Minutes of the Tourist Attraction Signposting Assessment Committee
Sydney Region meeting

Wednesday 12 November 2014 in the Heritage Gallery Room, Parramatta Heritage & Visitor Information Centre, 346A Church Street, Parramatta

Members
David Douglas  Regional Coordinator TASAC and Drive, Destination NSW
Phil Oliver  Guidance and Delineation Manager, Roads & Maritime Services (RMS)
Maria Zannetides  TASAC Secretariat

Also present
Justine Dowd  Manager, Cultural Heritage and Tourism, Parramatta City Council
Michelle Desailly  Interpretation and Strategy Coordinator, Parramatta City Council
James Marshall  Tourism Product Development Coordinator, Parramatta City Council
Wendy Dollin  Tourism Development and Events Co-ordinator, Blue Mountains City Council
Paul Page  Chair, Greater Sydney Tourism
Aman Bhangu  RMS Sydney

Apologies
Stacey Rossetto  City Marketing Officer, Penrith City Council

AGENDA ITEMS

1. DELEGATIONS / PRESENTATIONS & REGIONAL SIGNPOSTING ISSUES

1.1 Parramatta signposting issues

Justine and Michelle brought the following matters to the Committee’s attention:

a. Parramatta Park and Old Government House

Improvements are being made to the event spaces at Parramatta Park. Old Government House and the “Governors Domain”, which refers to that part of the park that can be seen from Old Government House, have achieved World Heritage listing. The tourist signposting for both attractions requires updating. Existing signs refer to Parramatta Regional Park, which is not the current name. Although co-located, the two attractions offer very different tourism experiences and require separate signposting.

The Committee members provided the following advice:

i. It has been considerably more than five years since TASAC reviewed the eligibility of either attraction for “white on brown” tourist signposting, which means that their prior eligibility is no longer current.
ii. In order to review and update their signposting, the operators of each destination (Parramatta Park Trust and the National Trust) need to submit signposting applications to TASAC.

iii. The appropriate category for Parramatta Park is Outdoor / Nature Based Attractions with particular regard to the Recreation Reserves section. An application in the Historic Properties and Sites category would be required for Old Government House.

iv. As the two attractions are co-located, it is recommended that applications be submitted at the same time so that the best possible signposting solution can be devised in terms of the design and placement of signage on State roads.

v. To improve tourist signposting for the attractions it will be necessary to ensure that follow up signs on local roads are reviewed and upgraded as necessary by Parramatta Council.

b. Heritage properties near Parramatta city centre

The following three significant heritage buildings located south east of the Parramatta city centre were discussed:

c. Elizabeth Farm (70 Alice Street, Rosehill) is operated by Sydney Living Museums (previously known as the Historic Houses Trust). Dating from 1793, it was built as the family home of John and Elizabeth Macarthur and has witnessed major events in the nation’s growth during colonial times, from the toppling of governors and convict rebellion to the birth of the Australian wool industry. Its website indicates that it is open for unbooked visitors on Saturday and Sunday from 10.30 am – 3.30 pm and daily during school holidays.

- Experiment Farm Cottage (9 Ruse St, Harris Park), which is managed by the National Trust, stands on the site of the first land grant in Australia, made in 1789 by Governor Phillip to the former convict James Ruse. The c1835 house was built by Surgeon John Harris, who purchased the land from Ruse in 1793. Its website indicates that it is open for unbooked visitors on Wednesday to Sunday from 10.30 am to 3.30 pm. Admittance is by guided tour only. The last tour departs at 3 pm and it is understood that tours take half an hour.

- Hambledon Cottage (63 Hassall Street on the corner of Gregory Place, Parramatta) is owned by Parramatta Council and is leased to the Parramatta and District Historical Society. It was built in the Colonial Georgian style by John Macarthur in 1824 as a second house on his Elizabeth Farm estate. Its website indicates that it is open for unbooked visitors on Thursday to Saturday from 11 am – 4 pm

Elizabeth Farm is 600 m east of Experiment Farm and 600 m south east of Hambledon Cottage. Experiment Farm is 400 m south west of Hambledon Cottage. Only Elizabeth Farm is currently signposted as a major tourist attraction.

During the discussion the following points were noted:

i. Unfortunately, the current opening hours of all three historic properties are less than required for tourist signposting (the NSW Tourist Signposting Manual requires attractions to be open for a minimum of five days per week including both Saturday and Sunday and for six hours per day).
ii. It was noted that it would be necessary to extend Elizabeth Farm’s opening hours in order for it retain its existing tourist signposting. The possibility of providing tourist signposting for a heritage precinct to encompass all three properties was discussed. However, this would be difficult to achieve given that none of the properties currently satisfy the Manual’s opening hour requirements and, while they are relatively close to each other, each property has separate access arrangements.

