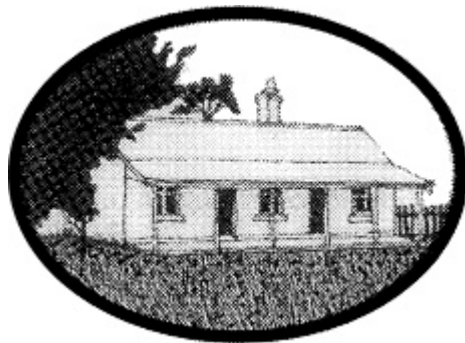




ST THOMAS REST PARK

Plan of Management



ST. THOMAS' REST PARK PLAN OF MANAGEMENT

FOREWORD

St. Thomas' Rest Park is a unique combination of a recreational facility and a heritage resource. Located in the suburb of Crows Nest, the Rest Park occupies the site of the former St. Thomas' Cemetery which was the first European graveyard established on the North Shore. The conversion of the former Cemetery into a Rest Park in 1974 provided valuable open space for local residents while preserving the historic significance of the land.

The conversion of the Cemetery to a Rest Park was Council's first heritage project. It achieved the preservation of a historic site, public access to its history and heritage and the creation of much needed open space for public recreation. The Rest Park combines historic precincts containing headstones and monuments, a small restored cottage museum, a history trail comprising interpretive signage, extensively landscaped grounds and a children's playground.

Council prepared an initial Plan of Management for St. Thomas' Rest Park in 1996. Carrying out actions prescribed in that first Plan has resulted in a significant upgrading of the amenity of the Rest Park in terms of both aesthetics and educational values. New park furniture and lighting have been installed, new plantings of indigenous species carried out to supplement the original plantings, and a walking trail consisting of signs which interpret the history and development of the Rest Park and which explores related issues have also recently been completed. Complemented by a new brochure, this interpretive resource enriches the recreational experience of Rest Park users by providing an opportunity for greater understanding of the heritage significance of the Rest Park.

This new Plan of Management provides guidelines which will ensure that the unique qualities of St. Thomas' Rest Park continue to be preserved. It establishes the overall directions and objectives and details how these can be achieved. The Plan of Management will ensure that the Rest Park continues to cater for the passive recreational needs of our local community as well as functioning as a historic resource for both locals and for visitors from further afield.

GENIA McCAFFERY
MAYOR

ST. THOMAS' REST PARK PLAN OF MANAGEMENT

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1.0 **Introduction**

1.1 **Preamble**

The St. Thomas' Rest Park Plan of Management marks the first time an attempt has been made to examine in detail the broad range of issues associated with this historically important area of public open space. The Plan draws on information contained within previous studies including a Recreational Needs Study prepared in 1997 and Council's Area Character Study, incorporating it into a useful and comprehensive document. This document complies with the Local Government Act 1993, as amended 1998, and supersedes Council's St. Thomas' Rest Park Plan of Management 1996.

This Plan of Management examines the present-day character and condition of St. Thomas' Rest Park and the factors which impact upon it, and establishes clear directions for future management and development. The document aims to provide guidelines to ensure the conservation of the unique qualities of the Rest Park, and to ensure that any future development is appropriate and sympathetic to the character of the Rest Park.

The Plan is divided into 6 parts:

Part 1 examines what a Plan of Management is, outlines the purpose and scope of this Plan, explains the linkage between this Plan of Management and Council's land management goals, and details the importance of community consultation in the planning process. It also examines the issue of leases, licences and other estates in the Rest Park.

Part 2 indicates the location of St. Thomas' Rest Park, and examines its characteristics and resources. The function and usage of the Rest Park is also examined.

Part 3 identifies and examines the major planning issues essential to an understanding of the overall directions of the Plan of Management. Current management policies and practices are also discussed.

Part 4 is the philosophical basis for the Plan of Management. It details the significance of St. Thomas' Rest Park both on its own and within the context of the North Sydney area, and establishes the overall directions and objectives of management which guide policy development and formulation of the action plan.

Part 5 is the implementation and performance component of the Plan of Management. A matrix sets out the objectives, proposed actions and performance indicators for each issue, and each issue is given a priority rating. An indicative works program further details the staging of all works and actions.

Part 6 contains the appendices as well as supporting material and background information which, though not essential to the basic understanding of the plan, provides an important resource base for appreciating the value of St. Thomas' Rest Park.

1.2 Community Consultation

Community consultation plays an important role in the production of any Plan of Management. It provides Council with a sound understanding of relevant local issues from people who are familiar with and use the open space areas in question. To a large degree, the direction for the future development of open space is based on the views expressed by the general public.

Public involvement and consultation generates an understanding of Council's land management aims, combats misinformation and misunderstanding, and fosters support for Council's programs and policies. The consent and co-operation of the users of open space facilitates management and lends weight to the status of the Plan of Management.

Since the adoption of the original St. Thomas' Rest Park Plan of Management in 1996 a Recreational Needs Study has been undertaken. This study, which entailed a high degree of community and stakeholder involvement in its preparation, provides information regarding community and stakeholder needs in St. Thomas' Rest Park that have been incorporated into this document.

Exhibition of the draft St. Thomas' Rest Park Plan of Management for a 28-day period, followed by a 14-day period to receive submissions allows interested parties to comment on and have input into the final document. In order to generate widespread community awareness of the draft Plan of Management, the following steps have been undertaken:

- regular advertisements in the Mosman Daily
- letters sent to local Precincts
- letters sent to known user and interest groups
- copy of the draft document posted on Council's web site

Writing a Submission

Submissions give members of the public an opportunity to express their opinions, provide information and suggest alternatives to Council's proposed management strategies for St. Thomas' Rest Park over the next 5 years.

To ensure submissions are as effective as possible:

- (1) List all points according to the section and page number in the Plan of Management.
- (2) Briefly describe each subject or issue you wish to discuss.
- (3) State which strategies you agree or disagree with, and give reasons.
- (4) Suggest alternatives to deal with any issue with which you disagree.

Written submissions should be sent to:

The General Manager
North Sydney Council
P O Box 12
NORTH SYDNEY NSW 2059

Attention: Ms Megan White
Landscape Planner

Fax No: 9936-8177

Email: council@northsydney.nsw.gov.au

Comments regarding this or any other adopted Plan of Management may be submitted at any time. Each Plan of Management is reviewed annually, and at the time of the review new issues can be incorporated and existing actions amended. The adopted Plans of Management may be downloaded from Council's website: www.northsydney.nsw.gov.au.

1.3 Purpose of the Plan of Management

The Plan of Management is an important document providing clear guidelines for the effective short and long term management of all land owned by Council or under Council's control. The rationale for this plan occurs from the legal requirements of the Local Government Act 1993 and the Local Government Amendment Act (community land management) 1998, and North Sydney Council's desire to produce a consistent and useful set of guidelines governing the direction of management of public open space.

Open space is recognised as an important component of the urban environment, providing opportunities for recreation and leisure. The Plans of Management provide a framework within which managers can develop a balanced response to current opportunities and address future pressures.

St. Thomas' Rest Park is a prominent and culturally important area of open space, containing a number of significant and distinctive features. The diverse and unique issues that relate to the Rest Park warrant the development of a significant Plan of Management.

The Plan of Management identifies clear objectives and establishes directions for planning, resource management and maintenance of public open space. It clarifies and establishes Council policy and direction, both to Council staff and the general public. The Plan provides a basis for assigning priorities in works programming and budgeting.

This Plan of Management will be reviewed regularly. An annual review will assess implementation and performance, and a review after 5 years will allow policy and planning issues to be updated.

1.4 Land Categorisation and Core Objectives

Council's previous St. Thomas' Rest Park Plan of Management, 1996, categorised St. Thomas' Rest Park as a 'park'. It is proposed to retain this categorisation. The Local Government Amendment Act 1998, provides more detail regarding the categorisation of community land, including detailed guidelines for categorisation of land, and core objectives for each land category. According to the Act, land should be categorised as a park under section 36(4) of the Act if:

the land is, or is proposed to be, improved by landscaping, gardens or the provision of non-sporting equipment and facilities, for use mainly for passive or active recreational, social, educational and cultural pursuits that do not unduly intrude on the peaceful enjoyment of the land by others.

The amendments to the Act also provide core objectives for management of land categorised as a park that are applicable to St. Thomas' Rest Park.

The core objectives for management of community land categorised as a park are:

- (a) to encourage, promote and facilitate recreational pursuits in the community involving organised and informal sporting activities and games, and*
- (b) to provide for passive recreational activities or pastimes and for the casual playing of games, and*
- (c) to improve the land in such a way as to promote and facilitate its use to achieve the other core objectives for its management.*

The community land covered by this Plan of Management is zoned 'Public Open Space' under Council's Local Environmental Plan 2001. An explanation of this zoning is contained in Appendix 1 – Explanation of Relevant Zoning.

