

# PRECINCTS

## 4.1 PRECINCT CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM

In order to integrate and coordinate its diverse range and scale of management and planning activities, the Centennial Parklands has instituted a Precinct Classification System. This system consists of the following six precincts: the Showgrounds, Moore Park, Queens Park, Central Centennial Park, Outer Centennial Park and Roads.

All planning and management actions in the Parklands are structured around this framework, be they visitor strategy or traffic management. Accordingly, the broad recommendations for tree management and landscape character objectives of the Centennial Parklands, the focus of this volume, and are presented by precinct.

A system of sub-precincts was developed specifically for this Tree Masterplan, in order to provide more detailed analysis and recommendations for the trees of the Centennial Parklands. Where possible, "hard" elements, such as roads delineate these sub-precincts, and more importantly, each sub-precinct has a distinctive landscape character or natural quality within the Parklands. Descriptions of and recommendations for the sub-precincts are detailed in Volume III of this report.

The plan on the following page shows the precinct divisions for the Centennial Parklands.







## LEGEND

- 1** Showground (Not Part of this Study)
- 2** Moore Park
- 3** Queens Park
- 4** Central Centennial Park
- 5** Outer Centennial Park
- 6** Roads:
  - Driver Avenue & Bus Station / Forecourt
  - Grand Drive
  - Centennial Park Roads (Not Highlighted on Plan)
    - Parkes Drive*      *Dickens Drive*
    - Carrington Drive*      *Musgrave Avenue*
    - Loch Drive*      *Jervois Avenue*
    - Loch Avenue*



**context**  
Landscape Design

in association with:  
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Drawing No: V1.4

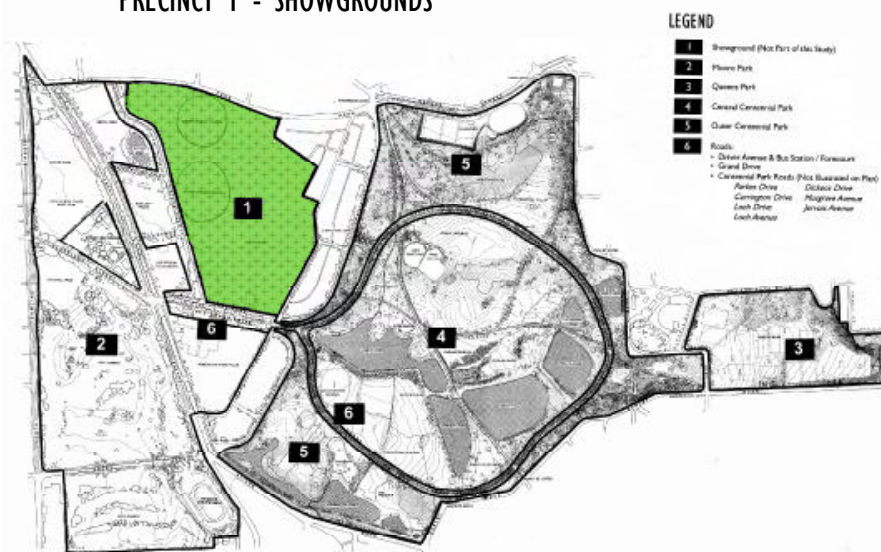
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**PRECINCT PLAN**



## 4.2 PRECINCT RECOMMENDATIONS

### PRECINCT 1 - SHOWGROUNDS



The Showgrounds are under long-term lease with Fox Studios Australia. While the Trust retain ownership of the assets including the trees, the care and control of the assets remains with the licensee.

The Showground trees create an avenue character. The trees address streets and small areas of open space in a strongly linear pattern. Predominant species are *Ficus hillii* and *Lophostemon confertus*. The majority of trees are mature (planted in the 1920's) and in good condition. The trees are a memory of the Royal Agricultural Showgrounds and should be retained and replanted as needs arise to retain the inherent character of the precinct.

There are no trees of outstanding historical note.

The plantings within the public precinct of the Showground site were planted as part of the redevelopment works. The plantings are all avenue in character defining the access roads and public streetscapes.

