

## Extracts from the Bass Gardens Conservation Management Plan 2002

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*(Further information is available from Sue Ross- [sueross@grapevine.net.au](mailto:sueross@grapevine.net.au))*

### About Bass Gardens park

Bass Gardens park is located in the Canberra suburb of Griffith.

It is an excellent example of a neighbourhood park planted primarily with exotic evergreen and deciduous trees typical of those available in Canberra in the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The design is formal but respects the natural contours of the land. The ground cover is natural grassland typifying conditions before irrigation was introduced to urban parkland.

Bass Gardens was planted in about 1930-31 as part of the development of Blandfordia 5, Griffith/Forrest/Red Hill.

Bass Gardens was included in the heritage citation for Blandfordia 5, Griffith/Forrest/Red Hill as Variation 102 to the Territory Plan on 24 February 2000. The citation describes Bass Gardens as exemplifying the importance of communal parks in garden city planning.

The plan is based on managing the Gardens as they were designed and managed in the 1930-1940 period.

The primary resource of Bass Gardens is the trees most of which are original plantings dating from the 1930s. A secondary but highly important resource is the native grassland which occupies most of the Gardens and has persisted because there was no irrigation or cultivation and sowing of exotic grasses.

The native grass and associated groundcover plants are uncommon in Canberra parks planted to exotic trees. Although this may be due to failure to install irrigation when it became readily available it nevertheless presents an unusual situation which has persisted well for more than seventy years.

## Recommendations

It is recommended that:

1. Bass Gardens be managed in accordance with the Conservation Policy and that no developments be allowed which are inconsistent with the design as it appears in the circa 1930 plan.
2. Consideration be given to adoption of the term 'Heritage Park' as an alternative to Neighbourhood Park for Bass Gardens.

- 3.** Holly oaks, cypresses and cedars with branches low to the ground remain that way for their aesthetic effect and striking contrast to their appearance in other streets and parks where they are pruned to give line-of-sight clearance.
- 4.** Tree removals accord with recommendations in the tree survey November 2000.
- 5.** Trees planted since 1940 other than the Chinese elm replacement street trees be removed and where feasible used elsewhere.
- 6.** Seventeen Chinese elms competing with the original trees or blocking sight lines along the avenues be removed.
- 7.** Replanting be confined to replacement of existing trees as they age and become unsafe and that no species be introduced which were not present in the original planting.
- 8.** The natural temperate grassland be managed to maintain its diverse species composition of native forbs and grasses. This will involve attempts to control or at least restrict the spread of Chilean needle grass and other herbaceous weeds.
- 9.** Woody and environmental weed control continue to be carried out by the management authority.
- 10.** The existing seats be retained until further study on heritage park furniture is carried out to determine conclusively the types of furniture used in the 1930s
- 11.** Archaeological work be undertaken to identify the site of Ryan's cottage which should then be identified on the ground.
- 12.** Local residents be encouraged to assist in the management of Bass Gardens by reporting damaged or fallen trees to Canberra Urban Parks and Public Places, refraining from depositing lawn clippings and other garden waste in the Gardens and removing dog faeces when walking their dogs in the gardens.
- 13.** The Friends of Bass Gardens consider organising guided public walks in the Gardens to explain their features and history.
- 14.** The proposed three year works program be adopted.