1.5 Council's Land Management Goals

The production of this Plan of Management is closely linked with North Sydney Council's overall land management objectives, as set out in the North Sydney Council Management Plan 2000-2003.

Council's land management objective relevant to St. Thomas' Rest Park is:

To provide a network of parks, sporting fields and open spaces that meet in the most cost-effective manner the outdoor passive recreation/leisure needs of the community.

1.6 Leasing of Community Land

The granting of a lease formalises the use of community land by groups such as sporting clubs, commercial organisations or individuals who are providing facilities or services for public use. The term 'estate' is defined as an interest, charge, right, title, claim, demand, lien or encumbrance, whether by law or in equity.

A lease, licence or other estate is required where exclusive control of all or part of an area by a party is proposed or desirable in the interests of management of an area. Activities under a lease should be compatible with any zoning or reservation, provide benefits, services or facilities for users of the land, and be authorised under the Plan of Management. The terms and conditions of a lease should ensure that the lessee undertakes proper management of the facility such that it is maintained in a safe and visually pleasing condition, and that the interests of Council and the public are protected.

Council currently leases the rear portion of the Sexton's Cottage located behind the Museum to a tenant for the purposes of acting in the role of caretaker of the Rest Park. The tenant is required to report any vandalism or other deterioration or damage that occurs in the Rest Park to appropriate Council staff. The current lease is for the term of 1 year.

The Local Government Amendment Act 1998 sets out requirements for the granting of a lease, licence or other estate in respect of community land.

General Conditions

Council may only grant a lease, licence or other estate for use of St. Thomas' Rest Park if it is:

- for a purpose specified as a core objective for land categorised as a park (refer section 1.4)
- for activities appropriate to the current and future needs of the community in relation to wide public purposes such as public recreation and cultural development
- for short term casual purposes as listed below:
 - the playing of a musical instrument, or singing, for fee or reward
 - engaging in a trade or business
 - delivering a public address
 - commercial photographic sessions
 - picnics and private celebrations such as weddings and family gatherings
 - filming for cinema or television

(Note: The use or occupation of St. Thomas' Rest Park for any of the above-listed short-term casual purposes is allowed only if the use or occupation does not involve the erection of any building or structure of a permanent nature).

Subleasing of St. Thomas' Rest Park is only permitted for the same purpose as the original lease.

Leases, licences and other estates for periods not exceeding 5 years

In order for Council to grant a lease, licence or other estate in respect of St. Thomas' Rest Park for a period that does not exceed 5 years (including any period for which the lease, licence or other estate could be renewed by the exercise of an option), it must:

- give public notice of the proposal, and
- exhibit notice of the proposal on the land to which the proposal relates, and
- exhibit notice of the proposal to such persons as appear to it to own or occupy the land adjoining the community land, and
- give notice of the proposal to any other person, appearing to the Council to be the owner or occupier of land in the vicinity of the community land, if in the opinion of the Council the land the subject of the proposal is likely to form the primary focus of the person's enjoyment of community land.

A notice of the proposal must include:

- information sufficient to identify the community land concerned
- the purpose for which the land will be used under the proposed lease, licence or other estate
- the term of the proposed lease, licence or other estate (including particulars of any options for renewal)
- the name of the person to whom it is proposed to grant the lease, licence or other estate
- a statement that submissions in writing may be made to the Council concerning the proposal within a period, not less than 28 days, specified in the notice

Other requirements

- Any person may make a submission in writing to the Council during the period specified for the purpose in the notice
- Before granting the lease, licence or other estate, the Council must consider all submissions duly made to it
- On receipt by the Council of a written request from the Minister for Local Government, the proposal is to be referred to the Minister

Final approval of a lease, licence or other estate rests with Council, however, in unusual circumstances, the Minister for Local Government has the discretion to 'call-in' a proposed lease, licence or other estate and determine the matter in place of the Council.

Leases, licences and other estates for a period of 5 years or less for use of St. Thomas' Rest Park for cultural or recreational purposes are not required to be tendered.

Leases, licences and other estates for periods exceeding 5 years

Leases, licences and other estates for use or occupation of St. Thomas' Rest Park for periods of over 5 years must be tendered unless for a non-profit organisation. The public notification and consultation procedure is as for leases, licences and other estates of 5 years or less. Council must submit leases, licences and other estates of over 5 years (including options to renew) to the Minister of for Local Government for his approval.

Leases, licences or other estates may not be granted for a period exceeding 21 years. (This includes any period for which the lease, licence or other estate could be renewed by the exercise of an option).

Uses of Community Land for which leases, licences and other estates are not required

Exemptions regarding the granting of lease, licence or other estate in respect of St. Thomas' Rest Park for terms of 5 years or less may be granted in the following cases:

- Use and occupation of the land for events such as:
 - (i) a public performance (that is, a theatrical, musical or other entertainment for the amusement of the public)
 - (ii) the playing of a musical instrument, or singing, for fee or reward
 - (iii) playing of any lawful game or sport
 - (iv) delivering a public address
 - (v) conducting a commercial photographic session
 - (vi) picnics and private celebrations such as weddings and family gatherings
 - (vii) filming for cinema or television

However, the use or occupation of community land for the events listed above is exempt only if:

- (a) the use or occupation does not involve the erection of any building or structure of a permanent nature
- (b) in the case of any use or occupation that occurs only once, it does not continue for more than 3 consecutive days, and
- (c) the case of any use or occupation that occurs more than once, each occurrence is for no more than 3 consecutive days, not including Saturday and Sunday, and the period from the first occurrence until the last occurrence is not more than 12 months.

2.0 **Characteristics and Resources**

2.1 **Site Location and General Description**

St. Thomas' Rest Park is the largest area of open space in the suburb of Crows Nest and also the most significant. The conversion of the former Cemetery into a Rest Park took place between the years 1967 and 1974 and went some way to overcoming the relative shortfall of open space in this part of the North Sydney area.

The main entrance to the Rest Park is through historic gates on West Street. To the north the Rest Park is bounded by the Warringah Freeway, to the south by residential development and to the west by Matthew Lane and a number of residential premises.

St. Thomas' Rest Park occupies an area of over 4 acres (1.6 hectares), and is situated on the brow of a gentle hill. Consisting of historic precincts containing headstones and monuments, a small cottage museum, an interpretive history trail, extensively landscaped grounds and a children's playground, the Rest Park caters for the recreational needs of the local community as well as for visitors who come to explore and examine the relics of the past.

It has been established that the back fences of a number of properties on the northern side of Huntington Street encroach onto the Rest Park. Private encroachments alienate public land and restrict the public from using part of the Rest Park, hence Council's objective is to remove these encroachments. When new owners take possession of any of the affected properties, Council requires that the back fences be moved to the correct boundary line. In this way, all the encroachments onto the Rest Park will eventually be removed.

2.2 **Site History and Heritage**

St. Thomas' Rest Park is the site of the former St. Thomas' Cemetery which was the first European burial ground established on the North Shore. The land for the Cemetery was donated to the Anglican Parish of St Leonards in 1845 by Alexander Berry, a prominent merchant and landholder. Berry donated 4 acres of his land in order to secure a prestigious burial place for his wife, Elizabeth, who was the sister of another important landowner, Edward Wollstonecraft. The striking pyramid monument in the centre of the Rest Park was erected in honour of Elizabeth; Edward Wollstonecraft and Alexander Berry are also buried there.

St. Thomas' Cemetery contains the graves of many notable historic figures including Conrad Martens, Bernard Holtermann, Captain Owen Stanley and Major Ovens. The names of many North Shore suburbs and landmarks including Berry, Wollstonecraft, Pymble, Ives, Lavender, Blue and Milson, owe their origin to the pioneering families buried here. The first burial was recorded in 1847, and the last in 1950. The North Sydney Heritage Study Review, 1993, identifies other monuments and headstones of particular historic significance including those of Lieut. Col. George Barney, Rev. W.B. Clarke and Captain John Vine and his wife Alice (daughter of E.T. Blacket).

One of the most interesting and significant of all the monuments is the Bent and Ovens' Tomb, an unusually shaped sandstone tomb with an extremely fine inscription. Before Judge Ellis Bent died in 1815, he incurred the displeasure of Governor Macquarie, who refused to allow his burial at Garden Island. He was interred at Devonshire Street Cemetery and later, in 1825, when Brevet-Major John Ovens died, Ellis Bent was re-interred with him at Garden Island. After the St. Thomas' Cemetery opened, the tomb was transferred there and is retained in the Rest Park in its original position.