**Action:** Secretariat to contact Sydney Living Museums with a view to arranging a meeting to discuss the future of tourist signposting for Elizabeth Farm (and Rouse Hill House & Farm - see item 4.6 below).

c. **Other Parramatta attractions**

- **The Former Female Orphan School** is an historic property located within the University of Western Sydney’s Parramatta campus (bounded by the Parramatta River, James Ruse Drive, Victoria Road and the Carlingford railway line). Dating from the early colonial period the building’s first function was to accommodate and educate orphaned children. It subsequently became a psychiatric hospital and eventually became disused and fell into disrepair.

Since 2000, it has been progressively restored by the university and is now occupied by the university’s **Whitlam Institute**. This is a public policy institute that commemorates the life and work of former Prime Minster, The Hon. Gough Whitlam AC QC. The institute is custodian of the Whitlam Prime Ministerial Collection, including books, papers and memorabilia gifted by Mr Whitlam and others. The collection has been digitised and is available to interested parties as an e-collection. The institute also undertakes public policy activities including commissioning original research, presenting public policy forums and lectures and conducting education and outreach work, such as presenting public exhibitions on Australia’s social, cultural and political history.

- **Lake Parramatta Reserve** is a 60 hectare bush and parkland reserve located about two kilometres north of the Parramatta city centre. The lake was Parramatta’s water supply until 1909. The reserve is now a significant bushland area with many species of native flora and fauna. There are numerous remains of former usage and occupation by Aborigines and a Bushfoods Garden and Walk have been established to present this aspect of its history. The reserve is open all year round and has facilities for picnicking, barbecues, playgrounds and bushwalking tracks.

- **St John’s and St Patrick’s Cathedrals** are located in the city centre. St John’s is south of Centenary Square and St Patrick’s is on the centre’s northern edge near the intersection of Victoria Road and Marist Place.

- **The Discovery Centre** project at Centenary Square will provide visitor information services and may one day become the primary visitor information centre for Parramatta.

- Earlier this year the State government announced its intention to redevelop the 146 ha **North Parramatta heritage precinct** bounded by the Parramatta River and O’Connell Street. The site is expected to accommodate high density residential development with 6,000 new apartments in high-rise buildings up to 30-storeys high alongside existing heritage buildings such as the Francis Greenway-built former Female Factory (a prison and workhouse). The precinct also includes the old Kings School, the old Parramatta gaol,
Pirtek stadium and the Cumberland Hospital, which is currently operating as a mental health facility.

- As a result of sponsorship arrangements, **Parramatta Stadium** is now known as **Pirtek Stadium** and the possibility of signposting in the latter name was raised.

The Committee members provided the following advice:

i. To be eligible for tourist signposting operators must demonstrate that a destination:
   - Fits into one of the categories of tourist attraction included in the Tourist Signposting Manual.
   - Satisfies the Manual’s basic eligibility requirements, e.g. minimum opening hours for unbooked visitors and availability of parking, public toilets and promotional material.
   - Offers unbooked visitors a high quality tourism experience throughout its opening hours to encourage visitors to learn about the attraction and its significance. The presence of retail and / or dining opportunities and booked activities such as workshops, classes, functions or events are not relevant to TASAC’s consideration of applications.
   - Presents a tourism experience that is supported by sufficient written interpretive material (e.g. leaflets, visitor information panels, plaques, annotated displays, fact sheets, guided or self-guided tours etc.) and / or audio-visual interpretive material at the premises to assist visitors to engage with the tourism experience offered.

ii. TASAC categories that might be appropriate for the former Female Orphan School / Whitlam Institute are **Historic Properties and Sites** or **Museums**, depending on the nature of the tourism experience offered at the location. The best fit for Lake Parramatta Reserve would be the **Outdoor / Nature Based Attractions** category, specifically the section for Recreation Reserves.

iii. St John’s and St Patrick’s Cathedrals are more suited to pedestrian way finding signage rather than road based tourist signposting.

iv. Road signage for the visitor information centre at Centenary Square could be provided if the centre is accredited at level 1 or 2 and has appropriate car parking for visitors.

v. More information is needed about the nature of the tourism experiences that might become available at the North Parramatta Heritage Precinct before advice could be given about their suitability for tourist signposting.

