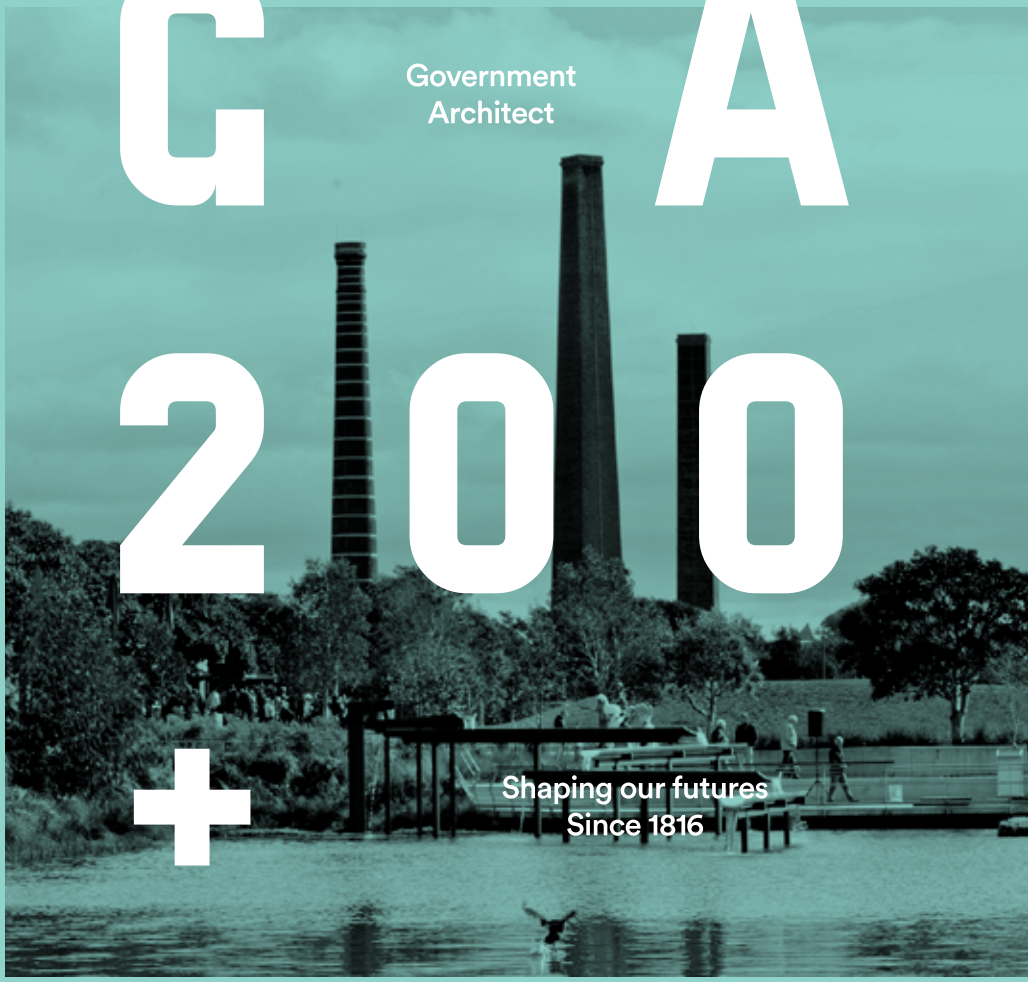
GA 200 +

Government Architect



Shaping our futures
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GA200+
Forum 03
What is it about living in Sydney?

NSW GOVERNMENT

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How do we protect and celebrate Sydney's unique green space, waterways and climate while also increasing density?

What is it about living in Sydney? This primer gives a few personal insights into the unique characteristics of our city that make it such a great place.

This forum will focus on Sydney's urban networks - green infrastructure, waterways and climate. With a projected need for 500,000 - 700,000 new homes over the next 15-20 years, how will our urban networks evolve to accommodate the scale of this development while also protecting the unique qualities of our city? How can we make sure our increased density is good quality? What does it really mean to create a liveable city and how do we ensure that it is liveable for everyone?

The following articles are by nine leading commentators, writers, landscape architects, environmentalists and artists who we've invited to expand on the themes of the Sydney Green Grid to provoke the discussion about what it means to live in a 'liveable city'.

This event is presented in partnership with the Committee for Sydney and it forms a part of their current work, 'Density Done Well'. More information on this project can be found at:

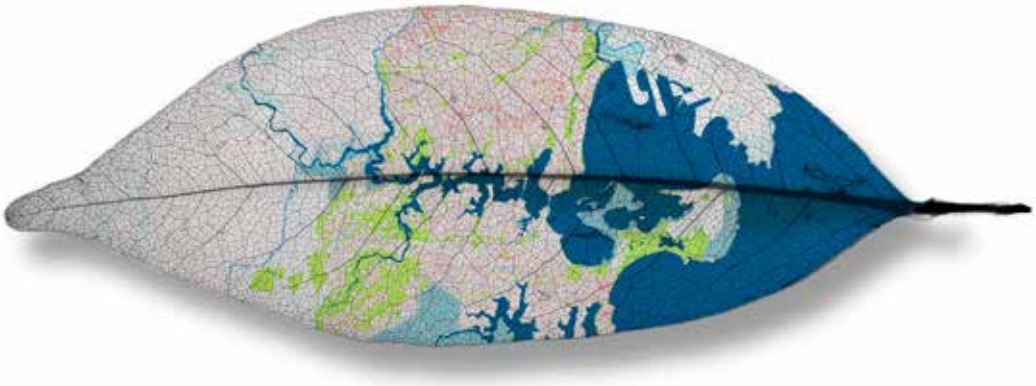
sydney.org.au

Cover photo: courtesy Turpin+Crawford Studio, Sydney Park Water Re-use project; Image credit: Simon Wood

Forum Program 25 July 2016

3:15pm	**Arrival**	The Mint 10 Macquarie Street, Sydney
3:30pm	**Forum 03** **What is it about living in Sydney?**	Introduction: Peter Poulet /Government Architect Keynote presentations: Elizabeth Mossop /Spackman Mossop + Michaels Jane Gleeson-White /Author “Six Capitals” Panel discussion: Rod Simpson /Greater Sydney Commission Tom Grosskopf /Office of Environment & Heritage Siobhan Toohill /Westpac Michaelie Crawford / Turpin and Crawford Facilitator: Dr Tim Williams /Committee for Sydney
5:00pm	**Refreshments**	
6:00pm	**Close**	

