an intention to consider listing the item under clause 33(1)(a) of the Heritage Act 1977.

On 7 November 2007 the Heritage Council considered a report prepared by the Heritage Office outlining a recommendation to list the Currawong Workers' Holiday Camp on the State Heritage Register. The recommendation included an assessment of Heritage Significance (Heritage Data Form) which indicated that the site is of State Significance given that it meets 5 of the 7 heritage assessment criteria for listing on the State Heritage Register: Criteria A – Historical Values, Criteria B – Associations with People or Groups of People, Criteria D – Community Esteem, Criteria F - Rarity and Criteria G – Representative Values. The assessment did not consider that the site met the test for State significance in terms of Criteria C – Aesthetic / Technical or Criteria E – Research Potential.

The assessment report noted that proposed listing of Currawong on the State Heritage Register was overwhelmingly supported by the public in submissions and conditionally supported by the proponent Eco Villages Australia Pty Ltd. It further noted that the main issue of contention in relation to the proposed listing was the criteria for listing and the size of the curtilage associated with any such listing. Three (later amended to four by addendum to the report) curtilage options were presented for consideration by the Heritage Council. The four alternatives are outlined in detail in section 3.4 below.

At its meeting of 7 November 2007 the Heritage Council resolved:

1. *in accordance with section 33(1)(d) of the Heritage Act, 1977 advises the Minister that the item known as “Currawong” at Currawong Beach, Pittwater is of State Heritage Significance in accordance [with] heritage assessment criteria A, B, D, F and G;*
2. *Recommends to the Minister, in accordance with section 32(1) and (2) of the Heritage Act, that the Minister direct the listing of the item, “Currawong” at Currawong Beach, Pittwater on the State Heritage Register;*
3. *recommends to the Minister that the appropriate curtilage for the State Heritage Register listing should be the whole of the property comprising the following lots being Lot 10 DP 1092275, Lot 1 DP 166328, Lot 1 DP 337208 and Lot 4 DP 978424 [equating to Curtilage 3 as shown in section 3.4 below];*
4. *notes that the listing of Currawong on the State Heritage Register does not prohibit development but the Heritage Council, in considering any application for development, would be concerned to ensure that any such development would not detract from the State heritage significance of the item;*
5. *considers that a Heritage Agreement under Part 3B of the Heritage Act, 1977 would be a useful management tool for the ongoing conservation management of the item;*
6. *in accordance with section 33(1)(e) of the Heritage Act 1977, gives notice of its decision to persons notified under section 33(1)(a); and*
7. *in accordance with section 57(2) of the Heritage Act, note that the Heritage Council Standard Exemptions will apply.*

A briefing note to the Minister was subsequently prepared by the Department of Planning’s Heritage Office which recommended in accordance with the Heritage Council’s recommendation that the Minister direct the listing of the “Currawong Workers’ Holiday Camp, Pittwater” on the State Heritage Register. The Statement of Significance recommended by the Heritage Council is addressed below as section 3.3.

Following receipt of the above advice from the Heritage Council the Minister decided to appoint a Ministerial Review Panel under section 35 of the Heritage Act 1977 to advise on the recommendation of the Heritage Council to list the site on the State Heritage Register.

### **3.2 Assessment against Criteria for State Significance**

Under section 4A(3) of the Heritage Act 1977:

*The Heritage Council is to notify the Minister of the criteria that it uses for the making of decisions as to whether or not an item is of State heritage significance and is to notify the Minister of any change to those criteria that may occur from time to time. The Minister is*

*to cause notice of the criteria and any such change to the criteria to be published in the Gazette.*

The criteria prepared by the Heritage Council which it uses to determine whether or not an item is of State heritage significance are as follows:

*Items listed on the State Heritage Register must meet one or more of the following criteria:*

- (a) an item is important in the course, or pattern, of NSW's cultural or natural history;*
- (b) an item has strong or special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in NSW's cultural or natural history;*
- (c) an item is important in demonstrating aesthetic characteristics and/or a high degree of creative or technical achievement in NSW;*
- (d) an item has strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group in NSW for social, cultural or spiritual reasons;*
- (e) an item has potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of NSW's cultural or natural history;*
- (f) an item possesses uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of NSW's cultural or natural history;*
- (g) an item is important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of NSW's:
  - cultural or natural places; or*
  - cultural or natural environments.**