vi. Sporting stadiums are not considered to be tourist attractions and are therefore not eligible for “white on brown” tourist signposting but they may be eligible for “white on blue” service signposting. Phil commented that existing service signposting for Parramatta Stadium along the Great Western Highway is adequate and that “Pirtek Stadium” is not an appropriate name for signage purposes.
1.2 Tourist signposting at Mt Victoria

RMS wishes to rationalise signage at the intersection of the Great Western Highway and Station Street at Mt Victoria. Phil indicated that there are 10 signs at the intersection and many are obscured by traffic lights. At the same time, Council has requested that RMS install “white on blue” service signs at the intersection for Mt Victoria village.

Both Mt Wilson and Blue Mountains Botanic Garden are signposted at the intersection. The botanic garden’s eligibility for tourist signposting was confirmed in 2012 but the status of Mt Wilson as a major tourist attraction has not been considered by TASAC for considerably more than five years and any prior eligibility it may have had for the signposting is no longer current. It was estimated that the Mt Wilson signs are more than 20 years old and it was noted that they do not comply with current sign design standards.

It was agreed that there was no basis to retain existing tourist signposting for Mt Wilson at the intersection. However, Wendy informed the meeting that it was critical for Mt Wilson to continue to be signposted from the intersection to assist emergency services vehicles, particularly during bush fires. Phil advised that RMS would be prepared to consider installing “white on green” directional signage for Mt Wilson at the location if Council wrote to RMS requesting that this occur and giving reasons.

It was also noted that because the intersection is at capacity in terms of the amount of signs that can be accommodated, RMS is unable to progress Council’s request to install service signage for Mt Victoria village without removing some of the existing signs.

1.3 Members’ report on site inspections

Site inspections in the Parramatta area were not conducted prior to the meeting. However, Maria commented that Council might care to review the adequacy of street name signage in the city centre.

2. NEW TOURIST SIGNPOSTING APPLICATIONS

2.1 Murray Valley National Park Quicks Beach, Barooga

NPWS has applied for tourist signposting for the Quick’s Beach precinct within Murray Valley National Park. The park (and a regional park of the same name) were established to conserve the natural, cultural and heritage values of the State’s River Red Gum forests. Quicks Beach, which is open daily during all hours, is one of nine visitor precincts in the park system and is about 3.5 km from Barooga. The precinct’s visitor facilities include camping (tents and caravans), picnicking, fishing, swimming and boating. A visitor information panel with park and precinct maps and details of local fauna and things to do is in place near the precinct’s entry.

In 2013 TASAC determined that two other precincts within the park were eligible for signposting - Ski Beach near Barooga in August 2013 and Moama Five Mile in December 2013. Quicks Beach is the closest camping area in the park to Ski Beach, which is very popular day use area.

Decision: Murray Valley National Park Quicks Beach is eligible for tourist signposting in the National Parks, State Conservation Areas, State Forests and Water Storage Areas category. For
signposting to be installed on State roads the local Council would need to be agreeable to the installation of follow up signs on local roads.

**Action:** Secretariat to advise the applicant as above and inform RMS South West.

### 3. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF 15 OCTOBER 2015

The minutes of TASAC’s meeting of Wednesday 15 October 2014 in Ballina were confirmed. The Committee members and Secretariat advised that they had completed all the actions attributed to them from the meeting.

### 4. MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

#### 4.1 Mudgee Wine Tourism Region information bays

The Committee was pleased to note recent advice and photographs from Andrew Kearins of Mid Western Regional Council confirming that visitor information panels relating to the Mudgee Wine Tourism Region have been installed at the Norris Lane rest area (for visitors approaching from the north west) and the Ilford rest area (for visitors approaching from the south). Both rest areas have mobile phone coverage. The information panels feature a map of the region showing its wineries as well as a list of wineries with the name, address, phone number and opening hours for each. The panels also advise visitors to contact the Mudgee visitor information centre for more details. Subsequently, RMS Western has designed and ordered Welcome signs to be placed in the road reserve in advance of the two rest areas.

Work is also proceeding towards the installation of a third visitor information panel for motorists approaching the wine region from the north east. It is expected that this will be located at a new hard stand area that will be created following road works at the intersection of Ulan and Wollar Roads. Andrew has advised that construction works at the intersection have commenced and they will have the effect of moving it closer to Mudgee. The old sealed road should be able to be kept as a rest area and this could be available by April 2015. After the rest area has been established and populated with an information panel to match the two that have recently been installed, RMS will make arrangements with Council for a Welcome sign to be installed in advance of the location at the applicant’s cost.