A note about the Sydney Green Grid



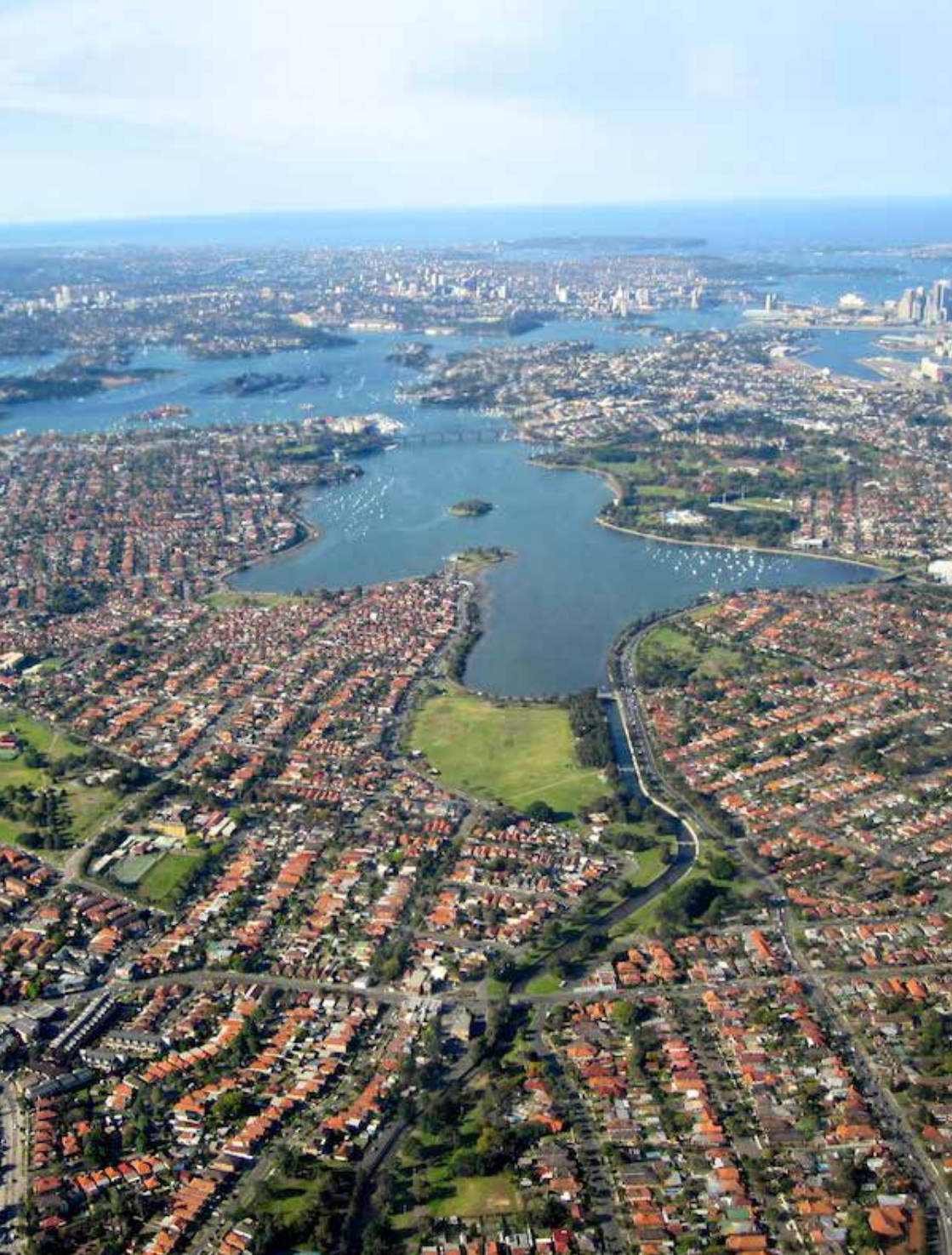
By mapping open space at the metropolitan scale, this project aims to create an interconnected network linking people, communities and nature.

The Sydney Green Grid promotes the creation of a network of high quality open spaces that connect with town centres, public transport hubs, the harbour, the rivers and key employment and residential areas.

It is a complex network that seeks to combine hydrological, ecological and urban resilience through an interconnected network of green infrastructure. The network aims to anchor sustainable development while maximising quality of life and well-being.

The Sydney Green Grid proposal was developed by the Government Architect's Office in 2014 and is now an integral part of the Metro Strategy. The final document is due for release later in 2016 as part of the District Plans for Sydney.

Birds-eye view Iron Cove
Image courtesy of Tyrrell Studio



Rod Simpson

We are celebrating 200 years of the Government Architect's office. It is worth considering how the public domain was concieved 200 years ago and 100 years ago.

Sydney Green Grid: The public's domain

Sydney may be seen as made of the intersection and interplay of three grids: the blue grid of watercourses and the receiving waters of rivers, estuaries, harbour and ocean, the green grid of open spaces that are largely coincident with the blue grid, and the grey grid of main roads that generally follow the ridges, as roads have always done.

The blue grid is the grid that has formed the topography, the element we have changed least. The flows of water have also determined the distribution of soils, favourable building sites; remnant vegetation is remnant for a reason. The soils and hydrology determine the potential for each area to support the re-establishment of native vegetation and although the topography has remained largely unchanged the flow rate and quality of water flow is very different.

The three grids together, supplemented by public institutions, schools, hospitals and universities constitute the public domain of the city, about 40-50% of the total urban land area. Perhaps more important than the amount is its connectivity, and more important still is the fact that it is in public ownership: we can collectively decide how it should be used and what should be accommodated within it.

We are celebrating 200 years of the Government Architects Office. It is worth considering how the public domain was conceived 200 years ago and 100 years ago.

Phillip's and Macquarie's 'domains' were not public in the sense of being set aside for the enjoyment of the public. The idea of land needing to be set aside for 'public recreation', indeed the very idea of the need for 'recreation' was first manifested through the public funding of Birkenhead Park in Manchester in 1847, and very different from the 'functional' public domain of market

squares, parade grounds, docksides and commons up to that point.

Recognition of the beauty of Sydney's harbour landscape and the need for reserving land for public recreation was well entrenched by the early 20th century. Interestingly, the 1909 report of the Royal Commission for the Improvement of Sydney and its Suburbs links 'beautification of the city' mostly to the design of streets, notably street tree planting, while the need for playgrounds is part of the sections dealing with slum clearance and housing improvements.

An appendix to the report is an extensive list of lands purchased from private owners for parkland as the city expanded and intensified and population reach one million.

Just over 50 years later, the renowned urban theorist and critic Jane Jacobs eloquently resisted the dominant view of the functional city. [1] Jacobs is often cast as a romantic, but she was more an acute and objective observer of the way the city worked at both the micro scale of personal interactions on the street and the conditions that made the street, the public domain, lively. Her observations about urban parks and squares needing 'functional physical diversity among adjacent uses and hence diversity among users' to feel active remains true, as does her vigorous dismissal of the idea of greenery being the 'lungs of the city' as 'science fiction nonsense.'

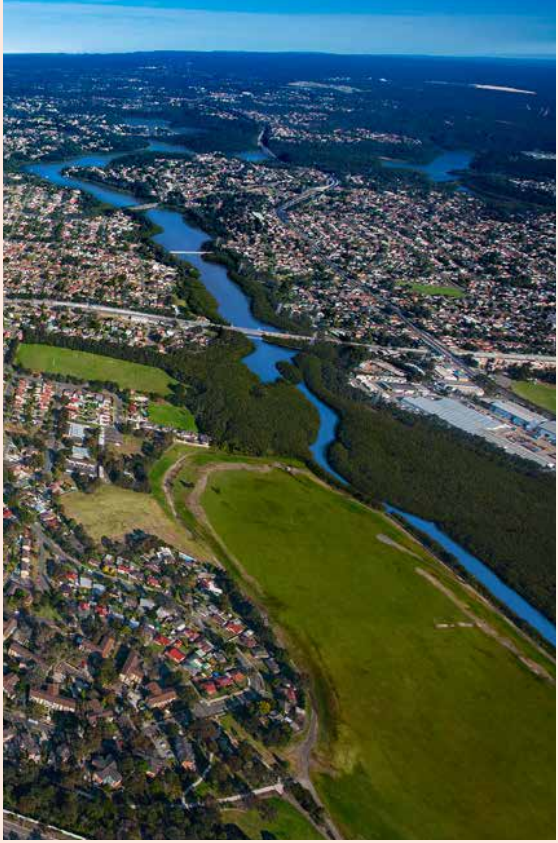
Planning ideas like the 'green belt' were enthusiastically adopted in the County of Cumberland plan from planning ideas circulating in Britain 50-60 years before, and just as enthusiastically dispensed with in the following two decades. Remnants of Sydney's green-belt make up parts of the Western Sydney Parklands, but most of these parklands are a re-conceptualisation of a 'services corridor' that was set aside.