*An item is not to be excluded from the register on the ground that items with similar characteristics have already been listed.*

As outlined above the Heritage Council has provided advice that in its view Currawong meets Criterion A, B, D, F and G. An item is only required to meet one of the criteria for State significance to be listed. In this case the Heritage Council is of the view that the subject item meets 5 of the 7 criteria. The Panel notes that no parties (including the Proponent to the Part 3A Major Project Application) who made submissions to the Panel disputed that the site is of State significance. Eco Villages however through a detailed report prepared by Graham Brooks and Associates suggested that the item was of State significance in relation to just one heritage criterion. Although not explicitly stated in the report it is assumed that Graham Brooks and Associates are of the view that the site meets Criterion A Historical / or D Social Cultural.

Having considered the argument, the proposed amended Statement of Significance prepared on behalf of the Proponent as part of both the Project Application and the Preferred Project Report, the Panel concurs with the Heritage Council's view that the site is of State heritage significance on the basis of 5 of the 7 criteria used to determine State significance. In regard to each of the criteria the Panel has formed the views set out below:

| <i>SHR Criteria</i>   | <i>Panels Consideration</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| (a) Historical        | The Panel agrees that the association of the Currawong Holiday Camp with Labor social ideals and the social and work place reforms which took place in NSW post World War II (including the 40hr working week and the introduction of annual leave) is of State significance. The Panel notes that Currawong is one of the last remaining intact examples of a mid twentieth century union holiday camp in NSW if not Australia and is therefore an important symbol of social reform.                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| (b) Association       | The Panel considers that sound documented and anecdotal evidence exists that Currawong has a strong association with Jim Kenny, past Assistant Secretary of the Labor Council of NSW and more broadly with the NSW Labor Council. This association with the post war union movement in NSW and prominent individuals in the movement is considered to meet the criteria for State significance. The Panel considers that the site is also of significance in association with the industrial manufacturers, Vandyke Brothers who manufactured two of the “Sectionit” holiday cabins although it is considered that this association is not as strong and unlikely to be of State significance in its own right. |
| (d) Social / Cultural | The Panel is of the view that the association with union members and their families since its establishment in 1949 as an affordable holiday destination is of State significance. The connection of the local, Union and broader community to the place and the prominence the place holds in the hearts and minds of visitors (some who are now returning as a third generation) cannot be overstated.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| (f) Rarity            | The Panel considers that the Currawong site meets the criteria for State significance in terms of rarity being a rare and probably unique example of a mid-twentieth century union based holiday camp remaining in NSW and possibly in Australia.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| (g) Representation    | The Currawong site is of State significance in terms of being representative of a mid-twentieth century union based workers holiday camp in NSW. The camp is representative of the modest accommodation provided by the Labor Council of NSW to enable low paid workers to enjoy a holiday during their newly awarded annual leave. The Currawong camp is the last remaining such camp in NSW.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |

However the Panel also considers that the site is of State heritage significance in regard to Criteria C Aesthetic / Technical significance. The Panel has reviewed the Heritage Council’s Inclusion and Exclusion Guidelines on Aesthetic Significance (Assessing Heritage Significance, Heritage Office, 2001) and is of the view that the site is aesthetically distinctive as a rare surviving group of workers cottages used as holiday accommodation. The aesthetic grouping is distinctive. Further

the cabins exemplify a particular taste, style or technology as they are representative of their type. They exemplify the workers retreat type accommodation in their natural setting and as a group. When the cabins are assessed against the exclusion criteria, the Panel concludes that the site has not lost its integrity as a group and the visual appeal and scenic qualities of the site have not been degraded. The guidelines also outline types of items which meet the criterion. Currawong is consistent with the category of “items which demonstrate distinctive aesthetic attributes in form and composition and is rare as a group.” The Panel’s assessment therefore concludes that:

- the group of holiday cottages are aesthetically distinctive, they exemplify a style, they are not degraded for what they are and they have attributes in form and composition;
- while they are not architecturally significant they certainly are an important composition as a group and this relates to their appearance and not simply their history as they are intact and have a relationship that is informal; and
- they are of State Significance aesthetically.