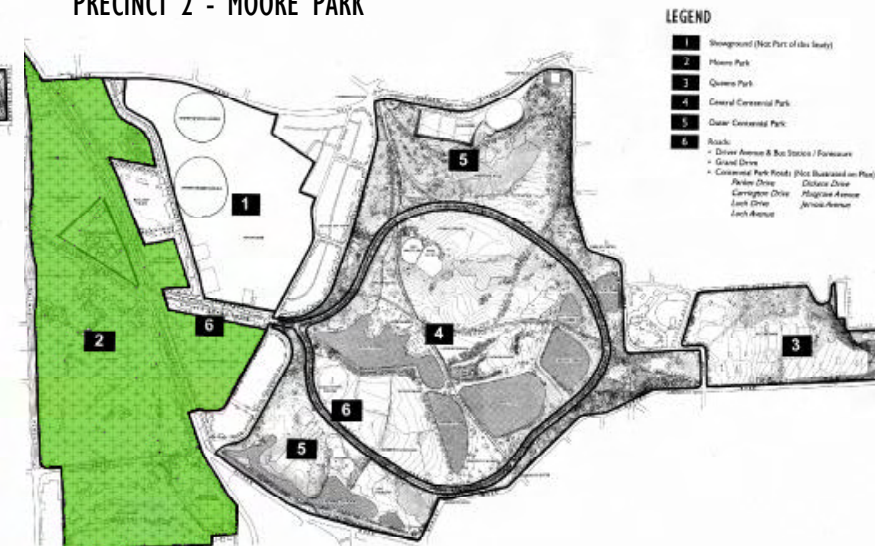
The plantings within the Trust controlled Equestrian Centre are individual trees planted to define accessways and carparks. The tree character is thus most closely associated with avenues, belts and rows. The predominant species is *Araucaria heterophylla*.

The plantings within the Hordern Pavilion/RHI forecourt are *Angophora costata*. The character is one of informal native trees arranged in a formal grid pattern to reflect the urban qualities of the space. The progress and success of these trees needs to be monitored to determine their long-term viability.

### Recommendations

- (i) To maintain the avenue plantings of fig and brush box through the Fox Studios precinct to link with Moore Park.
- (ii) To maintain the use of *Araucaria sp* in the Equestrian Centre
- (iii) To maintain the grid of 'gum' type trees in the RHI/Hordern forecourt

### PRECINCT 2 - MOORE PARK



Moore Park is a series of playing fields segmented by several major and secondary roads which link the Centennial Parklands to the surrounding city. Its distinct landscape character is the result of the scale of park elements, mainly the extensive avenues of majestic figs that line the roadways and set off broad expanses of open fields.

The broad fig avenues in Moore Park are aesthetically similar to Grand Drive in Centennial Park, but they are distinguished by the use of Hill's figs. Other significant planting elements in Moore Park include the fig groves associated with Lake Kippax and Mount Steele and the remnant palm avenues lining MacArthur and Gregory Avenues.

There are four main issues related to tree plantings in Moore Park: the continued encroachment of urban development on the park edges; the gradual deterioration of the fig avenues due to age and stress; the ambiguous character of the Moore Park Golf Course, and the weak physical and visual connection between Moore and Centennial Park. Old Grand Drive, the intended, but now closed, main entrance to Centennial Park presents an opportunity to strengthen the physical and visual connection between the two parks.

## Recommendations

- (i) Anzac Parade, Cleveland Street, Dacey Avenue and Driver Avenue to be retained as strong avenues in character.
  - Anzac Parade to be Moreton Bay Fig
  - Cleveland Street to be Port Jackson Fig and Moreton Bay Fig
  - Dacey Avenue and Driver Avenue to be Hill's Weeping Fig.
- (ii) Reinforce the Parklands character along the edges of Moore Park by developing South Dowling Street, Moore Park Road and Robertson Road edges as open grassland and woodland dominated by mixed species of figs. This will strengthen the identity of the Parklands and the connection between Moore Park and Centennial Park.
- (iii) Define the outer corners Moore Park — Driver's Triangle, the corner of South Dowling Street and Dacey Avenue, the corner of Dacey Avenue and Anzac Parade — with landmark plantings consisting of feature trees or palms and/or garden beds.
- (iv) Develop tree plantings at the junction of Cleveland Street, Anzac Parade and Lang Road to emphasize the main western entry point to the Parklands.
- (v) Strengthen the definition of the fairways on Moore Park Golf Course by augmenting the existing belt plantings with a mix of native and exotic planting.