What can we draw from all this?

Expectations about the purpose of open space and the public domain have changed and shifted and will continue to do so as new sports and recreational activities emerge. We are becoming increasingly aware of the need to adapt to, and ameliorate climate change, to protect and restore biodiversity and ecosystems, and the potential for increased walking and cycling to significantly improve health and reduce healthcare costs. Consequently it is essential not only to consider the amount, but the quality, variety, connectedness and intersection and overlaying of the blue, green and grey grids that constitute our public domain.

History shows that it is the adaptation, mutability and flexibility of the public domain that makes cities more liveable: the greening of the grey grid for example. However, it is difficult to engage in discussion about how some open spaces could be more active and while others could be more extensive and offering solace, when the public domain is perceived to be under threat.

[1] I refer to Jacob's criticism rather than any Australian critic because her reaction was more clearly expressed and more acute, partly due to the more intensive and extensive disruption to New York proposed by its freeway vandals.



Salt Pan Creek and Georges River (courtesy Tyrell Studio)

Rod Simpson is Environment Commissioner for the Greater Sydney Commission. He is an architect and urban designer, and an Associate Professor in the Urbanism Program at the University of Sydney. He has worked for the Commonwealth and provided consultancy services to State and local governments in planning and urban design.

He led urban design for the City of Sydney Sustainable Sydney 2030 strategy with the SGS consortium. Rod was instrumental in the development of BASIX and PRECINX. He is a member of various housing, transport and architectural design review panels.

Elizabeth Mossop

The Case for Urban Park Networks

Australian cities are unique in their combination of strong environmental values and highly developed urbanism. Over their short history visionary planners, park activists, and conservationists have all played important roles in developing urban parks and park systems and in the conservation of our natural landscapes. The preservation of natural landscapes in urban areas, the strong protection of peri-urban national parks and the conservation of urban trees, have allowed the development of cities that still give many people contact with nature in the course of their everyday lives. Sydney, for example, has an extraordinary legacy of bushland within the city, both around the harbor and along waterways, as well as being surrounded by National Parks.

It cannot be stressed strongly enough how important this urban nature is, and how unusual. Now that the most 'advanced' cities all over the world are trying to address ideas of resilience and questions of how to support urban life more effectively, people everywhere are trying to replicate what Australian cities already have. This is not something to be smug about, as I don't feel that we (Australians) place high enough value on this irreplaceable resource. The forces of ill-considered development and the pressures of short-term political decisions continue to chip away at this urban legacy of natural beauty. Especially now, as we contemplate the impacts of much higher urban density, we have to be much more articulate about the importance of the green infrastructure of our cities, and find ways to preserve and strengthen the green networks that should define our 21st Century urbanism.

There is overwhelming evidence that urban green space and contact with nature provide a foundation for successful cities. By this I mean that these urban landscapes make significant contributions to public health and safety, economic competitiveness, social cohesion, and children's development, and to the infrastructure, resilience and ecological health of the city. For example, while it is obvious that green networks can contribute to healthier lifestyles, through increasing physical activity, there is also research data that demonstrates how urban landscapes can improve children's academic performance, can reduce the markers for cancer and strokes, improve mental health, and so on. There are excellent resources available synthesizing research on the benefits of urban greenspace (Centre for City Park Excellence, Parks and Leisure Australia, the American Planning Association, the National Recreation and Park Association, etc.). This research can support our advocacy for the development of green landscape infrastructure for our cities. In the international context Australian cities should focus on the opportunity to provide leadership and innovation in green urbanism and to export our expertise.

Olmsted's prophetic ideas of park utility, that "service must precede art" are gaining traction in the 21st Century as we think of parks in terms of their urban performance, and the multi-layering of uses. Crucial to these ideas is the systematic thinking about parks, as connected circuits or green networks. As planners and designers we know that connectivity for people, hydrology and habitat is key to making parks effective and cities successful. This systematic approach requires the kind of visionary integrated land planning over time, that is becoming increasingly difficult in an environment where the interests of private development are given a higher priority than the public interest.

The importance of parks in expressing democratic ideals, and their role as public space, from which no-one is excluded, is of increasing significance in today's more fragmented and diverse societies. This is clearly expressed in the Australian traditions of outdoor sports, socializing and cultural events which continue to bring people from all parts of the community together.

We have to make urban parks and their agency central to people's thinking about cities, urban revitalization and resilience. Too often parks are perceived as a luxury that can be dealt with at some point in the future, but a healthy city requires an integrated system of open space that addresses issues of public health, safety and community resilience.

Elizabeth Mossop is an internationally known landscape architect and urbanist. Her practice concentrates on urban infrastructure and open space projects like Cook and Phillip Park in Sydney and reconstruction of New Orleans and the Gulf Coast. She is founding director of Spackman Mossop + Michaels, an international design practice. She was formerly Director of Masters in Landscape Architeture Programs at Harvard, and Professor and Director of Landscape Architecture at Louisiana State University. She is the incoming Dean of the Faculty of Design, Architecture and Built Environment at UTS.

Jane Gleeson-White

I looked out my window in the dark
At waves with diamond quills and combs of light
That arched their mackerel-backs and smacked the sand
In the moon's drench, that straight enormous glaze
— 'FIVE BELLS', KENNETH SLESSOR

The economic case for Sydney's green and blue places

This is Sydney Harbour through the eyes of poet Kenneth Slessor. How do we value this bush-fringed harbour? How do we value Sydney's waterways and green places? Let's assume for a moment that we're unable to formulate value beyond the terms of the current paradigm and must remain locked into the language of postwar public policy: economics. In terms of traditional economics, the value of this natural world is zero. So how would we make an economic case for investing in Sydney's green and blue places?

We'd draw on ecological economics, a new school of economics founded in 1982. Ecological economics is based on the paradigm-shifting assertion that the economy is a subsystem of the global ecosystem.

As leading ecological economist Robert Costanza says, this worldview 'treats humans as part of and not apart from the processes and functions of nature'. Ecological economists reconceive nature as 'natural capital'. That is, as a stock of wealth that produces a range of 'ecosystem goods' and 'services' that are used by the human economy.

Ecosystem services include regulating services that affect climate, floods, disease, wastes, and water and air quality; cultural services that provide recreational, aesthetic and spiritual benefits; and supporting services such as soil formation, photosynthesis and nutrient recycling.

Because our survival depends absolutely on ecosystems, ecological economists argue we must include their value in our accounting systems. In 1997 Costanza and his colleagues put a dollar value on the annual global contribution of 17 ecosystem services. They estimated their worth at US$16-54 trillion a year, roughly equal to the 1998 Gross World Product. The great failing of today's economic system is that only measured wealth is valued and cared for—and because we don't measure natural production and provision, we deplete and destroy the natural world.