Accordingly the Panel has formed the view that Currawong meets 6 of the 7 criteria for State heritage listing. It considers that the Currawong site is of exceptionally high significance to the State and therefore recommends that the Minister proceed to take action to list the item on the State Heritage Register under section 32(1) of the Heritage Act 1977.

Importantly as noted above the heritage value of the Currawong site has not been disputed with all parties agreeing that the item is indeed of State heritage significance albeit that there is some dispute regarding which, and how many, criterion for State significance it is consistent with. All parties agree that the item should be included on the State Heritage Register. Rather the main area of dispute in relation to the proposed heritage listing relates to the proposed Statement of Significance. This matter is addressed by the Panel in section 3.3 and 3.4 below.

### **3.3 Statement of Significance**

The Heritage Council in its data form for the Heritage Office Database recommended a proposed Statement of Significance (refer Attachment 2) for Currawong.

As part of the preparation of a draft Conservation Management Plan, submitted as part of the Preferred Project Report for the site, Graham Brooks and Associates undertook a new assessment of the Currawong site against the NSW Heritage Office Assessment Criteria for listing on the State Heritage Register. This revised assessment concludes that the site meets at least 4 of the 7 criterion including: (A) Historical; (B) Association; (D) Social / Cultural; and (G) Representation. There is a disparity in relation to the value ascribed to the site in terms of (F) Rarity with the assessment section indicating the site has State significance while the following Statement of Significance ascribed only local significance. Following the assessment a revised alternate Statement of Significance was prepared by Graham Brooks and Associates (refer Attachment 3). The Statement of Significance prepared by Graham Brooks and Associates varies considerably from the Statement endorsed by the Heritage Council. It provides a different emphasis on the relevant values of the site and differs significantly in certain areas including:

- reasons for Currawong retaining its low key character;
- emphasis on connections to the NSW Labor Council (and in particular Jim Kenny, Assistant Secretary of the Labor Council of NSW and Jim McGirr, Labor Premier) and Currawong as a symbol of the social reform movement in the mid 20<sup>th</sup> Century;
- different levels of significance (local v State significance) ascribed to the site in terms of its representative and rarity values; and
- research potential both as a layered cultural landscape and in terms of indigenous heritage values.

The Panel has given consideration to the alternate Statement of Significance prepared by Graham Brooks and Associates, having regard to the draft Conservation Management Plan. However the Panel has formed the view that the Statement of Significance endorsed by the Heritage Council of NSW better reflects the various heritage values of the site.

While some of the points raised by Graham Brooks and Associates appear to be valid (e.g. intactness is the result of lack of investment in renewal and further development rather than the result of a deliberate policy by the Labor Council of NSW), the Panel considers that these matters do not derogate from the significance of the site nor the need to preserve the site's values whether preserved to date on purpose or by happenstance.

The Panel considers that given its consideration of the significance of the site against the predetermined criteria for determining State Significance, the Heritage Council's recommended Statement of Significance is generally appropriate. However it does have some concerns with elements of the Statement as outlined below:

1. "*Currawong is of State historical significance as **the most** intact remaining example of mid-twentieth century, union organised workers' holiday camp....*"

Comment – the Panel considers that this statement should be amended to read "**an intact** remaining example...." rather than "**the most intact** remaining example" as it does not consider sufficient evidence has been presented to substantiate that it is the most intact example of such a holiday camp in Australia.

2. "*Currawong is then **a symbol** of the social reform movements of mid-twentieth century Australia....*"

Comment – the Panel considers that Currawong is a physical symbol of the social reform movement and this statement should be amended to read "**physical symbol**" to more accurately reflect the type of symbol that Currawong represents.