A special Act of Parliament was passed in 1967 to allow the St. Thomas' Cemetery to be converted to a Rest Park. The term 'Rest Park' describes an area of land, formerly a cemetery, which has been modified for the purpose of better catering for the recreational needs of the community, whilst retaining the basic features of the cemetery. The area became 'community land', and responsibility for its management and maintenance was transferred from a management committee of the Church of England to North Sydney Council. Constraints imposed on management of the Rest Park by the Act are detailed in Appendix 3. The Cemetery was renamed St. Thomas' Rest Park, and in 1974 the new Rest Park, designed by Ashton, Powell and Taylor, was officially opened to the public.

In the conversion, broken monuments and headstones were cleared away and others were moved to the historic section of the Rest Park. Monuments and headstones already in suitable positions were retained in these locations. Most grave surrounds were removed and used to form low walls. The conversion of the Cemetery to a Rest Park was North Sydney Council's first heritage project, and it aimed to preserve a historic site while providing public access to its history and heritage.

The Sexton's Cottage, a stone cottage built around 1850, is the only building on the site. Originally consisting of one room, the cottage was used for the 'laying out' of bodies prior to burial. Extensions were carried out in the 1880s to provide a residence for the Sexton who was employed by St. Thomas' Church to look after the Cemetery ground and supervise burials. In 1985 North Sydney Council restored the cottage, and it opened as a museum the following year. The museum contains a copy of the burial register, storyboards which explain the history of the Church and the Cemetery, photographs and other biographical information.

2.3 Physical Characteristics

2.3.1 Topography

From its southern boundary, where the North Sydney area meets Sydney Harbour, the land rises steeply until it reaches a maximum height of around 100 metres in Crows Nest. At this point the land levels out and forms a plateau. St. Thomas' Rest Park is situated on this plateau on the brow of a gentle hill.

There is little natural topographical variation within the Rest Park, however the construction of a number of earth mounds as part of the landscaping works undertaken in the early 1970s has added an interesting three dimensional element to the site.

Composed of crushed sandstone purchased cheaply from nearby office building excavations, the mounds are up to two metres high.

2.3.2 Geology and Soils

St. Thomas' Rest Park is situated within the Sydney Basin, a geological province characterised by sedimentary rocks. Triassic sediments, laid down between 230 and 180 million years ago, form the dominant rock type within the basin, and include (in chronological order of deposition) the Narrabeen, Hawkesbury and Wianamatta groupings. Hawkesbury sandstone is the major rock type in St. Thomas' Rest Park and the sandstone bedrock can be clearly seen in the Warringah Freeway cutting which forms the northern boundary of the Rest Park.

Soils within St. Thomas' Rest Park closely reflect the nature of the underlying sandstone geology. The topsoil is a brown sandy loam, low in organic matter and deficient in nutrients due to leaching. The subsoil varies between clay, silty sand, sandy clay with ironstone accretions, and weathered sandstone. In many areas of the Rest Park, soil depth over bedrock is minimal. Prior to undertaking the comprehensive planting program carried out in the early 1970s, all areas marked for planting out were extensively cultivated.

2.3.3 Vegetation

The current vegetation of St. Thomas' Rest Park is largely a product of the comprehensive landscape design and planting plan developed by Ashton, Powell and Taylor and implemented by North Sydney Council in the early 1970s. This planting program aimed to reinstate within the Rest Park the original vegetation community which would have existed prior to European settlement, and thus consisted almost entirely of species native to the lower North Shore.

Turpentine (*Syncarpia glomulifera*) were used to form a backdrop around the historic section of the Park and a grove of Casuarinas behind the West Street fence was planted to allow a glimpse into the Rest Park from this approach. Sydney wattle (*Acacia longifolia*), Black wattle (*Acacia decurrens*), Golden banksia (*Banksia ericifolia*), White kunzea (*Kunzea ambigua*), and *Leptospermum* sp. were all used in areas where screening was desired. Planting of these species on top of the mounds has effectively screened both the paling fence on the southern and western boundaries and the two-storey flats to the south of the Rest Park.

Other trees planted in the Rest Park as part of this planting scheme include Sydney Red Gums (*Angophora costata*), Blackbutt (*Eucalyptus pilularis*), Sydney Peppermint (*Eucalyptus piperita*), Red Bloodwood (*Eucalyptus gummifera*), Coastal Myall (*Acacia glaucescens*) and Sweet Pittosporum (*Pittosporum undulatum*). Smaller plants include Hairpin Banksia (*Banksia spinulosa*), Golden Spray (*Viminaria juncea*), Mountain devil (*Lambertia formosa*), Dusky Coral Pea (*Kennedia rubicunda*), Sarsaparilla Vine

(Hardenbergia violacea), Kangaroo Vine (Cissus antarctica), River Rose (Bauera rubioides), Isopogon sp. and Dillwynia sp.

The row of poplars growing along the West Street fence was removed when the new planting scheme was implemented as it was felt that these trees introduced a discordant element into an otherwise natural association of plants. At the time of their removal, the poplars were only about 10 years old, and could not therefore claim any historic significance. Had the trees not been removed, they would eventually have completely dominated the site.

Traditionally known as the Commemorative tree, the Bermuda cypress (Sabina bermudiana) is by far the most significant tree in the Rest Park. The tree, which has traditionally been grown near places of burial, is thought to be extinct in its own habitat. Trees of this family have long been associated with funerals and mourning practices in many different civilisations, and the wood has been used to make coffins due to its incorruptibility. It is believed that Alexander Berry planted cypress trees in the Cemetery, and that this tree may have seeded from one of the original trees.

Along with a large Myall Wattle (estimated to be 15 years old), the Bermuda cypress has been retained within the historic section of the Rest Park. Other trees which have been retained on the site include Pittosporums and Brush Boxes. The Blackbutt in the north-west corner of the Rest Park is a remnant of the natural forest which covered the hill prior to European settlement.

In 1990 contractors maintaining St. Thomas' Rest Park prepared a new planting scheme in association with Council staff. The scheme involved planting additional native species to supplement the original plantings, and replacing plants nearing the end of their lives.

In 1998 another significant replanting program was undertaken in the Rest Park. The understorey vegetation in numerous areas including the West Street frontage was substantially replanted using plant material from a list of indigenous species developed when the Rest Park was planted out during the 1970s. Additionally a number of shade tolerant natives were chosen for underplanting beneath the existing canopy.

2.4 Structures

The cottage built for the St. Thomas' Church's Sexton is the only building within the Rest Park. Erected somewhere between 1850 and 1880, the earliest part of the cottage consists of one room constructed in simple, vernacular style - the exterior of rendered brick with a verandah and an iron roof over timber shingles. Timber extensions were carried out in the 1880s, and the building became the residence for the Church's Sexton.

North Sydney Council comprehensively restored the cottage in 1985 and the exterior was painted appropriate heritage colours. The exterior of the cottage was repainted in 1995.

In 1986 the cottage was reopened as the Sexton's Cottage Museum, housing the Cemetery's burial register, storyboards relating the history of St. Thomas' Church and Cemetery, photographs of early North Sydney and other memorabilia. The museum at the front of the cottage is managed by Stanton Library's Manager of Historical and Technical Services, and the rear of the cottage is leased by Council to a tenant who acts as caretaker and supervisor of the Rest Park. The presence of an on-site caretaker is an important factor in maintaining a relatively low level of vandalism in the Rest Park. The cottage is bordered by a low timber picket fence and some cottage garden style plants.

There are numerous monuments and headstones within St. Thomas' Rest Park. The historic precincts consist of a number of gravestones standing upright. Many of the historically significant graves lie within this section of the Cemetery, however others in sympathetic locations outside these areas have also been retained. The sandstone edging bordering the historic precincts was repaired and relaid as part of the landscape improvement program undertaken in the 1970s to allow ease of mowing, and the ground was covered with a white gravel mulch to inhibit weed growth.

A number of monuments and headstones have been retained within the Rest Park, but transferred to new positions. A plot map housed in the museum indicates the original location of all monuments and headstones which have been moved into the historic section of the Rest Park. Attempts by organisations such as the Army and the Department of Railways to move various monuments to locations outside the Rest Park have been strongly resisted in order to preserve the historic character and the integrity of the Rest Park.

Other features of St. Thomas' Rest Park include the original Cemetery fence and striking gates which mark the main entry to the Rest Park from West Street. The fence is of Gothic design in wrought iron on a stone base. The Rest Park is partially bounded by attractive fencing in good condition, and there are lights and seats scattered throughout. There is a children's playground located near the entrance to the Rest Park from Matthew Lane. The area is well shaded by a number of mature trees, and there are seats catering for people supervising the children's play.

In 1997 new lights were installed in the Rest Park. The new lights are of a more appropriate colour, style and height than the lights they replaced. 1998 saw the installation of new seats and picnic tables in the Rest Park, replacing the existing old-style seats which were in relatively poor condition and not consistent with Council's identified corporate image.