## Species recommendations:

It is recommended that the avenues and edges in Moore Park continue to be characterized by Moreton Bay fig (*Ficus macrophylla*) and Hill's figs (*F. microcarpa* var. *hillii*). Where poplars detract from the integrity of the avenue they must be removed, primarily along Anzac Parade. Where poplars reinforce and strengthen an edge, as they do behind the Hill's figs (*Ficus microcarpa* var. *hillii*) along Dacey Avenue, they may be retained. The expanded use of yellowwood, Crow's ash (*Afrocarpus* spp., *Flindersia* spp.), and wattles (*Acacia* spp.) is recommended on the golf course and around the Robertson Road Fields. Brush box (*Lophostemon confertus*) is suggested for narrow portions of road such as the north side of Lang Road, and an expanded palette of native trees is suggested for the woodland planting on Mount Steele. Tall, columnar species such as araucaria (*Araucaria* spp.) and Queensland kauri (*Agathis robusta*) are recommended in areas where emphasis is needed such as at topographical high points and junctions. Increased use of these species will strengthen the presence of Moore Park and its link to Centennial Park.

## HIGH SCHOOL SUB-PRECINCT

The Sydney Girls High School site was Sydney's earliest public zoo and dates from about 1879. Many of the current trees date from this period and were planted under the direction of Charles Moore.

An avenue of failing *Phoenix canariensis* and *Lophostemon confertus* today defines the Cleveland Street and Anzac Parade frontages to the school grounds. The palms have failed from the same disease that has ravaged the palms in Centennial Park. An avenue of Moreton Bay figs extends along Anzac Parade, to join with the remnant palm avenue. The northern edge of the school grounds facing the playing fields is generally open to give prominence to the main building and with *Erythrina* sp trees specifically placed to reflect key parts of the buildings. This northern frontage should be kept generally open. A row of *Agathis* sp trees have been placed in the playing fields opposite the main building to frame the building.

There is a garden area adjacent to the administration building, which is significant as a place for commemoration.

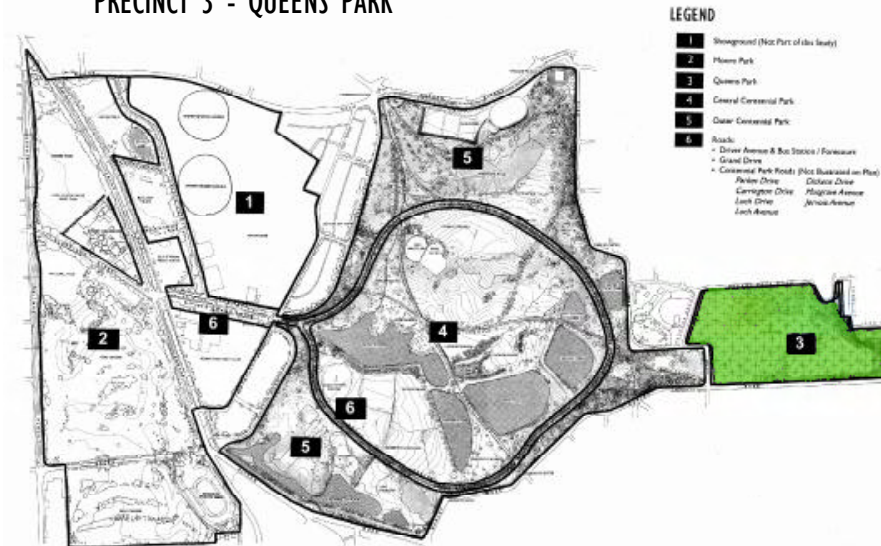
The centre of the site was a natural depression with a swamp pond that was converted into a decorative ornamental pond during the zoo period. It remains a periodically wet area and supports water loving trees. In respect of the master plan definitions, this area has the character of deciduous open woodland. The trees are in general decline, although the species of poplar, fig, willow and plane tree are all long living. This zone is a recreation/play area for the school, which needs to be kept quite open with winter sun and summer shade.

## Recommendations

- (i) Maintain an avenue character to the Anzac Parade and Cleveland Street frontages using stately palms or other tree species that have a strong vertical, single stemming form. A hedge is recommended to further define the boundary line.
- (ii) Keep the northern frontage to the school generally open to highlight the main building as seen from the playing fields. A low hedge is recommended to define this boundary line.
- (iii) Maintain a deciduous wooded grassland character within the school grounds to reflect historical character and to ensure light and shade are seasonally available.
- (iv) Maintain the area on the corner of Anzac Parade and Cleveland Street as a garden precinct.