Costa Rica pioneered the application of ecological economics. In 1997 under national parks director Carlos Manuel Rodriguez, Costa Rica began to cost the ecosystem services of its forests then being rapidly cleared for beef cattle ranching. Rodriguez realised he had to demonstrate that the forests' financial value was equivalent to the money lost by not destroying them for cattle ranching. Their value was estimated by calculating their contribution to tourism and hydroelectricity via their provision of greenhouse gas mitigation, watershed protection, biodiversity conservation and scenic beauty. This was a game-changing move. The valuations persuaded the finance minister that Costa Rica's ecosystems were essential for its long-term economic growth.

The results of these valuations were impressive. Costa Rica's forest cover increased from 21 per cent in the 1980s to 52 per cent in 2010 and was accompanied by energy savings and increases in living standards. As Rodriguez argued: 'If we can show that economic and social health is dependent on the health of nature, then most politicians see the case we are making.'

Similar cases are now being made for green cities. In 2003 the urban forests of the USA were estimated to be worth some US$4 billion annually for their contribution to clean air and water alone. Trees and green infrastructure also cool cities, buffer rainstorms, reduce storm water runoff, conserve energy, create natural habitat, foster physical and psychological health, and look beautiful.

The economic case for investment in Sydney's green infrastructure must be based on the sorts of new ecosystem valuations made possible by this green accounting.

Jane Gleeson-White is a writer with degrees in economics and literature. She is the author of Six Capitals: The revolution capitalism has to have – or can accountants save the planet? Six Capitals is the sequel to her internationally acclaimed prize-winning Double Entry, a history of accounting from around 7,000 BC to the 2008 financial crash and the environmental crisis. At the heart of the story is the life of the remarkable Renaissance monk and mathematician Luca Pacioli, father of accounting and constant companion of Leonardo da Vinci.

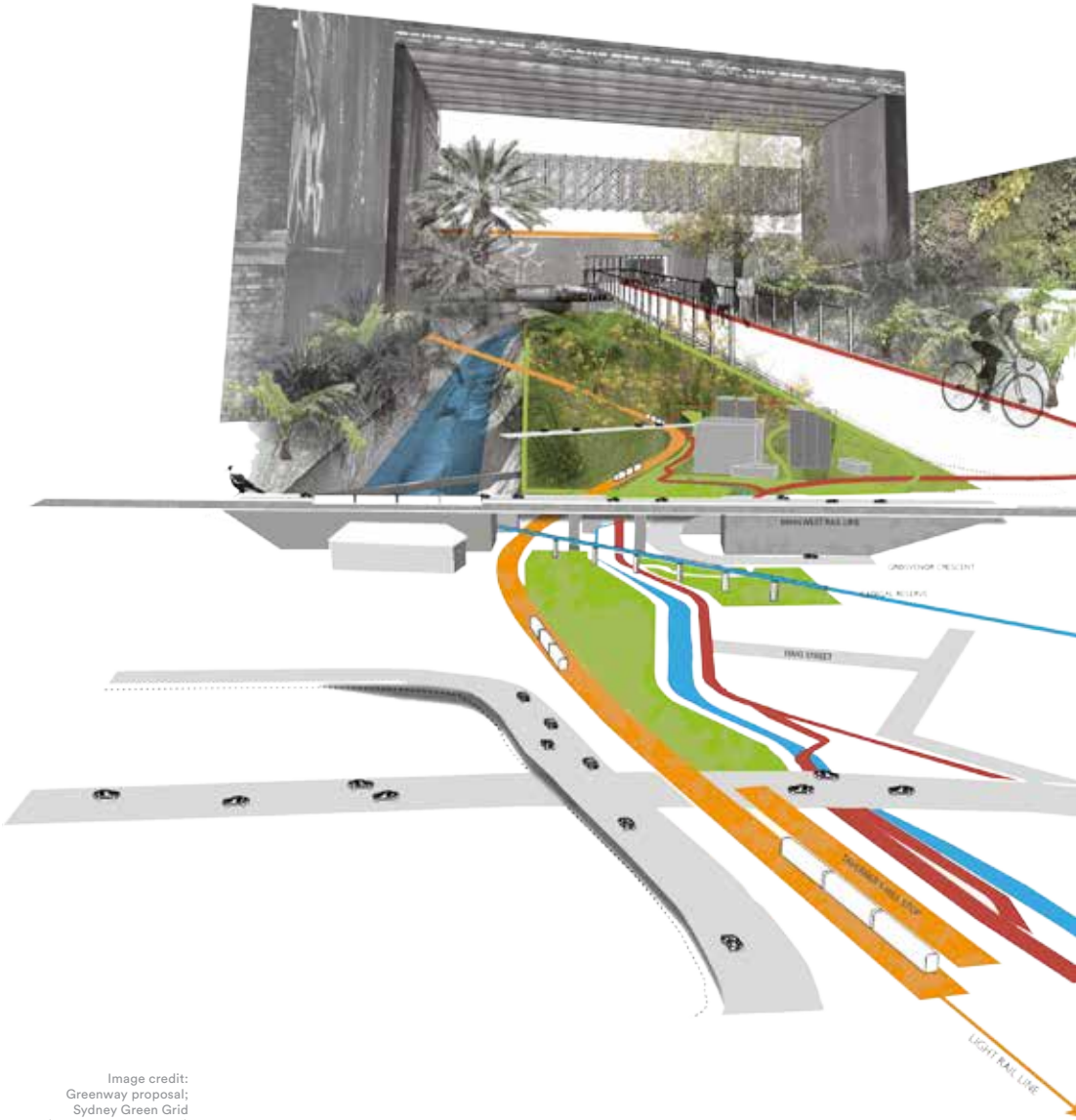


Image credit:
Greenway proposal;
Sydney Green Grid
(courtesy Tyrell Studio)

Mark Tyrrell and Scott Hawken

Urban Transformation through Next Generation Infrastructure and Catalytic Project Definition
A Systems Approach and Network Thinking: sustainable paths for non-linear outcomes

Today's challenges are complex and immediate. Facing them in a linear way, as a list of tasks to cross-off one-by-one, is not only unviable in regards to time and resources, but promises little in terms of successful outcomes. Global and city level challenges are typically treated as independent problems and separated into silos. Facing population growth, environmental degradation or energy consumption independently often undercuts or undermines progress in other areas if a holistic approach is not pursued. The reality of such systems is that they are complex and inter-related.

Food webs, political alliances, energy delivery, water, climate, cellular and metabolic networks, social networks, the world wide web, economic and ecological systems integrate a diverse range of inputs, processes and connections that make linear approaches irrelevant.

The anatomy of networks

The grid represents a classic formal network where connections are set out according to a pre-thought out plan or map. The grid appears austere, absolute and inert but offers multiple opportunities for interaction and connection through the many intersections, and multiple paths through such a structure.

The instantaneous experience of networks such as the world wide web suggest that the structure of networks is neutral. This belies the impact different designs and structures actually have on the function of such networks, grids and webs. The physical and spatial structure of networks influences what they can do, how they do it and limits or enables their effectiveness as infrastructure for carrying out multiple and diverse actions and functions.

The various dimensions of network spatial characteristics include structural complexity, dynamic change with nodes and links continually created and broken or changing in character, network diversity with connections of different capacity, direction and material and language or signs.

Networks take on characteristics of meta-complexity through the overlay

or connection of different networks. The use of networks influences their function over time so that such structure learns, achieving a form of memory or a “culture”.