3. "*Currawong is of local significance for its aesthetic and landmark values....*"

Comment – as outlined above the Panel is of the view that Currawong is of State significance in terms of its aesthetic values. It therefore considers that paragraph 4 of the Heritage Council's recommended Statement of Significance should be rewritten to reflect the Panel's assessment. Suggested wording is as follows:

Currawong is of State significance for its aesthetic values as a workers holiday camp located amongst bushland and surrounded by national park on a magnificent Sydney waterfront. The group of holiday cottages are aesthetically distinctive as a group and although not being architecturally significant form a rare and important composition grouping. They exemplify a style and are not degraded but clearly represent their history and the informal relationship between them. The Currawong site has high scenic quality.....

4. *Paragraph 3 – Currawong is rare and **probably unique** within Australia for having operated as a union camp....”*

Comment – The Panel considers that this statement should be amended to say rare and to delete the reference to “ **and probably unique**”.

5. *“Currawong also has scientific research potential and local representative values of its natural environment....”*

Comment – the Panel considers that Currawong does have research potential being adjacent to and part of an inter-related landscaped with Ku-Ring-Gai National Park which is listed on the National Heritage Register. It considers that this should be included in the Statement of Significance as its research potential as part of the surrounding area, which incorporates the National Park, is relevant to its significance.

Subject to the above amendments the Panel considers that the Statement of Significance recommended by the Heritage Council is appropriate.

### **3.4 Site Curtilage**

As noted above, there have been a number of alternate curtilages considered for the proposed listing of Currawong on the State Heritage Register. However as part of the Preferred Project Report the draft Conservation Management Plan prepared by the Proponent’s consultant Graham Brooks and Associates, recommends that:

*“The whole of the Currawong site should be listed on the NSW Heritage Register, with the heritage listing taking into account the additional research and analysis undertaken for the preparation of this CMP”.*

Accordingly the Panel notes that there is now general consensus with both the local community, the Heritage Council and the Proponent that the curtilage for the listing of Currawong should be the entire site.

The Panel notes as pointed out in many submissions, that the site remains one of the only early land grants that retains nearly half of its original 100 acres (40 ha) land grant. It is understood that originally Portions 9 and 10 were made as one land grant and the subject site is substantively

the same allotment as the original Portion 10 granted in 1835<sup>1</sup>. Further it is considered that part of the site's significance lies in its historical value as a colonial farm which later became a workers holiday camp. It is considered that the ability to interpret this history, and transition of uses or layered cultural landscape, is to some degree dependent on the proposed curtilage reflecting the original land grant.

The Panel is therefore of the view consistent with the Heritage Council of NSW and the Proponent's heritage consultant that the curtilage for the item should be the whole of the site consistent with the original land grant. The Panel notes that the identification of the site's curtilage as the whole of the site does not preclude development within the curtilage rather it would trigger the involvement of the Heritage Council in the development of any such land (in accordance with the provisions of Part 4 of Heritage Act 1977).

In addition to reflecting the original land grant the adoption of the entire site as the heritage curtilage ensures that all of the existing attributes of the site that contribute to its significance as a place are reflected in the listing. This extends to the site's natural and landscape significance demonstrated by the iconic cliffs behind the site, the open grassed valley floor, the treed midslopes, the creek and foreshore areas and the built structures. The Panel considers that it is the combination of these factors that make up the site's significance and the interrelationship between each and therefore considers it essential that these relationships be recognised in the listing.

The Panel notes that the existing land holding includes land which Eco Villages proposes to transfer to the Ku-Ring-Gai National Park as part of the current major project application. While the Panel recommends that the whole of the site be included in the heritage curtilage it is noted that if at some time in the future part of the land is transferred to the National Park, an exemption could be created to remove the requirement for approval by the Heritage Council of certain types of works which are regularly undertaken within a National Park. This would avoid unnecessary layers of legislative controls but at the same time ensure that the integrity of the curtilage is preserved.

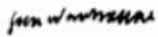
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<sup>1</sup> Draft Conservation Management Plan, Graham Brooks and Associates, August 2008.

#### 4. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Minister and the Director General:

1. Note the Panel's report;
2. Request that the Department of Planning's Heritage Branch amend the Statement of Significance for Currawong consistent with the recommendations contained herein;
3. Publicly release this report to inform both the local community on the outcome of the Panel's deliberations; and
4. List Currawong as an item of State significance on the State Heritage Register.