In 1998 in response to an identified need, a series of 7 interpretive signs were installed in the Rest Park. Collectively known as the St. Thomas' Rest Park History Trail, the signs inform visitors about the history and development of the Rest Park. Topics dealt with include the establishment of the Cemetery, characteristics of a Victorian cemetery, detailed information about specific individuals buried there, the transformation from Cemetery to Rest Park, the Commemorative Tree and the Sexton's Cottage Museum.

In 1999 a new low fence was constructed and installed around the Commemorative Tree. The style of the fence was designed to complement the historic fence which forms the eastern

boundary of the Rest Park along West Street. The fence is designed to protect the root zone of the tree, thus increasing the tree's health and longevity.

2.5 Current Activities Within the Park

When St. Thomas' Rest Park was originally created, the primary objective was for the Rest Park to act as a source of information for visitors interested in the history of the North Sydney area, St. Thomas' Church and the Cemetery itself. There are currently a number of programs and initiatives providing interested members of the community with detailed educational and interpretive information.

The Sexton's Cottage Museum is open every Thursday from 1.00 - 4.00 pm, and on the first Sunday of each month from 2.00 - 4.00 pm. The Museum contains a copy of the Cemetery's burial register, a plot map indicating the original locations of all graves, storyboards which explain the history of the Church and the Cemetery and photographs of early North Sydney.

During History and Heritage Weeks guided tours of all grave sites are organised, and at other times of the year, the Library's Historical Services staff, Council's Historian and volunteers are available to lead guided tours for school groups and other interested parties upon request. Two brochures, 'A Walk Through History at St. Thomas' Rest Park' (refer Appendix 5) and 'Sailors, Soldiers and Civil Servants' (refer Appendix 6) provide detailed information for interested visitors. The brochures are available from the Museum and Stanton Library free of charge.

The seven interpretive signs comprising the History Trail provide 24-hour access to historical information in the Rest Park. The History Trail provides the basis for interpretive walks in the Rest Park. Several guided tours are conducted during the year, and tours are also available upon request. In conjunction with the signs, and in addition to the guided tours, a new brochure entitled 'St. Thomas' Rest Park – Self-guided Walking Tour Notes' was produced (refer Appendix 4) to complement the interpretive History Trail. This brochure provides more detailed information about some of the well-known people buried in the Rest Park and may be cross-referenced with the History Trail. This brochure is available free of charge from the Rest Park Museum, Stanton Library and from Council's Customer Service Centre.

A survey undertaken in 1994 for North Sydney Council found that St. Thomas' Rest Park is generally considered to be a local park known and used mostly by residents living in the immediate vicinity. The Rest Park currently accommodates a range of recreational experiences including walking, picnicking, socialising and dog walking. The sloping grass banks are suitable for relaxing, and the large open areas of grass are popular with joggers and for informal ball games. The layout of the Rest Park, with its extensive areas of tree and shrub planting and irregular mounding, makes it ideal for children's informal adventure play, and play equipment located in the north-west corner of the Rest Park also caters for the recreational needs of children.

Pathways through the Rest Park linking Atchison Street and West Street guarantee that the Rest Park is used as a thoroughfare throughout the day.

3.0 **Planning Issues**

3.1 **Background**

St. Thomas' Rest Park is subject to a range of pressures from a variety of sources. Prolonged pressure can lead to a significant degrading of the park environment. As an aid to devising solutions to these negative influences, it is important that the relevant issues be analysed and discussed. Below is a brief outline of the current main planning issues which apply to St. Thomas' Rest Park.

3.2 **Landscape Character and Heritage**

The North Sydney Heritage Study Review undertaken in 1993 by Godden Mackay describes St. Thomas' Rest Park as being a landlocked urban park of great historical significance due to its original use as the North Shore's first European burial ground. The Study contends however, that the integrity of the Cemetery site has been lost due to its conversion to a Rest Park, and stresses that this once socially accepted practice is, in conservation terms, no longer regarded as appropriate. Despite the conversion, in its present form the Rest Park remains an extremely valuable and important historical site - the historic precincts and the Sexton's Cottage museum form part of Council's Historical and Technical Services and are used as a community heritage resource.

The historical significance of St. Thomas' Rest Park is reflected in the North Sydney Heritage Study Review's identification of the Rest Park as a "Unit 1- Known Archaeological Site". This unit consists of sites with known archaeological features, and no activity which may have removed or destroyed such features is considered to have occurred. The Study recommends that such sites should be the subject of significant assessment, and, if warranted, detailed archaeological investigation in accordance with the relevant provisions of the New South Wales Heritage Act.

It is due to the initial use of the site as a cemetery that St. Thomas' Rest Park exists today. The current landscape character is a direct result both of this former landuse and of the landscape design scheme implemented in the early 1970s. The integrity of this original design and planting scheme has been well maintained, and the Rest Park consequently has a strong, well-developed and cohesive landscape character.

The focal point of the Rest Park is Berry's tomb, a large sandstone monument notable for its strong simplicity and the fine quality of its inscription. Around this monument, a historic section containing many of the historic tombs as well as two significant mature trees, is separated from the main general activity area by large swathes of planting and artificial grassed mounds. While visual separation between the historic area and the rest of the Rest Park is quite pronounced, the layout of the gardens facilitates a variety of walks connecting the two areas.

The grassed mounds are an important feature of the Rest Park. At around two metres in height, the mounds afford extensive district views towards Folly Point and Northbridge. Planting on top

of the mounds screens unsightly elements including the paling fence on the southern and western boundaries, and the two-storey flats to the south of the Rest Park.

Vegetation is a major variable influencing landscape character. With the exception of some cottage garden plantings in the immediate vicinity of the Sexton's Cottage and the commemorative cypress, the vegetation in St. Thomas' Rest Park today consists entirely of species native to the lower North Shore. It is important to ensure that any future planting in the Rest Park is consistent with this established style, and that the existing plantings are maintained to a high standard to preserve the aesthetic value and visual amenity of the Rest Park.

3.3 Access and Circulation

St. Thomas' Rest Park is frequented mainly by local residents who arrive on foot or by bicycle, and no special provisions have been made for carparking. Generally there is ample parking for visitors arriving from further afield in one of the surrounding residential streets. Numerous buses running up and down Miller Street one block from the Rest Park can be used to reach the Rest Park, and buses also run along West Street. Whilst general vehicular access to the site is prohibited, adequate access for service and emergency vehicles must be provided. The pedestrian gates are designed to remain open at all times to allow access into the Rest Park.

A large proportion of regular visitors to the Park are local residents, and it is important that the Rest Park is accessible to people pushing strollers and prams. The presence of a children's playground accentuates this need.

Two footpaths running in an east-west direction comprise the only formalised circulation system in the Rest Park. These footpaths aid internal circulation, and are also used by commuters as a shortcut. The Rest Park has been specifically designed to encourage a variety of informal walks within it, and while pedestrian movement is largely based on individual whims, the installation of the seven interpretive signs has had a significant impact on pedestrian circulation. People following the History Trail and/or the self-guided walking tour notes that complement it, move through the Rest Park in an identifiable manner.

Due to the essentially flat nature of the topography, the large open grassed areas and the existence of the formal pathways running through the Rest Park, current access provisions for people with impaired mobility are considered to be adequate.

3.4 Recreational Opportunities and Constraints

St. Thomas' Rest Park is a unique combination of a historical resource and a recreational area located in close proximity to a large population centre. This Plan of Management aims to ensure the provision of a resource that educates and informs visitors, a visually aesthetic environment recognising the historic nature of the Rest Park and a high quality recreational facility which meets the needs of the community.

There are currently a number of programs in place to interpret the historical aspects of the Rest Park. The interpretive signage trail, self-guiding tour brochures, static displays in the Sexton's

Cottage museum and guided tours of the grave sites led by knowledgeable Council staff and volunteers all help the public to understand and appreciate the history of the site. These interpretive measures enrich the recreational experience of people using the Rest Park. Opportunities to promote this valuable and unique resource in the wider community to attract more people to the Rest Park should continue to be pursued.

Additional recreational opportunities within the Rest Park are primarily designed to meet the needs of local users. The majority of activities occurring such as sitting, eating lunch and relaxing are of a passive nature, however informal active pursuits are also popular. The Rest Park is well suited to meet the recreational needs of users; grassy slopes afford casual users with pleasant spots to sit, in both the sun and the shade, and the large, open grassed area close to Matthews Lane and away from the historic precinct section is suitable for ball games and similar activities. Other common forms of Rest Park use include picnicking, walking and jogging. The Rest Park is also a popular destination for people walking dogs.