#### 4.2 Luka Chocolates, additional information

The operator of Luka Chocolates at the Wyong Milk Factory submitted the following additional information in support of her application for signage with the legend “Chocolate Factory”, which was considered earlier in the year:

- An 8 minute film about chocolate production is screened at the premises on demand. While chocolate making can be observed through a viewing window at the factory during weekdays, chocolates are not made on weekends and the film enables all visitors to learn about the production process irrespective of when they arrive. The film covers the key steps in chocolate making including tempering, moulding, preparation of various fillings, sealing and decorating chocolate shells and making handcrafted blocks of chocolate.
• The factory has increased its opening hours since its application was submitted. It is now open daily from 10 am to 4 pm. Art work for a new brochure that shows the increased hours has been provided along with a photo of the current hours displayed on its front door.

• Static displays at the factory have been improved and evidence was provided to demonstrate the range of material now available for visitors to peruse. They include posters on the Art of Chocolate Making, a display of more than 30 antique chocolate moulds mounted on shelves above the viewing window into the production area and information about the global origins of chocolate.

• An image of the chocolate “tasting zone” at the premises where milk and dark couverture may be sampled.

The above information satisfactorily responds to the matters which TASAC raised in its initial assessment of the application. Central Coast Tourism is preparing a site inspection report which will allow the application to be finalised.

Decision: The Chocolate Factory is eligible for tourist signposting in the Primary and Secondary Industry category subject to the receipt of a satisfactory site inspection report.

Action: Secretariat to advise the applicant as above and finalise the application and inform RMS Hunter if appropriate after receipt of an inspection report.

4.3 Oxley Wild Rivers National Park, Wollomombi Gorge

TASAC determined that Oxley Wild Rivers National Park Wollomombi Gorge was eligible for tourist signposting in September 2013 but existing dilapidated signs have yet to be replaced. Patricia Wilkinson of NPWS has advised that funds will be applied for in the next round of capital bids so that signage replacement can occur in 2015/16.

Two other precincts within the Oxley Wild Rivers National Park (Dangars Falls and Gara Gorge) were also found to be eligible at the same time as Wollomombi Gorge and replacement signs for those precincts also need to be progressed. While all three precincts are within the same National Park, they are accessed from different entry points along Waterfall Way between Armidale and Dorrigo.

Action: Secretariat to request that NPWS progress the replacement of signs for Dangars Falls and Gara Gorge in the same timeframe as Wollomombi Gorge.

4.4 Junee signposting issues

It was noted that Junee Council has installed new “white on green” directional signposting for the Roundhouse Railway Museum, including some signs on a State road, without the concurrence of RMS. Council had previously removed the museum’s dilapidated “white on brown” tourist signposting following the museum’s decision not to apply to TASAC to upgrade the signage because its opening hours do not meet the Tourist Signposting Manual’s requirements. Phil is pursuing with South West region the removal of the unauthorised signs on the State Road.

Action: Secretariat to provide Phil with a summary of the history of recent signposting matters in Junee.
4.5 Robyn Rowe Chocolates, additional information

The operators of Robyn Rowe Chocolates at Murrumbateman submitted the following additional information in support of their application for signage, which was considered last July:

- A film of 8.5 minutes duration with subtitles is shown on a continuous loop on a wall mounted screen. While chocolate making can often be observed through a viewing window at the premises, chocolates are not made throughout the opening hours and the film enables all visitors to learn about the production process irrespective of when they arrive. The film shows how vanilla soft centre, Muscat mousse, honey log and banana flambée chocolates and solid chocolate frogs are made with explanations of various techniques, including tempering, preparation of fillings, moulding chocolate shells, using extruded fillings and decorating chocolates. A second wall mounted screen shows another film about growing cocoa and making couverture chocolate.

- A photo of a new opening hours sign at the gate to the property shows that the business is now known as “Robyn Rowe Chocolates” and its opening hours are Thursday to Monday from 10 am to 5 pm. The previous name of “Chocolat D’Or” is no longer used.

- A new brochure has been created with the current business name, stating the opening hours and informing potential visitors about the opportunity to learn about how chocolates are made at the site rather than focusing on the business’s retail aspects as was the case with the previous brochure.