John Whitehouse  
Chair



Martin Hill



Stephen Davies

9 March 2009

# ATTACHMENT 1

## List of Parties that appeared at Panel Hearings

**List of Parties that appeared at the Hearings on 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> & 13<sup>th</sup> June 2008**

|     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|-----|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1.  | Eco Villages Pty Ltd<br>Mr Allen Linz, Eco Villages Australia Pty Ltd<br>Mr Michael Harrison, Architectus<br>Mr Jonathan Bryant, Graham Brookes & Associates<br>Mr Bruce Masson, Masson Wilson Twiney<br>Mr Gary Mostyn, Pells Sullivan Meynick<br>Mr Mark Tooker, Worley Parsons<br>Dr Daniel Martens, Martens Consulting<br>Dr Bob Paterson, Lanfax Laboratories<br>Dr Anne Clements, Anne Clements & Associates<br>Dr Alison Hunt, AHA Ecology<br>Mr John Travers, Travers Environmental |
| 2.  | Mr Angelo Quaglia                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| 3.  | Mr Norman Carter                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| 4.  | Careel Bay, Pittwater Protection Association Inc<br>Ms Kristine Martin                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| 5.  | Surfrider Foundation<br>Mr Tom Kirsop                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| 6.  | Pittwater Council<br>Mr Lindsay Dyce, Pittwater Council<br>Dr L de Ambrosis, GHD<br>Mr G Kotze, GHD<br>Mr A Leventhal, GHD<br>Ms Louise Collier, Cardno Lawson Treloar<br>Ms Janine Formica, Pittwater Council<br>Mr Robert A Moore, Robert A Moore Pty Ltd<br>Mr James Payne, Pittwater Council                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| 7.  | Ms Cathy Kubany                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| 8.  | Pittwater Natural Heritage Association<br>Ms Polly Thompson                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| 9.  | Ms Patricia Gleen                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| 10. | Avalon Preservation Association<br>Mr Peter Maymans                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| 11. | Ms Jill Bruce                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| 12. | Ms Patricia Giles OAM                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| 13. | Ms Sue Martin                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| 14. | Mrs Susan Colvin                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| 15. | Dr Ken Hughes                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| 16. | Brookvale Valley Community Group<br>Dr Christina Kirsch Davies                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| 17. | Palm Beach & Whale Beach Association<br>Mr Storm Jacklin                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| 18. | National Parks Association (Sydney Br)<br>Ms Heather Roy                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| 19. | The Honourable Dr James Macken, AM                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| 20. | Association for Berowra Creek<br>Dr Gabe Lomas                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| 21. | Royal Australian Institute of Architects<br>Mr Murray Brown<br>Mr Peter Stutchbury                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| 22. | Mrs Mary Newlinds                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| 23. | Dr Stuart Spring                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| 24. | Mr Giles Tabuteau                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| 25. | Dr Richard Pearse                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |

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|-----|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 26. | Ms Kit Moore                                                                                |
| 27. | Church Point Reserve Association<br>Mr Ray White                                            |
| 28. | Clareville & Bilgola Plateau Residents Association<br>Mr John Waring<br>Ms Jennie Mackenzie |
| 29. | Friends of Currawong<br>Mr Shane Withington                                                 |
| 30. | Friends of Currawong<br>Ms Jo Holder                                                        |
| 31. | Ms Ann McMahon                                                                              |
| 32. | Pittwater Residents Against Inappropriate Development,<br>Mr Harvey Rose                    |
| 33. | Mr Bryan Penny                                                                              |
| 34. | Mr Richard Leplastrier                                                                      |
| 35. | Mr David Catchlove                                                                          |
| 36. | Mr Brian Kench                                                                              |
| 37. | Mr Craig Burton                                                                             |
| 38. | Mr David Boulton                                                                            |
| 39. | Ms Margaret de Low                                                                          |
| 40. | Ms Gabrielle Grimbacher                                                                     |
| 41. | Mr Robert T Dunn                                                                            |
| 42. | Mr Henry Wardlaw                                                                            |
| 43. | Mr David Gleen                                                                              |
| 44. | Ms Anne Hinds                                                                               |
| 45. | Mr Angus Gordon                                                                             |
| 46. | Mr Julian Pulvermacher                                                                      |
| 47. | Mr Stephen Crosby                                                                           |
| 48. | Ms Herminie Swainston                                                                       |
| 49. | Ms Wendy Starkie                                                                            |
| 50. | Mr Tony Cullen                                                                              |
| 51. | Miss Juliet Rayner                                                                          |
| 52. | Mrs Jenny Cullen                                                                            |
| 53. | Mr Aero Leplastrier<br>Mr Mallee Lambert<br>Ms Ishbel Cullen                                |
| 54. | Ms Annabelle Kristevic                                                                      |
| 55. | Ms Ann Sharp                                                                                |
| 56. | Ms Susan Young                                                                              |
| 57. | Ms Toni Warburton                                                                           |
| 58. | Ms Susan Rushforth                                                                          |
| 59. | Ms Louise Mitchell                                                                          |
| 60. | Mr Simon de Burgh                                                                           |
| 61. | Ms Penny Gleen                                                                              |
| 62. | Mr Peter Altona                                                                             |
| 63. | Scotland Island Residents Association,<br>Mr Bill Gye<br>Ms Shar Jones                      |
| 64. | Mr Stephen Burns                                                                            |
| 65. | Mr Robert Stokes, MP                                                                        |
| 66. | Ms Karen Lambert                                                                            |
| 67. | Ms Joanne Ritchie                                                                           |
| 68. | Dr Conny Harris                                                                             |
| 69. | Ms Jila Baker                                                                               |

|     |                                                          |
|-----|----------------------------------------------------------|
| 70. | Mr John Brogan                                           |
| 71. | National Trust of Australia (NSW)<br>Mr Graeme Quint     |
| 72. | Ms Susie Gold<br>Mrs Elizabeth Anderson                  |
| 73. | Ms Penny Rosier                                          |
| 74. | West Pittwater Community Association<br>Ms Margie Morris |
| 75. | Mr Alan Yuille                                           |
| 76. | Mr David Haythornthwaite                                 |

# ATTACHMENT 2

## Heritage Council Proposed Statement of Significance

## Heritage Council Endorsed Statement of Significance

Currawong is of State historical significance as the most intact remaining example of a mid-twentieth century, union-organised workers' holiday camp in NSW and probably Australia, designed for workers 'to get away from crowded industrial areas and enjoy places normally frequented by richer people' (Sydney Morning Herald 30/12/1947, p3).

The establishment of the holiday camp was a response to the social and work place reforms taking place in NSW in the post World War II period, following the introduction of annual leave in 1944 and the 40-hour week in 1947. Currawong is then a symbol of the social reform movements of mid-twentieth century Australia, and more specifically celebrates the increased leisure time legislated for workers at that time. Its significance is enhanced by the fact that the camp was established by the NSW Labor Council (now known as Unions NSW), the peak representative body of unions in NSW.

Currawong is of State significance for its historical associations with the post-war union movement in NSW, especially Unions NSW (formerly known as the Labor Council of NSW) and with Jim Kenny, Assistant Secretary of the Labor Council of NSW and Labor premier Jim McGirr. There is also a strong association with the industrial building manufacturers, the Vandyke Brothers. Currawong is furthermore of State social significance for its associations with union members and their families from all over the state who have holidayed there (as well as non-unionists allowed to rent the cottages in off-peak periods), some now returning as third generation visitors. The social significance of the site is also demonstrated by public protests and media debates over the several proposals for its redevelopment since the 1970s.

Currawong is also of State significance for its representative and rarity values. The provision of inexpensive holiday units in seaside locations for members has been a benefit offered by many unions in NSW since the 1950s. However these units tend to be small-scale in their scope and without shared facilities, located in towns or other built-up locations, and of more recent fabric than Currawong. The conservation plan for the Eureka Youth League's 'Camp Eureka', which is listed on the Victorian Heritage Register, states that 'Camp Eureka is one of only two 'workers' holiday camps' from the 1940s and 50s remaining in their original form; the other being Camp Currawong at Little Mackerel Beach on Pittwater outside Sydney' (Heritage Alliance, 2004). Currawong is rare and probably unique within Australia for having operated as a union camp continuously for 60 years, with little modification of the original fabric of its units.