## PRECINCT 3 - QUEENS PARK



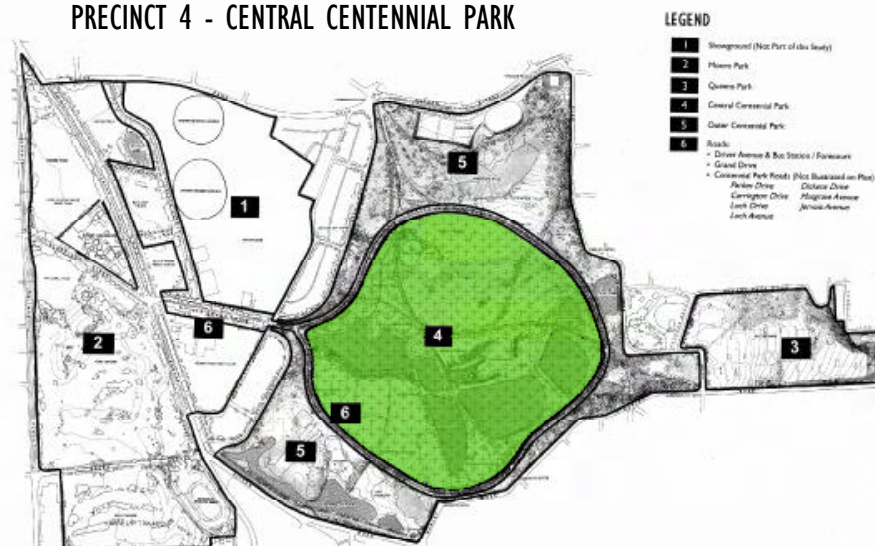
Queens Park is notable for the dramatic contrast between its steep, wooded sandstone ridge and the expansive playing fields below these slopes. The dominant tree species in Queens Park —figs, pines, *Araucaria* in the woodland planting on the ridge and the coral trees on the edges— are consistent with those in adjacent Centennial Park and provide visual continuity between the two. However, the actual physical connection across York Road is impeded by the awkward intersection and the lack of continuity in planting character along the edges of the two parks.

### Recommendations

- (i) Conserve the open playing fields and the woodland character along the ridge. Increase the seasonal colour and visual appeal of the existing shrub plantings on the slopes by increasing the variety of wattles.
- (ii) Reconfigure the perimeter plantings along the south, west and north edges of the park from rows to tree clumps to create a woodland character more similar to the edges of Centennial Park. This will strengthen the connection between the two parks and increase visibility into Queens Park.
- (iii) The replacement of the coral trees on Darley Road is recommended due to the safety hazard they present. The use of a deciduous flowering tree would provide both visual appeal and an aesthetic connection with the Darley Road Slope planting in Centennial Park. A suggested alternative is the Illawarra flame tree (*Brachychiton acerfolia*). Other deciduous species such as liquidambar (*Liquidambar spp.*) and/or trees with lighter foliage such as the peppercorn tree (*Schinus areira*) could provide the desired effect of contrast and form a stronger link between Queens Park and the Musgrave Pond area in Centennial Park.

- (iv) The increased use of Holm oak (*Quercus ilex*) is recommended on the perimeter of Queens Park, as it performs well. Additional figs, particularly the Moreton Bay fig (*Ficus macrophylla*) are also suggested for the west, south and north edges. Woodland planting of water-tolerant eucalypts is recommended for the steep and wet slopes on the eastern end of Darley Road.
- (v) Reconfigure the rows of Hill's figs (*Ficus microcarpa* var. *hillii*) on the slopes defining the terraces of the playing fields into clumps. This will give the slopes a wooded grassland character more in keeping with the adjacent slopes and the proposed changes to the perimeter plantings.
- (vi) Introduce Cabbage Tree Palms and other 'wet-sclerophyll' type planting below creek ledges where there is shade and protection.

## PRECINCT 4 - CENTRAL CENTENNIAL PARK



This precinct features playing fields, gardens, ponds, woodland, plantations, and avenues and contains the greatest diversity of landscape character in the Parklands. Central Centennial Park also contains a number of significant plantings, several of which are strongly associated with the identity of Centennial Park. These include the belts and avenues of paperbark trees, the palm avenues along Parkes Drive and Snake Bank, and the palms defining the garden areas in Frog Hollow.

The main problem in this area is the ambiguous character and lack of focus in the following tree plantings: the north portion of Frog Hollow; the Church Grounds; along the southern edge of the Duck Pond, and along the northern edge of Willow Pond.