Next Generation Infrastructure : unlocking capacity and generating new cultural qualities

With the proliferation of network thinking a type of “next generation” infrastructure has emerged that takes on the characteristics of ecological systems which are inherently multi-functional and intricate. Infrastructure ecologies capture the power of natural systems either through simulating the behaviour of natural systems or through using the natural capacity of such systems. There are various ways to think about the function of infrastructure. There is the end of pipe approach characteristic of the 20th century where systems deliver single services from point A to B.

There is the co-location of various functions such as a tennis court on the roof of a sewage plant or an energy generation power station where the heat-waste is used to warm nearby buildings. Finally there is the symbiotic or synergistic form of “next generation infrastructure” promoted by advocates such as New York engineer Hilary Brown.

Such systems are multipurpose, interconnected, and synergistic and leverage the power of multiple systems to achieve efficiencies and a qualitative transformation greater than those possible through a single system or network. Such systems are more complex but also achieve an elegance and civility that modernist infrastructure lacks. Picture the contrast between a free-way designed solely for cars and a small street or multi-modal boulevard where trees, green raingardens, pedestrians, bicycles, children and adults intermingle. The boulevard, delivering social benefit, health benefit, ecosystem services and transport benefits, produces less to no carbon emissions, integrates natural systems, delivers community benefit and a mixed economy. Such next-generation infrastructures are often surprisingly traditional in appearance but require a large shift in thinking to be implemented at the scale of the city.

Liveable infrastructures: local experiments in community, democracy and engagement

Delivering and imaging such infrastructures are beyond the capacity of either community or professionals or government. They require a process of engagement across stakeholder groups to fulfil their potential for social, economic and ecological engagement. Such infrastructures and networks are not simply about doing the same things better but about

a cultural and economic and ecological transformation where the various networks, processes and complexities of urban life are integrated to deliver a quantum improvement in liveability.

The potential of the catalytic project to activate new hybrid infrastructures

To enable greater performance of our cities, but with limited resources, requires city building projects to be positioned at points of maximum overlap. Overlaps between ecological, recreational, grey and blue networks also represent terrains of joint ownership and funding streams. In this way the strength of the contemporary city building project is underpinned by its potential for widespread influence. Linearity, separation and stasis must be reconceptualised as superimposition, hybridisation and defined temporality.

As our cities become bigger and faster, innovative and more interdependent, agile approaches are required for achieving greater, and richer constellations of projects. Renewable and more limited resources require network thinking and the synergistic power of catalytic interventions and next-generation infrastructure.

Mark Tyrrell holds degrees in Architecture, Urban Design and Landscape Architecture and is the founder of TYRRELLSTUDIO, a multi award winning Australian design firm. Studio work ranges from urban design and development strategy through to construction documentation for large scale public projects.

Dr Scott Hawken, Lecturer in Urban Development and Design (UNSW) is an Urban Designer, Landscape Architect and Landscape Archaeologist with local and international experience in professional and academic contexts. His work focuses on the agency of open space as a variable in the spatial makeup of the city.

Tom Grosskopf

What is it to live in Sydney? The future of Sydney is in our hands. We have made choices that have created the city we experience today. We will make further choices that will create the Sydney of the future.

How we influence these choices starts with the vision for our city: a strong global city, a great place to live. So what are the characteristics that make Sydney liveable?

There is no doubt that our highly prized environment – the harbour, the coast, our mountains, parks and open spaces –is a big part of the answer but it isn't all there is to it. The quality of the built form in terms of services to its occupants and its resilience to changing conditions is another. The ease of movement of people and goods in, out and around the city is a third. There are more.

So what is it that the natural environment offers for liveability?

The ecosystem services of cleaner air and water are well understood. The less obvious resilience services associated with attenuating urban heat effects and protection from natural hazards such as flood and coastal erosion are now being quantified. The emerging mental and physical health services delivered through the wonder of our natural world and active recreation like bushwalking are only just starting to be accounted for.

Can you have a strong global city and all of these natural environment services? The answer is yes. Sydney has developed into a City of over 4.5 million people spread out over some twelve and a half thousand square kilometres. In this growth we have lost many environmental assets but we do retain a catalogue of natural wonders able to fill a David Attenborough series. Just among our resident bird species we find Emus in Western Sydney, Powerful Owls in the east (an apex predator with a wing span of over a metre and an appetite for possums, flying foxes and even koalas) and Bar Tailed Godwits on the coast (an international visitor from the artic coasts that holds the record for the longest non-stop flight of any bird). If we look at insects, arachnids, reptiles, mammals, fungi and plants we can't help but be amazed and enthralled at all we have.

We understand enough of the science to inform the choices that can retain these wonders on our doorstep. In fact, we can even recreate some of what was once here through well planned reintroductions of species, typically small mammals that are locally extinct. Our own Jurassic Park, minus the risk of killer dinosaurs.

These are matters of choice. Just as we see manufacturing starting to decouple growth from energy consumption we can decouple urban growth from a degradation of natural environment services.

We already have tools to enable these choices. The Green Grid (a design led, green infrastructure strategy for Sydney) is already part of our planning lexicon. When it comes to enabling choices about our natural wonders biodiversity certification, Biobanking and the biodiversity investment opportunities map for western Sydney are all available. Giving voice to the Green Grid and these enabling tools through the six district plans for Sydney, the connection between local and longer term regional planning will accelerate the achievement of our vison, a great place to live.

Without the enjoyment of all of the natural environment services we have today, I would find the liveability of Sydney much diminished. The choices of how much, where and of what quality wait for us in our decisions about plans, policies and proposals.

Tom Grosskopf is the Director Metropolitan Branch at the Office of Environment and Heritage, NSW. The Metropolitan branch delivers advisory services to planning authorities and regulatory services to the development and infrastructure sectors across Australia's premier global city; Sydney. He also delivers sustainability and energy productivity programs to the business, household, community and government sectors across NSW.

Michaelie Crawford

What could be the value of art in Sydney's Green Grid?

Art is an integral part of the matrix of today's 'creative cities'. Governments require artwork in major developments and are themselves commissioners of artworks for the public domain. Like green networks, art's quantitative value can no doubt be calculated. It is however its qualitative value that is of greatest worth to The Green Grid.

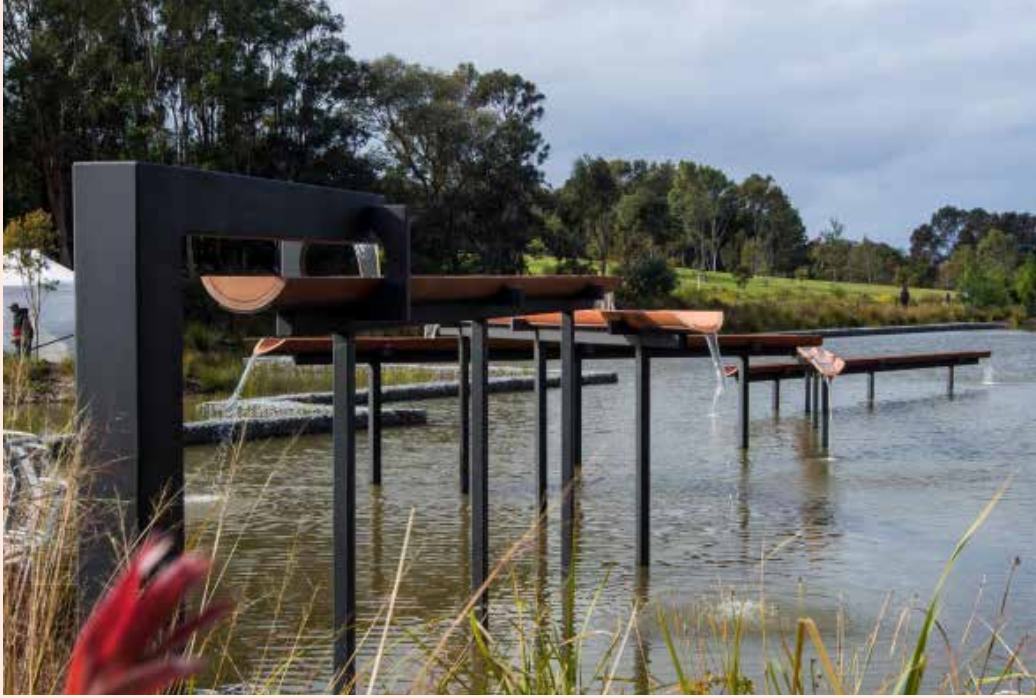
We seek meaning, identity and belonging. These are essential qualities to what makes a space a place and a city liveable. Ensuring the vitality of these qualities is particularly relevant during a period of increasing density and rapid urban transformation.