A children's playground is located in the north-western section of the Rest Park. While the play equipment is currently in reasonable condition, the playground has been flagged for upgrading in the 2003-2004 financial year. Community input into the draft St. Thomas Rest Park Plan of Management also highlighted the urgent need to install a fence around the playground. This fence will minimise the potential for conflict in an area of the Rest Park which is also very popular with people exercising dogs.

St. Thomas' Rest Park functions as both an educational resource serving a wide catchment of users and a recreational resource catering primarily to the needs of local users. Whilst management strategies within this Plan must take both these functions into account, priority must be given to the former, as it is the historic elements which give the Rest Park its special value and interest, and which set it apart from other urban recreational areas. This Plan of Management must also be flexible and adaptable enough to provide for the changing needs of the community in relation to the Rest Park.

3.5 Structures

This Plan of Management needs to consider long-term policy and directions for all structures and park furniture contained within St. Thomas' Rest Park. Emphasis should be placed on providing adequate facilities according to predetermined levels of community need.

Existing items of park furniture are generally in good condition. The type and amount of furniture in the Rest Park and how it meets the needs of users was examined as part of Council's Recreational Needs Study, undertaken in 1997, and new park furniture including seats and picnic tables was installed in the Rest Park in 1998 in response to the identified need. In 1997 new lights were installed in the Rest Park. The new lights with dark green poles and hoods to direct the light downwards are more appropriate in terms of scale and character than the lights they replaced. The lights are designed to provide safe passage for people walking through the Rest Park at night. Prior to installation of any further items of park furniture, consideration must be given to their aesthetic appearance, and they should be sympathetic to the existing character of the Rest Park and consistent with Council's identified corporate image.

The seven signs comprising the St. Thomas' Rest Park History Trail were also installed in 1998 in response to a need identified in the previous Plan of Management for the Rest Park. The signs reflect the historic origins of the Rest Park and explain some of the features of this unique and significant heritage resource.

Children's play equipment located in the north-western corner of the Rest Park is well used and in reasonable condition. This playground is managed and maintained as per Council's Playgrounds Plan of Management to be a safe, functional and attractive facility.

The tombs and monuments located throughout the Rest Park are historically important structures requiring specialised management. Management and maintenance of these structures is discussed in Section 3.7 – 'Park Maintenance'.

3.6 **Pollution**

Traffic noise from the Warringah Freeway bordering the northern edge of St. Thomas' Rest Park impinges upon the otherwise tranquil nature of the Rest Park. Extensive border planting of native trees partially screens the expressway from view, and although the planting has a limited impact on the noise, lessening the visual intrusion of the freeway on the Rest Park has a positive effect on the overall amenity.

Litter levels in the Rest Park are generally low due to the absence of retail food outlets in the immediate vicinity and to an effective program of ongoing park maintenance.

A major concern raised by many visitors is the issue of dogs in the Rest Park. One of the most common recreational activities currently occurring is dog walking, a use which is patently incompatible with the Rest Park's primary function as a historical, educational and interpretative resource, and which has serious implications for the effective operation of the Rest Park in this regard. The most significant problems caused by dogs are disruption to the peace and tranquillity of the historical section and dog faeces scattered throughout the Rest Park. The installation several years ago of two specially designed bins for the disposal of dog faeces has gone some way to controlling the latter problem.

3.7 **Park Maintenance**

The need for ongoing maintenance is an important issue which influences not only landscape character but also affects general safety levels. Efficient maintenance practices allow cost savings to be made, permitting funds to be redirected to other important areas. The monitoring and maintenance of all the historical features in the Rest Park is an issue that requires constant attention.

The landscape of St. Thomas' Rest Park has been designed for minimum long term maintenance. Grass areas are large and contiguous to minimise edge trimming, and the ground surface surrounding the monuments and headstones grouped within the historic precincts is a white gravel

mulch which inhibits weed growth. The grouping of existing graves and the placement of headstones within planting areas are other low maintenance features of the Rest Park.

In 1999 a low fence was installed around the root zone of the Commemorative Tree and the area was mulched. This measure is designed to protect the tree by preventing compaction of soil in the root zone.

There are a number of maintenance issues associated with the monuments and headstones scattered throughout the Rest Park. Ongoing problems include headstones becoming loose, monuments and headstones being damaged by vandals, and general disintegration due to aging. Vandalism often occurs at night, and it is therefore extremely important to ensure that all lights in the Rest Park are functioning, as high lighting levels should deter potential vandals. Council now maintains a stockpile of replacement parts so that faulty lights can be repaired as soon as the damage is reported. Faulty lights may be reported to Council by commuters walking through the Rest Park at night, or by the on-site caretaker.

The historic stone precincts also require regular maintenance. The sandstone edging which defines the precincts had fallen into disrepair and was subject to extensive renovation and upgrading works in the early 1970s. All maintenance of historic items is carried out in accordance with currently accepted conservation practices as described in the Burra Charter*.

Over the years, the original engravings on a number of monuments and headstones have become worn and weathered and are now virtually illegible, however Stanton Library holds a complete transcription of all existing headstones, and a plaque program is also currently in operation. This program involves the installation of standard plaques containing pertinent information on the more historically significant monuments and headstones which have become difficult to read. In addition, relatives may request the installation of relevant plaques at their own expense.

* The Australian ICOMOS Charter for the conservation of Places of Cultural Significance (the Burra Charter) was adopted by Australia ICOMOS in 1979. Revisions were adopted in 1981 and 1988. The Charter takes into account the International Charter for the Conservation and Restoration of Monuments and Sites (Venice 1966), and the Resolutions of the 5th General Assembly of the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) (Moscow 1978).

3.8 **Current Management Practices**

Management strategies for St. Thomas' Rest Park over the past 5 years have focused on maintaining the desired landscape character, interpreting the historical aspects of the Rest Park, satisfying the recreational needs of users and achieving an acceptable standard of maintenance. These strategies have been very successful, however this Plan of Management identifies further opportunities to carry out forward planning to achieve a more holistic approach to the long term care of the Rest Park.

The incorporation of community participation in the planning process is an important management tool. There must be enough scope within this Plan of Management to allow for the active

involvement of the community. Ways in which the community can participate in the management and maintenance of St. Thomas' Rest Park should continue to be investigated, as a sense of community ownership can lead to a reduction in anti-social activities such as vandalism. To date the Holtermann Precinct has been actively involved in the development of this Plan of Management, raising issues and providing information to Council. Opportunities to further involve the community in the life of the Rest Park should be examined and encouraged within the parameters of this Plan.

4.0 **Basis for Management**

4.1 **Management Objectives**

The primary aim of the St. Thomas' Rest Park Plan of Management is to provide guidelines for future use, development, management and maintenance of the Rest Park. St. Thomas' Rest Park is an important and unique component of North Sydney Council's open space system providing a rare opportunity for users to explore aspects of the history of the North Sydney area while simultaneously serving the passive recreational needs of the local community. It is the responsibility of management to maximise the potential of the Rest Park, ensuring that it continues to cater for a range of activities, that conflicts between user groups are kept to a minimum, and that any future development is compatible with the designated character of the Rest Park.

Management must be responsive to the changing needs of the community and users, and the Plan of Management must have the flexibility to incorporate and take advantage of future requirements and changing needs as they arise. The plan must provide both short and long term policy, and be flexible enough to respond to social changes.

Based on legislative requirements, community needs and expectations, and the values and assets of St. Thomas Rest Park itself, the following broad, primary management objectives have been identified:

- To manage the land for public recreation in accordance with the overall objectives of the North Sydney Council Management Plan 2000 - 2003;
- To retain and enhance the cultural significance of the area (namely its archaeological, historical and social significance) for past, present or future generations by the active use of conservation methods. These conservation methods may include the following methods:
 - (a) the continuous protective care and maintenance of the physical material of the land or of the context and setting of the area
 - (b) the preservation of the land, that is, the maintenance of the physical material of the land in its existing state and the retardation of deterioration of the land;
- To recognise, promote and maintain the historic aspects and elements of the Rest Park;
- To emphasise and strengthen the heritage character of the Rest Park;
- To ensure that the effective functioning of the Rest Park as a historical resource is not jeopardised by other, unsympathetic uses of the Park;
- To provide and maintain a high quality recreational and cultural facility which meets the needs of the community;

- To define, promote and maintain an appropriate landscape character for St. Thomas Rest Park;
- To upgrade the existing recreational and cultural environment and the aesthetics of the Rest Park where required;
- To ensure the Rest Park is accessible to the general community including people with disabilities;
- To take a consistent approach to management of St. Thomas Rest Park and to maintain the Rest Park to an acceptable standard;
- To manage the playground as per the Playgrounds Plan of Management, NSC;
- To ensure the Plan of Management is flexible and able to evolve with changing community attitudes;
- To provide for public safety.

These objectives have been used in the subsequent management issues to guide policy development and formulation of the action plan.