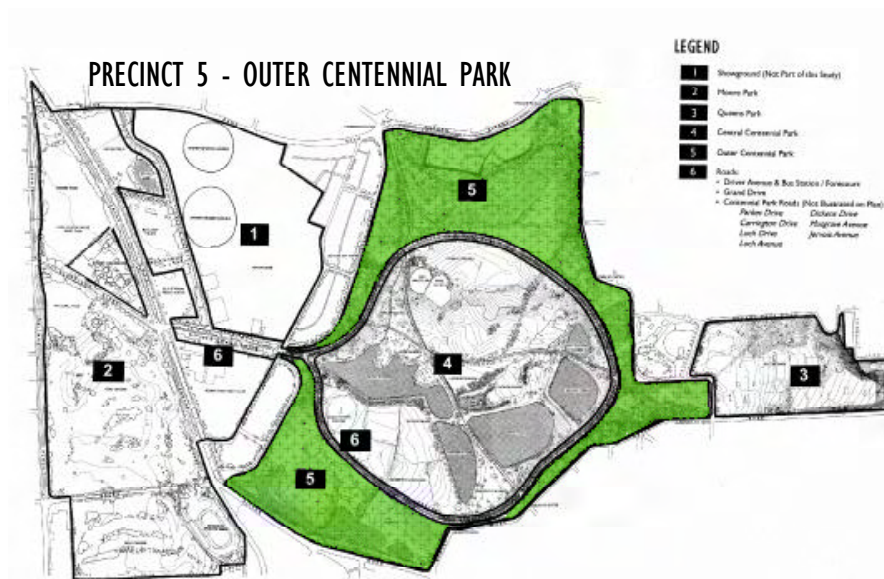
This area contains important corridors for both wildlife and people, mainly the water channel extending north to south through Central Centennial Park, and the palm avenues along the embankments of Busby's and

Randwick Ponds. At present these have weak connections into adjacent precincts, as well as weak internal junctions.

Finally, the character and spatial definition of the maritime pine forest, the edges of Lachlan Swamp and the belt plantings along the water channels in the Mackay Oval area are diminishing as self-sown species proliferate in these areas.

## Recommendations

- (i) Clarify the structure of plantings and improve vistas by thinning the following plantings: the maritime pine (*Pinus pinaster*) forest, the belts defining the fields in Mackay Equestrian, and the evergreen wooded grassland area in Frog's Hollow.
- (ii) Remove and/or add trees to strengthen character and connections to other precincts. For instance, the gradual development of deciduous woodland planting is recommended along the southern edge of the Duck Pond and Willow Pond to strengthen its focus, to give it more visual appeal and to form a link to the Musgrave Pond area. Likewise, the reconfiguration of the Randwick pond edge will give this corner a focus, increase its recreational and aesthetic value as well as provide a connection between the Church Grounds and Frog Hollow.
- (iii) Add wooded grassland plantings between the belts and the open fields in the Mackay Oval/Equestrian Fields and the maritime pine forest and the surrounding playing fields to increase the picturesque value and to create a transition zone between the forest and the field.
- (iv) Introduce cabbage tree palms (*Livistonia australis*) to Snake Bank as an alternative species and to the watercourse zones to reflect gully vegetation.
- (v) Strengthen the structure and junctions of the existing corridors to increase their visibility, and their recreational and wildlife value. This includes thinning the riparian belts in the Mackay Oval and Equestrian Fields, as mentioned above, and establishing a planting around the Pavilion which clarifies the junction of Snake Bank, the palm avenue along Randwick Pond and the paperbark avenue on the north edge of the Duck Pond.



The north, east and south edges of Centennial Park are woodland slopes dominated by figs, oaks, araucaria, pines, and, to a lesser extent, coral trees. The trees create a distinct evergreen character strongly associated with the identity of the Parklands as a whole. The slopes also provide the adjacent residences with views and vistas into the park, a relationship dating back to the original design for Centennial Park. The character of much of the southern edges is determined by its function as a drainage basin, and contains several ponds and associated plantings.

Many of the trees in these woodland slopes are mature to overmature and in need of replacement. In addition, the pine trees on the sandstone ridge on the north edge of the park visually dominate this area of the park, and low levels of maintenance here have resulted in the proliferation of self-sown species and weeds. The Southwest Corner and the Musgrave Pond areas are isolated from the main portion of the park, and while Musgrave Pond has a unique character, the Southwest Corner lacks a clear focus.