Sydney's incredible natural environment – the harbour, mountains and network of green spaces are a defining part of our communal identity, and an essential component of Sydney's liveability. In revealing, enhancing or provoking meaning within this context, art can highlight its value and focus attention on our relationship to the urban green ecosystem.

A number of our artworks are sited within The Green Grid. Each project is a response to the particular qualities of the site - its local environmental characteristics, its built form and function, its communities, its accumulated stories and its future imaginings. The artworks are condensed moments within the broader context. They distil something of its character to offer a new way of understanding place, and a deeper connection to it.

On the harbour's edge at Pyrmont Point Park, Tied to Tide translates the winds, waves and tides like a barometer of nature's energies. Sculptural form is derived from place. Floating, hinged timber arms and pivoting ladders reference local maritime structures. As the tide rises and falls, the arms inversely raise and lower. Wave wash from passing boats activates the sculpture for a brief and frenzied moment. Local wind eddies tip the tilting ladders to elucidate its local eccentricities. Tied To Tide invites an engagement in time, and over time, to experience the momentary, diurnal, and seasonal patterns of the harbour's environmental energies.

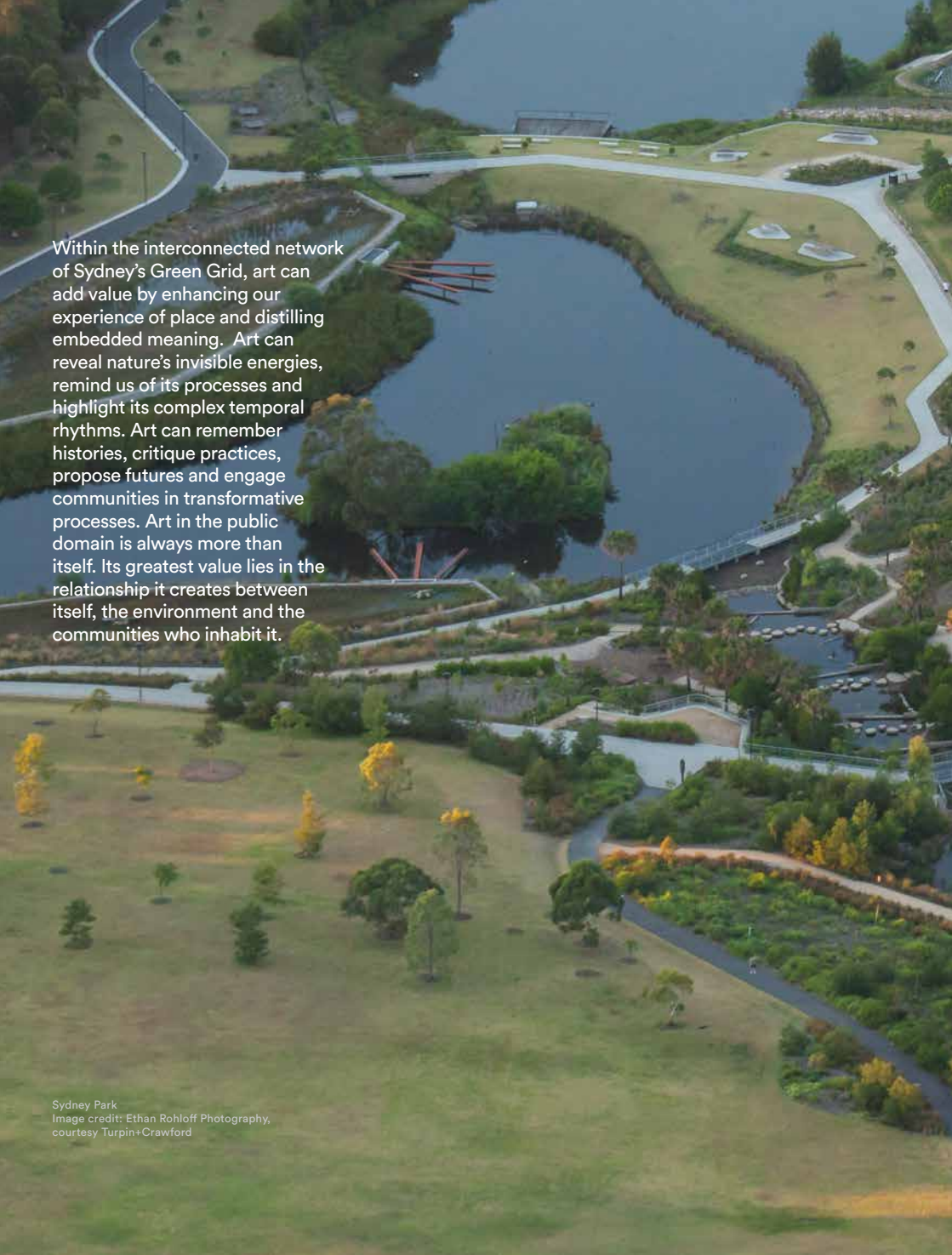
Water Falls is an integrated environmental artwork for Sydney Park Wetlands Stormwater Harvest Project. Stormwater is harvested from the surrounding catchment and treated in the wetlands' bio-filtration swales. The artwork reveals and celebrates the cleansed water as it enters and is recirculated throughout wetlands. Water falls playfully from a series of terracotta pipe installations that subtly reference the history of the site as a brick pit. The