Currawong is of local significance for its aesthetic and landmark value as a workers' holiday camp located amongst bushland and surrounded by national park on a magnificent Sydney waterfront (described by Governor Phillip in 1788 as 'the finest piece of water which I ever saw'. . .). The Currawong site has high scenic quality derived from its backdrop sandstone escarpment, forested slopes and beach. Its unspoilt natural landscape sits well with the heritage fabric remaining from its farming phase (1830s-1942), and from its union holiday camp phase (1949-present). Both periods of use are readily distinguishable with the later use not obscuring the former use or dominating over the natural environmental values. Two of the holiday cottages at Currawong (No.1, 'Kookaburra' and No.3, 'Platypus'), are likely to be of local significance for their technical innovation as examples of intact 'Sectionit' holiday cabins. This was a pre-fabricated house system developed by the Vandyke Brothers to reduce production costs. While this form of housing can be found in public housing estates across NSW, the design was especially adapted by Vandyke to Currawong. The Currawong Vandyke cabins are indicative of the relationship between innovative industrialists, Postwar Reconstruction ideals and the union movement.

Currawong is also of local heritage significance for its historical values as a colonial farm turned workers' holiday 'paradise'. One of the early land grants in the Pittwater area, the Currawong property is rare in the area for retaining nearly half of the original 100 acre (40 hectare) grant of 1836, with much of the original grant boundary still legible in the landscape. The historic cottage of Midholme is likely to be of local aesthetic significance as a now rare example of a farmhouse in the Pittwater region, and an early example of the use of fibro in construction there. Currawong has research potential given that it has been continuously occupied in several distinct phases, first by Aboriginal people, then by early settlers and farmers, and most recently by leisure-seekers. A study of the site's importance to the Aboriginal community has not been undertaken but it is likely that there may be sites within the Currawong property that are important to indigenous culture. There is also likely to be

archaeological evidence from the farming phase of occupation. Currawong also has scientific research potential and local representative values for its natural environment - vegetation types and habitats, similar to that of the surrounding national park - since the majority of the Currawong site is remnant bushland and provides habitat for native birds and animals.

# ATTACHMENT 3

## Eco Villages Pty Ltd Proposed Statement of Significance

## **CMP Statement of Significance (Graham Brooks and Associates)**

The Currawong property set in a spectacular and isolated water front location of the western shore of Pittwater, has historical and social significance at a state level for its association with the NSW Labor Council, now Unions NSW as a union member focussed vacation venue. It combines an evolved cultural landscape with evidence from the early pastoral and rural residential history of Broken Bay overlaid by one of the affordable holiday camps established in the middle decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century at coastal locations near Sydney by trades union or Labor Council entities, industry, social and or community groups.

Formerly known as Little Mackerel Beach, Currawong with its backdrop escarpments has historical and social associations with Indigenous people of the Guringai language group, with physical evidence dating back some 2,000 years. Between the 1830s and the 1940s it was progressively developed and occupied as a pastoral and low scale rural residential/vacation settlement, one of a collection of water's edge places on the western shore of Pittwater, at the base of the rugged West Head Escarpment and Ku-ring-gai National Park.

In the early 1940s the Port Jackson and Manly Steamship Company made a brief, poorly timed and unsuccessful attempt to exploit the growing popularity of Pittwater as a recreational place to establish at Currawong a version of the popular day-trip pleasure gardens that had been a feature of Sydney Harbour since the late 19<sup>th</sup> century.

In 1949 Currawong was sold to the Labor Council of NSW to be developed and used as an affordable holiday centre for union members and their families, a form of development that had been growing in popularity across coastal areas in NSW and elsewhere in Australia since the 1930s. Unions, community groups and some larger employers responded to national post war statutory vacation entitlements to provide vacation opportunities for their members or employees.