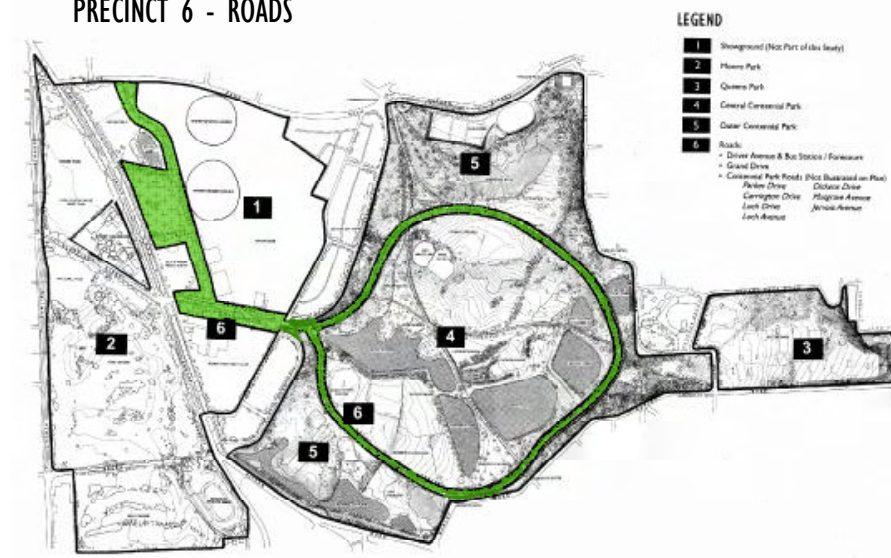
## Recommendations

- (i) Conserve the evergreen wooded grassland and woodland character of the York Road, Darley Road and Lang Road Slopes. Sustain slight variations in species and patterns that distinguish each slope. For example, thin the coral trees along Darley Road Slopes, retaining a sufficient number of trees to maintain the colorful quality of this edge. Along the York Road Slopes, a high proportion of Holm oak and pines is appropriate due to the dry sandy conditions and the corresponding poor performance of figs.



- (ii) Extend the woodland character of the York Road Slopes with evergreen wooded grassland at the Woollahra Triangle and the area east of the Woollahra Gates. This can be achieved by gradually replacing the grove of spotted gum (*Eucalyptus maculata*) with Holm oaks (*Quercus ilex*) and pines.
- (iii) Reconfigure the plantings on the north and south edges of the park to reveal and enhance the picturesque qualities of these areas, and increase their respective recreational and wildlife values. On the Sandstone Ridge, this requires phasing out the pines and replacing them with woodland and wooded grassland plantings of indigenous trees and shrubs, including Eucalypts, Angophora, Banksia, and wattles. These woodland and wooded grassland plantings should be structured to recover views into the park, to reveal the sandstone outcrops, and to enclose select remnants of the pine forest. In the Southwest Corner, where water is a dominant element, plantings should be reconfigured to improve access to and draw visitors to the ponds. Expanded use of indigenous species is also recommended in this area.
- (iv) Conserve the unique deciduous wooded grassland character of the Musgrave Pond area, and open its eastern end to strengthen the visual connection to Queens Park.
- (v) Extend the row of brush box (*Lophostomen confertus*) and tallowwood (*Eucalyptus microcorys*) along Oxford Street to Woollahra Gates, leaving a gap at the reservoir to retain views into the park.
- (vi) Replace the Lombardy poplars on Allison Road with another poplar (*Populus simonii* 'Fastigata'). Retain and extend the distinct pattern of paperbark trees along this edge, and continue the use of brush box (*Lophostomen confertus*).

## PRECINCT 6 - ROADS



Recommendations for roads are made on an individual basis due to their diverse nature and varying degrees of importance.

### Driver Avenue and Bus Station/Forecourt.

The row of Hill's figs (*Ficus microcarpa* var. *hillii*) on Driver Avenue dates from the 1920's and is the earliest planting of its kind in the Parklands, and is therefore highly significant. It also provides valuable shade and strongly defines the western side of Driver Avenue. Although Hill's fig is known to have horticultural problems, such as bark inclusions, its continued use in Moore Park is considered important. In addition to their heritage significance, the presence and character of Hill's figs distinguish Moore Park avenue plantings from those in the adjacent Centennial Park.