5.0 POLICY, IMPLEMENTATION AND PERFORMANCE

The policies established in this plan provide the framework for management consistent with anticipated availability of resources and anticipated community trends.

The priority ratings outlined on the following pages are subject to the availability of necessary staff and funds, and may require modification if special circumstances arise.

Codes used to define priorities in the following matrix:

| | | | |
|----|---------------|---|--|
| ST | (Short Term) | - | Action completed within 2 years |
| M | (Medium Term) | - | Action completed within 2-4 years |
| L | (Long Term) | - | Action commenced after 4 years * |
| O | (Ongoing) | - | Action is carried out on a regular basis for the life of this Plan of Management |
| C | (Commenced) | - | Action has commenced |
| CP | (Completed) | - | Action has been carried out |

* Note:

This Plan of Management is designed to be relevant for a 5-year period, and to be extensively reviewed and updated at the end of this time. As defined by this document, long-term projects are those that are scheduled for commencement but not completion within the life of this Plan.

5.1 Matrix

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

| Issue | Objective | Action | Comments | Priority | Performance Indicators | References |
|---------------------|---|---|--|----------|--|-------------------------|
| Existing Vegetation | To conserve and enhance existing appropriate vegetation. | Monitor all trees in the Rest Park which are in poor condition but which are treatable. | Annual inspections carried out by a qualified horticulturalist. | O | Regular inspections undertaken. | |
| | | Carry out maintenance works as required to conserve appropriate existing vegetation. | Use best-practice horticultural techniques. | O | Condition of vegetation in the Rest Park. | |
| | To maintain the Commemorative Tree (<i>Sabina bermudiana</i>) in optimum condition. | Assess the condition of the tree on a regular basis. | Annual inspections carried out by a qualified arborist. | O | Regular inspections undertaken. | |
| | | Carry out maintenance works as required to improve the condition of the tree. | Use best-practice horticultural techniques. | O | Condition of Commemorative Tree. | |
| | | Maintain the low fence installed around the base of the tree in good condition. | This fence prevents further problems associated with soil compaction, dogs and whipper snippers. | O | Fence maintained in good condition. | |
| | To control noxious weeds in the Rest Park. | Undertake weed removal programs when and where necessary. | Use techniques such as spot spraying, hand pruning and cutting. | O | Reduction in weed levels in the Rest Park. | |
| | | Implement the Noxious Weeds Act consistently and effectively. | | O | Noxious Weeds Act implemented by staff. | Noxious Weeds Act 1993. |

| Issue | Objective | Action | Comments | Priority | Performance Indicators | References |
|----------------------------------|--|--|--|----------|---|------------|
| Landscape Amenity and Aesthetics | To ensure all new plantings are appropriate and enhance the designated character of the Rest Park. | Select, plant and establish suitable species of trees, shrubs and groundcovers. | A major replanting program was carried out in 1998, hence further major work is unlikely to be required within the next 5 years. A list of species suitable for the Rest Park based on the original 1970s planting plan recommends a number of species native to the lower north shore which can be used in any future planting programs. | O | All new plantings are appropriate. | |
| | | Assess any new landscape proposals for their consistency with the designated character of the Rest Park. | Species native to the lower north shore are appropriate in all parts of the Rest Park except in the area immediately surrounding the Sexton's Cottage which is maintained with cottage garden plants. | O | All new planting work is appropriate. | |
| | To maintain significant view and vistas within the Rest Park. | Site new plantings strategically to maintain significant views and vistas within the Rest Park. | Views of significant monuments are especially important. | O | Existing significant views and vistas maintained. | |
| | | Consider the importance of existing features and focal points when siting park furniture and other structures. | | O | New site features do not negatively impact on existing features and focal points. | |

| Issue | Objective | Action | Comments | Priority | Performance Indicators | References |
|--------------------------------|--|--|---|----------|---|--|
| Conservation of Heritage Items | To protect and conserve all items of heritage significance in St. Thomas' Rest Park. | Consult with the National Trust, Council's Historical Resources Committee, the Heritage Council and other appropriate organisations on the management of heritage items and fulfil the requirements of the Heritage Act. | Items of heritage significance in the Rest Park include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the remaining graves and monuments - the Sexton's Cottage - the gates and fence along West Street | O | Co-ordinated and effective management of heritage items. | Heritage Act 1977 Heritage Review Study 1993, NSC |
| | | Commence work to repair the historic fence along West Street. | Funds have been allocated to allow this work to proceed in a staged manner over 3 years. | ST - MT | New work commenced and proceeding on schedule. | The Burra Charter. |
| | | Liaise with relevant organisations including the National Trust to keep abreast of the most up-to-date and appropriate maintenance and management techniques. | | O | All work to be done in accordance with currently accepted conservation practices. | |
| | | Carry out any work necessary to maintain heritage items in good condition as required. | All work to be done in accordance with currently accepted conservation practices. | O | Maintenance work on heritage items undertaken as required. | |

| Issue | Objective | Action | Comments | Priority | Performance Indicators | References |
|-----------------------------------|--|---|--|----------|--|------------|
| Recognition of Rest Park heritage | To recognise, conserve and interpret the cultural heritage of the Rest Park to enrich the experience of Rest Park users. | Acknowledge the heritage of the area through appropriate interpretive literature and signage. | Relevant information currently includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - self-guided walking tour notes - permanent interpretive signs - static displays in the Museum - verbal information supplied by on-site staff and volunteers - regular tours of the Rest Park and grave sites | O | Feedback received from Rest Park users. | |
| | | Publicise the Rest Park and its heritage significance in the wider community. | History Week and Heritage Week are publicised in the local and Sydney-wide press. | O | Increased number of visitors to the Rest Park. | |

ACCESS AND CIRCULATION

| Issue | Objective | Action | Comments | Priority | Performance Indicators | References |
|---------------------------------|---|---|---|----------|---|------------|
| Access to St. Thomas' Rest Park | To control vehicular access to the Rest Park. | Prohibit and prevent general vehicular access to the Rest Park. | | O | General vehicular access to the Rest Park prevented. | |
| | | Allow service and emergency vehicles to enter the Rest Park. | | O | Ease of entry for service and emergency vehicles. | |
| | To ensure all visitors have access to the Rest Park and its amenities. | Ensure pedestrian gates are kept open at all times. | | O | Pedestrian gates remain open. Number of complaints received per annum. | |
| | To place a higher priority on public and collective transport and cycle access to the Rest Park over private transport. | Encourage visitors coming from further afield to use public transport to reach the Rest Park. | This is consistent with Council's aim to reduce the number of cars in North Sydney. Introduction of car parking restrictions in the area immediately in front of the Rest Park on West Street provides easy access for a small number of private cars. | O | Decrease in number of complaints regarding lack of parking spaces. | |

| Issue | Objective | Action | Comments | Priority | Performance Indicators | References |
|-----------------------------|---|---|--|----------|---|------------|
| Circulation within the Park | To provide a safe and secure circulation system for pedestrian within the Rest Park which meets the needs of users. | Carry out regular inspections of all paved pathways to ensure they are maintained in a safe condition. | The paved pathway system is suitable for users of all mobility levels. | O | Regular inspections undertaken. | |
| | | Carry out corrective pathway works as and when required. | | O | Corrective pathway works undertaken as speedily as practicable. | |
| | | Monitor pedestrian circulation paths along the interpretive signage trail to ensure levels of wear are not excessive. | | O | Regular inspections undertaken. | |
| | | Carry out repairs to turf along the interpretive trail if and when required. | | O | Repair work undertaken as speedily as practicable. | |

RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS

| Issue | Objective | Action | Comments | Priority | Performance Indicators | References |
|-----------------|--|---|--|----------|---|------------|
| Use of the Park | To ensure the community has access to all heritage items and to facilitate an understanding of the historical significance of the Rest Park. | Make interpretive literature readily available to the public. | Current literature consists of a brochure, self-guided walking tour notes and a book 'Life and Death on the Northside' by Chris Morgan. Brochures are available from the Museum, from Stanton Library and from Council's Customer Service Centre. | O | Good supply of literature easily available for Rest Park visitors. | |
| | | Provide and encourage interpretive walks through the historic section of the Rest Park. | Organised tours take place during Heritage Week and History Week and on other occasions throughout the year. At other times, guided tours are available upon request. Self-guided tour notes are also available. | O | Interpretive walks and tour notes available to interested visitors. | |
| | | Provide regular access to the Sexton's Cottage Museum. | Council's Historical Services team opens the Museum every Thursday from 1-4pm, and on the first Sunday of each month from 2-4pm. | O | Museum open at stated times and dates throughout the year. | |
| | To acknowledge and promote St. Thomas' Rest Park as an important historic resource in the wider community. | Promote the Rest Park as a local history and educational resource. | Current initiatives include brochures, tour notes and History and Heritage Week activities. | O | Continuation of current promotional activities. | |

| Issue | Objective | Action | Comments | Priority | Performance Indicators | References | |
|-------|--|---|--|----------|---|---|--------------------------------------|
| | To allow for a range of unstructured recreational uses within the Rest Park. | Ensure all recreational activities occurring in the Rest Park are compatible with and do not detract from the primary function of the Rest Park as a historical resource. | Suitable activities include picnicking, walking, relaxing and contemplation. | O | Level of Rest Park use for appropriate recreational activities. Satisfaction of users gauged from feedback. | | |
| | | Restrict active recreation to informal sports and games in appropriate areas. | The large open area near Matthew Lane is suitable for activities such as ball games. | O | Annual number of complaints regarding inappropriate use of the Rest Park. | Appendix 2. | |
| | | Ensure all pedestrian gates remain open at all times to facilitate access to and use of the Rest Park. | | O | Annual number of complaints. | | |
| | | Patrol the Rest Park to ensure compliance with the above action. | Patrols are carried out by Council Rangers. | O | Regular Ranger patrols carried out. | | |
| | To reduce the impact of dogs on St. Thomas' Rest Park. | Allow dog walking within the Rest Park in accordance with the principles set out in Council's Policy 'Dogs in Public Places'. | | | O | Rangers carry out regular patrols to ensure compliance with Council's Policy. | Dogs in Public Places Policy 7.3.160 |
| | | Clearly indicate and enforce restrictions and responsibilities of those walking dogs in the Rest Park. | Two repositories for dog waste are located in the Rest Park. | | O | Annual number of complaints regarding inappropriate dog behaviour and dog waste in the Rest Park. | |
| | | | | | | | |

| Issue | Objective | Action | Comments | Priority | Performance Indicators | References |
|-------|-----------|--|---|----------|-------------------------------------|------------|
| | | Patrol the Rest Park to ensure compliance with the above action. | Patrols are carried out by Council Rangers. | O | Regular Ranger patrols carried out. | |

BUILT STRUCTURES

| Issue | Objective | Action | Comments | Priority | Performance Indicators | References |
|------------------|---|--|---|----------|--|--|
| Sexton's Cottage | To manage this heritage item as an educational resource and a visually attractive feature of the Rest Park. | Open the Museum at the front of the Cottage on a regular basis. | Current opening hours are every Thursday, 1-4pm, and the first Sunday of the month, 2-4pm. The Museum may also be opened by appointment. | O | Museum opened on a regular basis. | |
| | | Provide information to Museum visitors. | The Museum is staffed by Council staff and volunteers. The interpretive signage in the Rest Park provides details of Museum opening hours. | O | Visitor satisfaction. | |
| | | Maintain the exterior of the Sexton's Cottage in an attractive condition using era-appropriate materials, colours and planting as per the Sexton's Cottage Conservation Management Plan. | The exterior was upgraded in 1985 as is currently in good condition following repainting in 1995. Maintenance work is carried out by Council staff. | O | | Sexton's Cottage Conservation Management Plan, 1981. |
| | To generate revenue and to help ensure the Rest Park is maintained in good condition. | Lease the rear portion of the Sexton's Cottage to a tenant who will act as a caretaker. | The presence of a permanent tenant should reduce the incidence of vandalism in the Rest Park. | O | Conditions of lease adhered to. Standard of Rest Park. | |

| Issue | Objective | Action | Comments | Priority | Performance Indicators | References |
|-------------------------------------|--|---|--|----------|---|--------------------------------|
| Park Furniture and Other Structures | To provide park furniture and other structures which are necessary, visually attractive and which complement the established landscape character of the Rest Park. | Install park furniture and other structures in St. Thomas' Rest Park if required. | The Recreational Needs Study identified the need to upgrade the Rest Park by installing new seats and lights. This work has now been undertaken and current park furniture is in good condition and of an appropriate style. Park furniture and other structures may include shelters, picnic tables, seats, bollards, fences, lighting, signage, toilet blocks etc. | O | New park furniture and structures which meets user needs installed when required. | Recreational Needs Study 1997. |
| | | Submit a Development Application for all proposed structures in accordance with Council's Local Environmental Plan. | | O | New developments in the Rest Park comply with Council's Local Environmental Plan. | Local Environmental Plan 2001. |
| | | Consult and elicit comments from Rest Park users and the general community prior to the commencement of any new development in the Rest Park. | This is in addition to consultation undertaken as part of the DA process. Eg – Liaise with local Precincts and other interested groups and individuals. | O | Satisfaction of users and the general community with the consultation process. | |
| | | Ensure any new structures are compatible with the designated character of the Rest Park. | Consider heritage issues. | O | Appropriate consistent structures only installed. | Recreational Needs Study 1997. |

| Issue | Objective | Action | Comments | Priority | Performance Indicators | References |
|-------|--|--|--|----------|----------------------------------|--------------------|
| | | Ensure that all lights in the Rest Park are working. | Rest Park users and the caretaker report faulty or damaged lights to Council. High levels of lighting in the Rest Park should lead to a reduction in levels of vandalism. Refer also Issue 'Safety and Risk Management'. | O | All lights functioning properly. | |
| | | Repair any faulty or damaged lights as quickly as practicable. | Council maintains a supply of replacement parts to facilitate quick repairs. | O | Speed of repair work. | |
| | To prevent further deterioration of the historic fence bounding West Street. | Commence work to repair the fence. | Work is scheduled to commence in the current financial year as some funds have been allocated. However it is likely that the project will be completed in stages, over 3 years due to funding constraints. All work to be carried out in accordance with currently accepted conservation practices. | ST - MT | Repair work commenced. | The Burra Charter. |

| Issue | Objective | Action | Comments | Priority | Performance Indicators | References |
|-----------------------|---|--|---|----------|---|---------------------------------|
| Children's Playground | To ensure that the existing children's playground is safe, functional and an attractive feature of the Rest Park. | Manage and maintain the children's playground as per Council's Playgrounds Plan of Management. | | O | Playground managed and maintained as per Council's Playground Plan of Management. | Playgrounds Plan of Management. |
| | | Install a fence around the existing children's playground. | The new fence will be of simple design as the playground is due for a major upgrade in the 2003-04 financial year. At this time the long-term requirements including the style and the extent of fencing will be comprehensively addressed. | ST | New fence installed. | |
| | | Upgrade the playground in St. Thomas Rest Park. | Surrounding Precincts and other Rest Park users will be consulted as part of the upgrading process. | MT | New playground installed in St. Thomas Rest Park. | |

| Issue | Objective | Action | Comments | Priority | Performance Indicators | References |
|--------------------------|---|---|---|----------|---|--------------------|
| Monuments and Headstones | To provide and install relevant plaques near the monuments and headstones where the original inscription has become hard to read. | Install plaques in accordance with Council's plaque program. | Council Historian to liaise with the appropriate Council Departments. | O | Plaques installed in accordance with Council's plaque program. | |
| | To protect and conserve the historic monuments and headstones in good condition to facilitate public investigation of them. | Carry out regular inspections to check for vandalism of monuments and headstones that have become loose or are otherwise deteriorating. | Parks Department staff, Rangers and the Manager of Historical and Technical Services carry out inspections. | O | Regular inspections undertaken. | |
| | | Submit reports to the relevant Council departments as needed regarding required maintenance work on the monuments and headstones. | The Manager of Historical and Technical Services prepares the reports. | O | Reports prepared and submitted as required to facilitate maintenance. | |
| | | Continue to carry out all repair work on monuments and headstones in accordance with currently accepted heritage conservation practices. | | O | All repair work carried out in accordance with currently accepted conservation practices. | The Burra Charter. |
| | | Continue to liaise with appropriate bodies including the National Trust of Australia to keep abreast of the most up-to-date and appropriate maintenance techniques. | | O | Liaison carried out on a regular basis. | |