- Static displays at the premises have been improved and evidence was provided to demonstrate the range of material now available for visitors to peruse. They include 14 captioned images about steps in chocolate making that are mounted around the viewing window into the production area, a 21 page display folder titled “The Amazing Story of Chocolate” with text and illustrations about the history of chocolate, Equatorial cocoa producing areas and cocoa production processes.

- An image of a new display cabinet to showcase the different types of chocolates produced.

The above information satisfactorily responds to the matters that TASAC raised in its initial assessment of the application.

*Note:* A site inspection report in support of the application was received from Sean Haylan, Tourism Manager at Yass Valley Council on 14 November 2014.

**Decision:** Robyn Rowe Chocolates is eligible for tourist signposting in the Primary and Secondary Industry category.

**Action:** Secretariat to advise the applicant as above and inform RMS South West.

4.6 Rouse Hill House & Farm

Keri Whitely, Manager Cultural Services at Hawkesbury City Council, informed Maria that Rouse Hill House & Farm has reduced its opening hours. The historic property is managed by Sydney Living Museums. Its website indicates that it is open Saturday and Sunday from 10.30 am - 3.30 pm and daily during public school holidays, which is less than required for tourist signposting.
eligibility. In August 2007 when TASAC determined that the property was eligible for tourist signposting, its opening hours were Wednesday to Sunday from 9.30 am to 3.30 pm. The same hours were in place in January 2010 when TASAC agreed to a request from the operator to relocate some of its existing tourist signs because of physical changes to the point of entry for visitors.

Action: Secretariat to contact Sydney Living Museums with a view to arranging a meeting to discuss the future of tourist signposting for Rouse Hill House & Farm (and Elizabeth Farm - see item 1.1 above).

5. INQUIRIES RECEIVED SINCE LAST MEETING

The following inquiries received in the period since the last meeting were noted:

5.1 Coffs Coast Adventure Centre, Bonville
5.2 The Farm Byron Bay
5.3 Rouse Hill House & Farm

6. POLICY ISSUES

6.1 Revised brochure for Tourist Drive 7 (Yass-Wee Jasper-Tumut)

In late October, Shelley Jones, Event Tourism and Marketing Officer at Tumut Shire Council submitted a revised draft brochure for Tourist Drive 7 (Yass-Wee Jasper-Tumut). It includes a map and describes landmarks along the route, including commentary regarding road conditions. Sean Haylan of Yass Valley Council, which shares the drive with Tumut Shire, has indicated his support for the document.

RMS South West (Peter Barelli) has reviewed the draft brochure and has no objections. However, Peter commented that it would be desirable for the drive to be more significantly highlighted on the map and for the two references to former Tourist Drive 6 to be removed.

In relation to the first comment, Peter noted that despite the document’s focus on Tourist Drive 7, it is not all that outstanding on the map in comparison with the Hume and Barton Highways. The drive is represented by a narrow green line that does not stand out given the map’s use of light and dark green shading to depict State Forests and National Parks. In relation to Peter’s latter comment, Council appears to have used a map base that still shows former Tourist Drive 6, even though support for it as a numbered tourist drive was withdrawn in December 2012. In this respect, it was also noted that RMS has been experiencing difficulties in persuading map base providers to remove former tourist drives from their maps.

Action: Secretariat to provide the above comments to Tumut Council and explore what improvements to the brochure’s map might be possible.
7. OTHER BUSINESS

7.1 TASAC Meeting Schedule

Please refer to Attachment 1 for the schedule of meetings for the next six months. The next Sydney Region meeting will be held on 20 May 2015 at a location to be determined in the Macarthur area.

7.2 Blue Mountains signposting matters

The following updates provided by Wendy on current signposting matters in the Blue Mountains were noted:

- Construction of the Carrington Brewery in Katoomba is on hold pending advice from the NSW Office of Environment and Heritage to Council to enable it to complete its consideration of the brewery’s development application.

- Construction is proceeding on a new tea pot museum at Bygone Beautys at Leura.

8. NEXT MEETING

Wednesday 10 December 2014 at Destination NSW Sydney’s office.

The meeting concluded at 12.30 pm
## Attachment 1 – TASAC Meeting Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2014</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N / A</td>
<td>Sydney</td>
<td>10 December 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2015</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N / A</td>
<td>Parramatta</td>
<td>21 January 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western</td>
<td>Forbes</td>
<td>18 February 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern</td>
<td>Moss Vale</td>
<td>18 March 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern</td>
<td>Port Macquarie</td>
<td>22 April 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sydney</td>
<td>Camden or Campbelltown (TBA)</td>
<td>20 May 2015</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>