Kippax Triangle was recently incorporated into the northern end of Driver Avenue. The conservation of the existing oaks and the removal of the eucalypt grove are recommended.

### Gregory Avenue

Retain healthy specimens of Canary Island date palms (*Phoenix canariensis*). The proposed reinforcement and replacement with Queensland kauri (*Agathis robusta*) is acceptable.

### MacArthur Avenue

Remove all Canary Island date palms (*Phoenix canariensis*) and replace with Queensland kauri (*Agathis robusta*) in an avenue pattern. Any support plantings should be figs (*Ficus* sp.) or Holm oak (*Quercus ilex*) to reinforce character of the Parklands.



## GRAND DRIVE

- (i) Conserve the Grand Drive avenue planting as an essential feature of Centennial Park.
- (ii) Reinforce the original planting pattern and character of the avenue.
- (iii) Manage activity, particularly parking, in the tree zone to protect and sustain trees.
- (iv) Recover and reinforce important junctions and breaks in the avenue planting.
- (v) Maintain and reinforce the planting on the outer edge of Grand Drive.

## CENTENNIAL PARK ROADS

### Parkes Drive, north

Along with Loch Avenue, this is one of the major entry roads to Centennial Park. The conservation and reinforcement of the existing fig avenue is considered a high priority. The row on the south side of the road should be replaced in blocks when necessary. On the north side of the road, the soil conditions should be modified prior to the replacement of the figs in order to improve their performance. This row should terminate at the apex of the Ceremonial Triangle.

### Palm Avenue

- (i) Conserve the avenue planting, using two alternative species to reduce the risk of single species plantings. The replacement species must approximate the distinctive qualities of the Canary Islands date palm (*Phoenix canariensis*), mainly its scale, symmetry and regularity of habit. A combination of Queensland kauri (*Agathis robusta*) and cabbage tree palm (*Livistona australis*) is recommended, pending investigations into the viability of the latter.
- (ii) Establish a replacement planting pattern which allows for the eventual reinstatement of palms.
- (iii) Modify planting and maintenance techniques to reduce the known risks associated with single species plantings.
- (iv) Strengthen and reinforce the junctions with Grand Drive, Dickens Drive, and at the Shelter Pavilion.

### Carrington Drive

Carrington Drive is one of the minor roads within Centennial Park and therefore the conservation of the remnant of the fig/ oak / *Araucaria* avenue planting lining its edges is not considered mandatory. Conserve only the portion from the Woollahra Gates to the base of the Woollahra triangle, and allow the remainder to assume the indigenous woodland character proposed for the surrounding sandstone slopes.

### Loch Drive, Woollahra Gates to Grand Drive

This is considered an important entry road to the park. Conserve the row planting, retaining the distinct pattern of four oaks/ one araucaria. Modify soil conditions, replace in blocks as with Grand Drive, and institute parking restrictions.

### Loch Avenue, Grand Drive to Dickens Drive

Although this is one of the less important roads in the park, the avenue planting on this section of Loch Drive has high aesthetic value. Due to their potential hazard, replace the coral trees here with one of the following: peppercorn tree (*Schinus areira*); flame tree (*Brachychiton discolor* or *B. acerfolia*); or the orchid tree (*Bauhinia spp.*).

### Dickens Drive, Grand Drive to Parkes Drive

This is one of the minor roads within Centennial Park. The retention of the palm avenue is not considered a high priority. The decline of palms here from the spread *Fusarium oxysporum* offers an opportunity to strengthen the connection between the north and south portions of Frog Hollow. It is therefore recommended that the palms are not replaced as they die off, as this will allow for their replacement in kind if and when their viability improves.

### Dickens Drive, Parkes Drive to Loch Avenue

This is another of the minor roads within Centennial Park. The retention of the avenue planting of bird of paradise (*Strelitzia nicholai*) is recommended, as it distinguishes this portion of Dickens Drive from both Parkes Drive and the northern section of Dickens Drive.

### Musgrave Avenue

This is a defunct entry road to the park, and is used only by pedestrians and cyclists. The remnant fig/oak/araucaria row planting at the foot of the Darley Road Slopes enhances the contrast between the woodland slopes and the deciduous trees surrounding Musgrave Pond. Its retention is recommended.

### Jervois Avenue

This is a heavily used vehicular entry and exit avenue. Retain the fig avenue planting and replace in blocks when necessary.