MAINTENANCE AND MANAGEMENT

| Issue | Objective | Action | Comments | Priority | Performance Indicators | References |
|------------------------------------|--|--|--|----------|--|---|
| Leases, Licences and Other Estates | To allow use of St. Thomas' Rest Park for a range of cultural and recreational activities. | Grant leases, licences and other estates for use of St. Thomas' Rest Park as a venue for appropriate events. | Occasional or one-off use of the Rest Park may not require a lease – refer section 1.6 'Use of community land for which leases, licences and other estates are not required'. Proposed uses must comply with core objectives for St. Thomas' Rest Park – refer section 1.4. | O | Cultural or recreational activities held in St. Thomas' Rest Park are appropriate. | Local Government Act 1993, as amended 1998. |
| | To protect and safeguard this valuable and unique community resource. | Grant a lease to allow a caretaker to live in the rear portion of the Sexton's Cottage. | The presence of an on-site caretaker should be a deterrent to vandals. The caretaker has a role in looking after the Rest Park and reporting incidence of vandalism to the appropriate Council departments for actioning. | ST | Lease granted to facilitate a caretaker living in the rear portion of the Sexton's Cottage in the Rest Park. | |
| | | Review the terms and conditions of the current lease when it expires in light of this objective. | Current lease is for the term of 1 year. Leases, licences and other estates may be granted for periods of up to 5 years (including options for renewal) without having to be publicly tendered – refer section 1.6. | ST | Lease reviewed upon expiry. | Local Government Act 1993, as amended 1998. |
| | | Prepare a new lease document if required following completion of above action. | | ST | New lease document prepared if required. | |

| Issue | Objective | Action | Comments | Priority | Performance Indicators | References |
|-----------------------|--|--|--|----------|--|--------------------------------|
| Community Involvement | To provide opportunities for local residents and other stakeholders and interested parties to be involved in the development, implementation and monitoring of the St. Thomas' Rest Park Plan of Management. | Encourage community involvement through the provision of information via Council's Precinct system. | To date the Holtermann Precinct has been actively involved in the development of this document, raising issues and providing information to Council. | O | Relevant information distributed to local Precincts. | |
| | | Encourage stakeholders and other interested parties to provide written submissions to Council that can be incorporated into the annual review and amendments made to the Plan of Management. | Details of how to make a submission are contained within section 1.2 of this Plan of Management. | O | Review of Plan of Management takes account of submissions received during the year. | |
| | To provide opportunities for the public and user groups to become involved in new developments in St. Thomas' Rest Park. | Consult with stakeholders prior to and during the development of new proposals for the Rest Park and consider comments. | Stakeholders include Rest Park users, the Historical Resources Committee, local Precincts and individual local residents, the National Trust and the Heritage Council. | O | Community and user satisfaction with the consultation process as gauged from feedback. | |
| | | Lodge Development Applications where required for building and other works occurring in the Rest Park and seek public comment. | | O | Development Applications lodged for new works. | Local Environmental Plan 2001. |

| Issue | Objective | Action | Comments | Priority | Performance Indicators | References |
|-------|--|--|--|----------|---|------------|
| | To maintain the current number of volunteers working in the Rest Park. | Recruit new volunteers to replace any volunteers leaving the Rest Park as and when required. | Volunteers working in the Rest Park are responsible for opening the Sexton's Cottage to the public on Thursday afternoons and on the first Sunday of each month. They help visitors obtain information about particular individuals, give general information about the Rest Park, and let visitors peruse information contained in the Cottage such as the original Plot map. They also (along with Council staff) conduct guided tours of the Rest Park. | O | Current level of volunteers maintained. | |

| Issue | Objective | Action | Comments | Priority | Performance Indicators | References |
|-------------|---|---|--|----------|--|---|
| Maintenance | To maintain St. Thomas' Rest Park to an appropriate standard to respond to the needs and expectations of users and the general community and commensurate with Council resources. | Carry out regular maintenance to appropriate standards within St. Thomas' Rest Park. | | O | Maintenance programs implemented on time and within budget. | North Sydney Council Management Plan 2000 – 2003. |
| | | Undertake emergency repairs as required. | Council staff are pro-active, identifying problem area and responding to requests from the public. | O | Expenditure/revenue ratio achieved. | |
| | | Ensure adequate allocation of funds and develop comprehensive cost data for determination of the most cost-effective solutions in order to prevent future problems. | | O | Cost data recorded and monitored. | |
| | To maintain the Sexton's Cottage to an appropriate standard. | Carry out regular maintenance on the Sexton's Cottage. | Includes activities such as repainting. Caretaker undertakes some work in this area. | O | Maintenance activities implemented on time and to budget. Cottage appears in good condition. | |
| | | Undertake emergency repairs as required. | | O | Speed of repair work. | |

| Issue | Objective | Action | Comments | Priority | Performance Indicators | References |
|----------------------------------|--|--|---|----------|--|------------|
| Encroachments onto the Rest Park | To remove existing private encroachments onto the Rest Park. | Reclaim the private encroachments over time. | Council has established that the back fences of a number of properties on the northern side of Huntingdon Street encroach onto the Rest Park. When new owners take possession of any of the affected properties, Council requires that the fences be moved to the correct boundary line. | O | Encroachments are removed from the Rest Park as opportunities arise. | |

| Issue | Objective | Action | Comments | Priority | Performance Indicators | References |
|----------------------------|--|--|--|----------|--|------------|
| Safety and Risk Management | To identify, measure and manage potential hazards in a timely manner to minimise Council exposure to complaints, compensation claims and litigation. | Continue to carry out an inspection program to identify and eliminate all potential hazards. | | O | Inspection program regularly carried out. | |
| | | Carry out maintenance and risk management as required. | | O | Reduction in annual number of claims. | |
| | To minimise the incidence of vandalism to play equipment, park furniture, lighting and other structures. | Carry out patrols in the Rest Park on a regular basis. | Council Rangers carry out patrols. | O | Decrease in annual number of incidents reported. | |
| | | Remove graffiti from all items with the exception of monuments and headstones as soon as practicable. | People are less likely to deface surfaces that are in an undamaged condition. Removal of graffiti from monuments and headstones can cause substantial damage to the stonework. | O | Speed of repair work. | |
| | | Repair vandalised park furniture, lighting and other structures as soon as practicable or remove if damaged beyond repair. | Speedy repair of broken or faulty lights is particularly important as good night lighting should held to deter vandals. | O | Speed or repair work or removal. | |

| Issue | Objective | Action | Comments | Priority | Performance Indicators | References |
|-------|--|---|--|----------|--|------------|
| | To minimise potential hazards in relation to loose and damaged headstones. | Report damaged headstones requiring urgent repair to relevant Council departments as soon as damaged is noticed. | Council's Manager of Historical and Technical Services is responsible for the reporting. | O | All damaged headstones are reported to relevant Council departments. | |
| | | Carry out repair work as speedily as practicable. | Repair work is carried out by relevant Council department in consultation with Manager of Historical and Technical Services. | O | Speed of repair work. | |
| | | Report less urgent maintenance issues relating to monuments and headstones to relevant Council Departments as required. | Council's Manager of Historical and Technical Services is responsible for the reporting. | O | Reported damage is acted upon. | |

| Issue | Objective | Action | Comments | Priority | Performance Indicators | References |
|----------------------------------|--|--|----------|----------|---|------------|
| Monitoring of Management Systems | To review and update the Plan of Management regularly to conserve, maintain and enhance the values and the character of St. Thomas' Rest Park. | Review Plan of Management regularly. Review implementation and performance annually. Review and update policy and planning issues after 5 years. | | O | Achievements of Plan of Management objectives within the stated time-frame. Relevancy of the St. Thomas' Rest Park Plan of Management. | |

6.0 **Appendices and Supporting Material**

6.1 **Appendix 1 - Explanation of Relevant Zoning**

Public Open Space Zone

1. **Objectives of the zone**

The particular objectives of this zone are to:

- (a) allow for a range of open space areas which meet the needs of the community for both formal and informal recreation;
- (b) ensure sufficient public recreation areas are available for the benefit and use of the community; and
- (c) allow for the enhancement and management of recreation areas in accordance with Plans of Management adopted by Council under the Local Government Act 1993.

2. **Development or activity which may be carried out in this zone**

Any development in accordance with the Plan of Management adopted under Division 2 of Part 2 of Chapter 6 of the Local Government Act 1993 and for the time being applicable to the subject land; bushfire hazard reduction; community notice signs; cycle ways; drainage; horticulture; landscaping; park maintenance; recreation areas; refreshment rooms; remediation; temporary signs; temporary structures, including temporary structures for the sale of goods, information displays, and the display and sale of merchandise and produce; utility installations, other than generating works or gasholders; visitor facilities; vehicle access to another permissible use within the zone. (Source: Local Environmental Plan 2001. North Sydney Council).

6.2 **Appendix 2 – Definitions: Organised Sport and Informal Sports & Games**

Organised Sport

Organised sport describes sporting activities that are played on a permanently marked or designated playing surface provided and maintained by Council. These playing surfaces include grassed sportsgrounds (accommodating cricket, rugby, soccer, AFL, touch football etc), basketball, netball and tennis courts, cricket wickets and hockey fields. Fees are charged for use of all organised sporting facilities, and bookings must be made through Council's Customer Services Department.

Informal Sport and Games

Informal sports and games are those that do not require use of a marked or designated playing surface. They may be played within Council's parks and reserves free of charge, on a first come first served basis, as long as they comply with the requirements of the relevant Council Plan of Management, and do not significantly compromise the amenity of other park users.