Waterfalls, Sydney Park
Image credit: Ian Hobbs, courtesy Turpin+Crawford

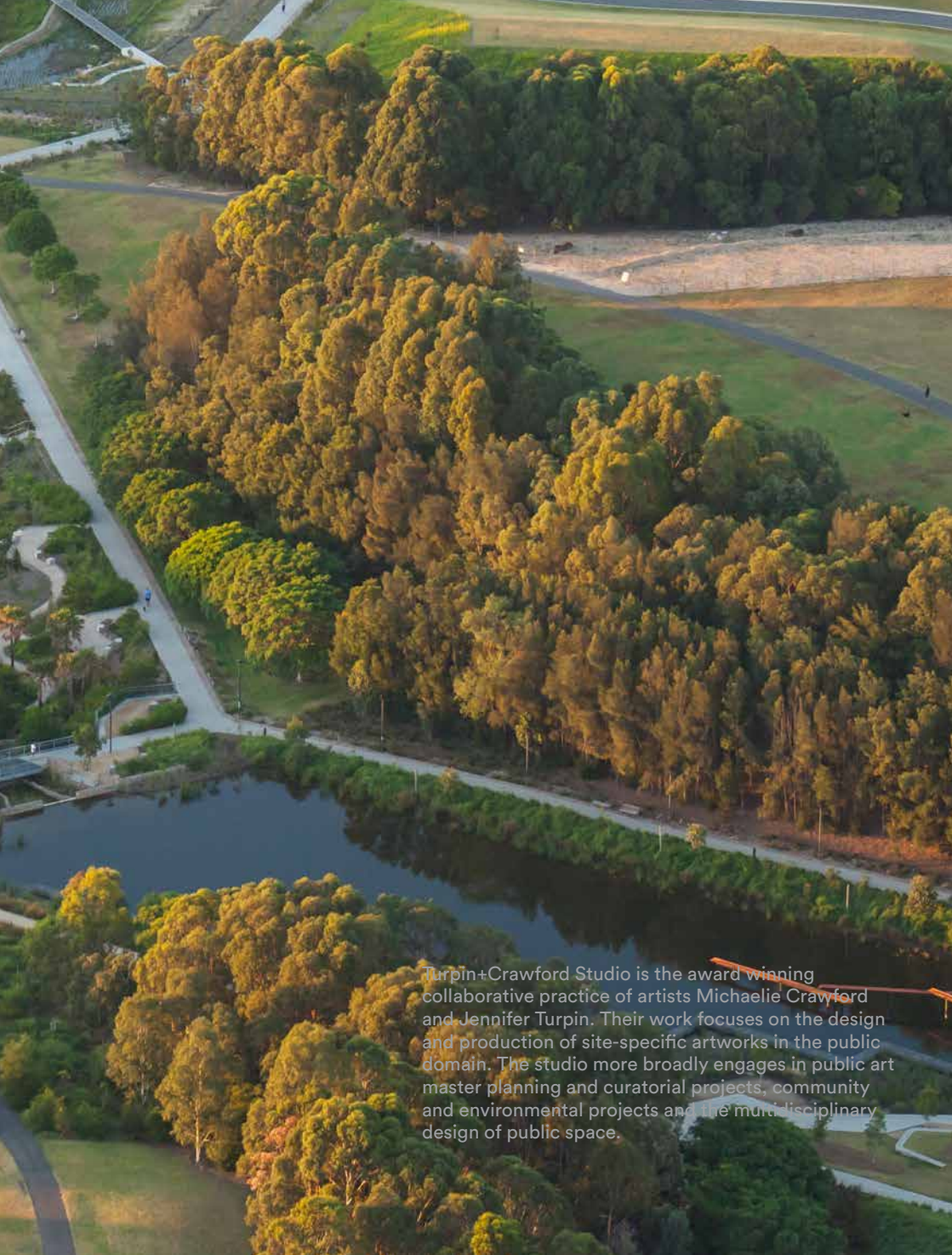
artwork draws our attention inwards to the value of place and process, whilst at the same time extending our reference outwards, to the wider environmental and social framework.

The Memory Line was a temporary artwork for Restoring the Waters, a pilot environmental rehabilitation project to restore a reach of stormwater canal to a natural creek system in Western Sydney. As a precursor to its restoration, it marked in a 3km long planted line, the meanderings of Clear Paddock Creek before it became a concrete stormwater canal in the 1970s. The Memory Line was a living installation. It grew and changed over time, keying the community into natural processes and the inherent poetics of ecological systems. It was accompanied by a suite of community artworks and addressed the need to understand what had been lost in the past so as to imagine what would be restored in the future. Considerable community fear around safety and flooding was ameliorated through the process as an understanding of the benefits of the project grew. Post-restoration, Clear Paddock Creek and its environs is a thriving green corridor highly valued by the local community.

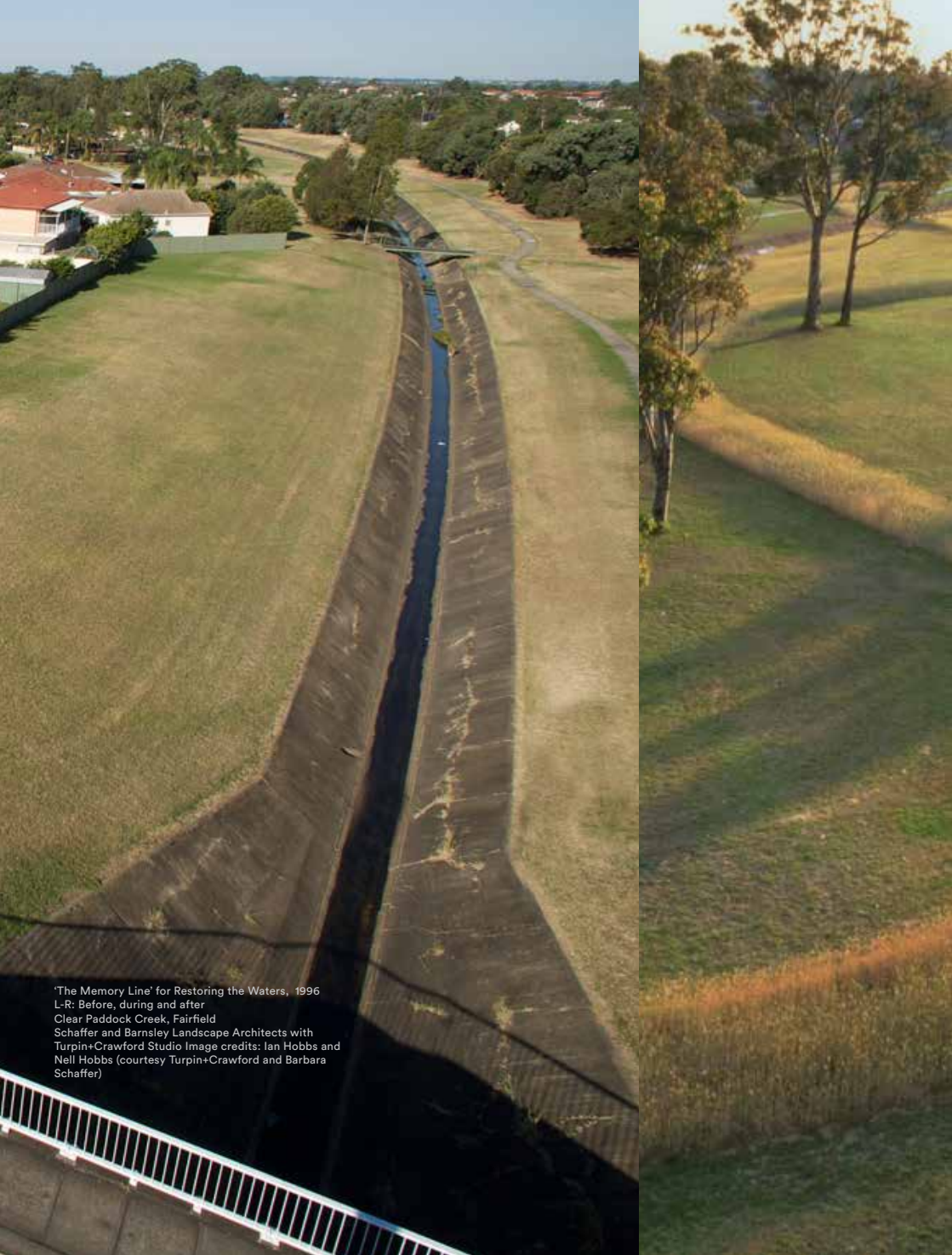


Within the interconnected network of Sydney's Green Grid, art can add value by enhancing our experience of place and distilling embedded meaning. Art can reveal nature's invisible energies, remind us of its processes and highlight its complex temporal rhythms. Art can remember histories, critique practices, propose futures and engage communities in transformative processes. Art in the public domain is always more than itself. Its greatest value lies in the relationship it creates between itself, the environment and the communities who inhabit it.

