

- **EXCLUSIVE**
- **NATIONAL**
- **NSW**
- **HERITAGE**

'Fine balance': NSW government moves to protect park with heritage listing



By [Andrew Taylor](#)

June 11, 2020 — 5.46pm

- [Share on Facebook](#)
- [Share on Twitter](#)
- [Send via Email](#)

[Leave a comment](#)

A skateboard complex may still be built at Rushcutters Bay Park despite the NSW government moving to heritage list the spot in Sydney's east.

Gabrielle Upton, Liberal member for Vacluse, said the inclusion of the park and neighbouring Yarranabbe Park on the NSW State Heritage Register would offer additional protections for green open space.



Gabrielle Upton, Liberal member for Vacluse, pictured with Charlotte Feldman, president of the Darling Point Society, at Rushcutters Bay Park. *CREDIT: RHETT WYMAN*

"For over 150 years this has been a place of respite from city life and an opportunity to enjoy sweeping views of our magnificent harbour," she said.

"I know that the local community wanted to have the parks' beauty and history acknowledged and with both parks now state heritage listed they will be protected for future generations to come."

Advertisement

However, residents remain wary of plans to build a skate park on a portion of Rushcutters Bay Park.

Charlotte Feldman, the president of the Darling Point Society, said the heritage listing made it “a little bit less likely” that the skateboard facility would be built.

“However, the powers-that-be are very determined and have ignored our pleas,” she said. “We feel that council is indifferent to the views of the community which we hope we represent.”

Ms Feldman said she was concerned a skateboard park would generate noise as well as unsociable behaviour.

“It’s not a peaceful sport and we feel that it should be somewhere more away from people,” she said.

RELATED ARTICLE



CITY LIFE

Half-pipe dreams: Sydney finally offers skateboarders room to move

Graham Quint, the director of conservation at the NSW branch of the National Trust, said the parks were an important site of interactions and conflict in the early colonial period.

The parks also have a strong association with the navy and sporting events such as the Sydney to Hobart yacht race and international boxing events hosted at the adjacent Sydney Stadium from 1908.

Mr Quint said the heritage listing would require consideration of the impact of high-rise developments or the skate venue on the parks’ heritage values.

The proposal to build skate facilities next to a canal that empties into Sydney Harbour has long been contentious, with former prime minister Malcolm Turnbull [voicing his opposition in 2017](#).

RELATED ARTICLE



[PLANNING](#)

[Sydney eyes off stormwater system in search for green space](#)

Ms Upton also expressed concern at the time that skating would create extra noise for residents living closeby.

“What we have there is really special,” she said. “It’s rare in city areas. It’s a large expanse of open green space for passive recreation. I think it’s something you want to be really jealous of.”

Plans to build the skateboard facility were put on hold last year after an interim heritage order was slapped on the park following local protests. [Woollahra councillor Anthony Marano](#) said at the time opponents of the skate park were elderly, retired and “have nothing else to do with their time”.

Cr Marano said a skate park would not threaten the beauty or heritage of the park and “we hope that despite some opposing voices, we will be able to progress our idea”.

Fellow councillor Harriet Price said the council would now have to seek approval under heritage laws to build the skate park.

“Respecting and protecting heritage often involves a fine balance,” she said. “It does not mean there can be no change or development.”

Get our Morning & Evening Edition newsletters

The most important news, analysis and insights delivered to your inbox at the start and end of each day. Sign up to [The Sydney Morning Herald's newsletter here](#), to [The Age's newsletter here](#) and [Brisbane Times' here](#).

- [Share on Facebook](#)
- [Share on Twitter](#)
- [Send via Email](#)

[License this article](#)

- [HERITAGE](#)
- [CITY LIFE](#)
- [LOCAL COUNCIL](#)



[Andrew Taylor](#)

- [Twitter](#)
- [Email](#)

Andrew Taylor is a Senior Reporter for The Sydney Morning Herald.