Currawong has historical significance at a state level for its associations with the Labor Council of NSW after 1949, and in particular with its then Assistant Secretary Jim Kenny, who promoted its original development as a major holiday camp. In common with many community based initiatives, Kenny relied to a large degree on a donated or subsidised labour, materials or equipment. He lobbied government and business for donations-in-kind and received support from a variety of unions and union members. Kenny expended large amounts of personal physical effort developing the place during his frequent stays at Currawong. Despite his attachment to the place, Currawong struggled to achieve good occupancy rates and financial sustainability, a factor which severely constrained its long term development. Kenny's initial dream of a substantial complex of cabins and other recreational facilities for Currawong was never realised.

Later attempts by the Labor Council to further develop the facility or find alternative uses were prevented by intense debate within sections of the Labor movement, poor financial viability, lack of government support for the incorporation of the place into the adjoining national park or as a result of external opposition to redevelopment expressed through the local council's rejection of development applications. There is no evidence to suggest that the surviving character of Currawong was the outcome of a deliberate and continuing Labor Council policy to retain the place in its original, partially-completed format.

The various holiday cabins erected during the 1950s have aesthetic significance at a local level. They were based on the standardised prefabricated housing units that had been manufactured in Australia since the 1930s to provide large scale housing at minimal cost, often in remote locations where transportation and erection were facilitated by prefabrication. A number of the cabins at Currawong were apparently donated by several of the major manufacturers and suppliers of these houses. Other donations of labour and material facilitated the initial development, although as a holiday camp, Currawong never realised its original intentions.

Currawong has aesthetic significance at a local level. It is an attractive, water's edge holiday and recreational landscape, in a relatively isolated location on the western shoreline of Pittwater, nestled

within a secluded valley at the base of the powerful and visually dramatic West Head escarpment within Ku-ring-gai Chase National Park. The dramatic contrast between the relatively small, self-contained cultural landscape and the surrounding natural bushland reinforces the visual and sensory isolation of the place, despite its relative proximity to the heavily settled residential areas of Palm Beach. Physical evidence of each cultural layer is readily apparent although each is subsumed by the overall aesthetic and environmental qualities of the setting.

Currawong has historic significance at a local level as a layered cultural landscape. Indigenous occupation is evident with rock art within shelters across the escarpment and in some remnant artefacts identified through test excavation. The pastoral and subsequent recreational character is defined by the salt marsh and open grassed flats, now with scattered clumps of trees, which stretch back along the side of a creek into the secluded valley. "Midholme", the substantial single storey Federation style residence, which looks out over the valley floor, expresses the rural residential period. The collection of small 1950s holiday cabins grouped informally in an enclosed bushland setting along a walking track on the rising slopes behind "Midholme" expresses the flavour of the initial holiday camp. The evolution of Currawong as a holiday destination is expressed by several small cottages associated with caretakers and managers, supporting sheds, fenced gardens, a substantial jetty, a tennis court, seating and other recreational facilities behind the beach. A substantial single storey conference centre at the far end of the cabins group marks the most recent, 1990s phase of Labor Council Occupation.

Currawong has a social significance at a state level for its strong association with the Labor Council of NSW and their operation of the place as a low key holiday venue for union members and their families during the latter half of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. It also has social significance at a regional level as a component of the overall visual character and identity of Pittwater and Broken Bay, with its complex collection of isolated residential settlements, vacation venues, recreational boating, powerful topography and natural bushland, all of which are overlooked and appreciated by the substantial residential community within the northern part of Pittwater Municipality.

Currawong has a rarity value at a local level as a surviving early pastoral and associated residential landscape and as the only recreation venture on the western shoreline of Pittwater that was deliberately founded, developed and operated as a structured holiday camp.

Currawong has representative value at a local level as part of a small, isolated collection of early pastoral landscapes along the western shoreline of Pittwater, each of which subsequently developed in a particular and distinctive manner. It is representative at a state level, of the collection of holiday camps and settlements that developed in NSW coastal areas from Jervis Bay to Broken Bay during the middle decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Currawong has good potential for Aboriginal cultural heritage research but limited technical or research significance for its European cultural heritage values given its relatively typical history as a small pastoral settlement overlaid by a mid 20<sup>th</sup> century holiday venue.