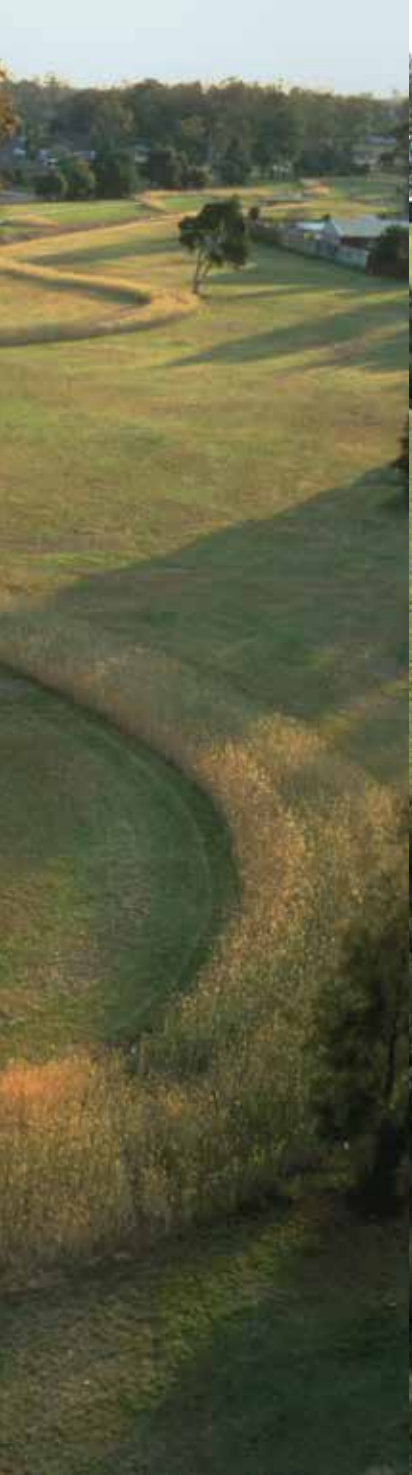
Sydney Park
Image credit: Ethan Rohloff Photography, courtesy Turpin+Crawford



Turpin+Crawford Studio is the award winning collaborative practice of artists Michaelie Crawford and Jennifer Turpin. Their work focuses on the design and production of site-specific artworks in the public domain. The studio more broadly engages in public art master planning and curatorial projects, community and environmental projects and the multidisciplinary design of public space.



'The Memory Line' for Restoring the Waters, 1996
L-R: Before, during and after
Clear Paddock Creek, Fairfield
Schaffer and Barnsley Landscape Architects with Turpin+Crawford Studio Image credits: Ian Hobbs and Nell Hobbs (courtesy Turpin+Crawford and Barbara Schaffer)



Tim Williams

What Sydney means to me

It depends on which Sydney. There are two of them. There is Compact Sydney and there is Sprawl Sydney. The former is within 10km of the CBD and the latter is beyond 20km of it.

Compact Sydney has much higher density development, a reasonable public transport system, most high value jobs, services and amenities, most of Sydney's private schools, almost all of Sydney's arts and cultural facilities, a much higher proportion of graduates, higher incomes, better health outcomes and almost all of the walkable precincts which we know internationally attract higher commercial rents and residential property prices. Compact Sydney is already that 30-minute city of which the PM has spoken, with all the benefits of that model in terms of access, liveability and productivity.

Sprawl Sydney is the city of the majority of Sydneysiders and it is the mirror image of the other Sydney. It is the Sydney of long commutes by road and poor public transport, of lower incomes and poorer health outcomes, of limited access to high value jobs, services and amenities including arts and cultural facilities, of few private schools and a public school system in a challenging environment, and of low density, drivable but not walkable suburbs that are now identified as a key factor in the prevalence of diabetes in this other city.

What Sydney means to me is a passion to make one Sydney by any means necessary. That means a massive public transport program connecting Western Sydney faster to the Sydney CBD and indeed Blacktown, Badgerys Creek, Campbelltown and Liverpool with one another and Parramatta.

That means a new town centre regeneration program to densify and renew the existing centres of Sprawl Sydney so as to attract talent and investment, and to ensure that the suburbs linked to them are retrofitted with greater walkability and shared streets. That means ensuring the benefits of the emerging Green Grid are provided as much in Sprawl Sydney as in Compact Sydney and that we see wave after wave of new investment in arts and culture targeted at both Sydneys. That means deep innovation in our public school system to retain and attract the aspirational wherever they live in Sydney so as to ensure our schools

reflect the Australian focus on mixed communities – with a diverse housing offer to match.

Though a very rich city has the resources to do all this, none of this is easy because we lack a governance system which enables us to understand, discuss and tackle our strategic challenges or to make fundamental policy choices. Hence the importance of the new Greater Sydney Commission as a first and important move towards the metropolitan coordination and voice so obviously lacking in Sydney and so vital to have if we are to build not just on the city we have but towards the city we need – that Sydney of eight million in 40 years' time, where we have cracked the problems of liveability, accessibility, productivity and equity which beset us at the moment. That's the Sydney worth fighting for – and that has most meaning for me.

Dr Tim Williams is CEO of the Committee for Sydney. Before coming to Australia in 2010, Tim was recognised as one of the UK's thought-leaders in urban regeneration and economic development for his role in developing East London as CEO of the Thames Gateway London Partnership, where he helped secure the Olympics for Stratford. He has also served as a special advisor on urban development, governance, city strategy and planning to 5 successive UK cabinet ministers, and to the Mayor of London. He has advised on CABE and wrote the London mayor's residential design guidelines in 2009. Tim chaired an inquiry for the UK Housing Corporation in 2007 into housing quality, published as the Williams Report.

Shaping our futures since 1816

In 1816, Governor Lachlan Macquarie appointed architect, stonemason and convicted forger Francis Greenway as civil architect and assistant engineer to the colony of New South Wales.

The appointment established the role of NSW Government Architect which has endured unbroken for 200 years.

The bicentenary takes place at a time of momentous change as NSW, like the rest of Australia and indeed the world, faces the challenge of creating a sustainable future, particularly in the cities and towns where most of us work, live, learn and play. What sort of places do we want our cities and towns to be? How can we achieve that?

Recent research shows that Australians want good design and understand the consequences of a poorly designed built environment. How do we honour that?

To give shape to this debate, the NSW Office of the Government Architect (NSW OGA) is launching GA200+, a program of forums, discussions and keynotes in Sydney and regional NSW for government, industry, researchers and the public about how we can collectively deliver a great built environment for the public good in the years ahead.

Strategic themes brought to light at GA200+ will be presented in discussion papers to inform an inaugural, draft Policy for Architecture and Urban Design in NSW. You can download these discussion papers and find out about other GA200+ events at:

ga200plus.org

The Committee for Sydney

GA 200 +

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