



Munn's Slipway, Barangaroo Reserve

Client Barangaroo Delivery Authority
Services Archaeological Conservation, Outdoor Heritage Conservation

Overview

The opening of Barangaroo Reserve has allowed Sydneysiders to walk around a part of the Sydney harbour foreshore that had been closed off to the public for more than 100 years. The six-hectare parkland has transformed one of Sydney's oldest industrial sites, stretching back two centuries. The topography of the park was inspired by the shape of the 1836 shoreline, which was cut away over time to make way for wharves and docking activities, and the original headland. The reserve has been designed to complement the other headland parks of the harbour (such as Mrs Macquarie's Chair and Goat Island) and aims to let visitors get up close to the water of the harbour.

Archaeological excavations of the site at the beginning of the park development works found the remains of a slipway from Munn's 1820s boatyard on the site. Comprising an area of flat sandstone units forming the ramp of the slipway, with semi-dressed stones along either edge, a decayed timber rail was also found running down the centre of the slipway. Unsurprisingly, given the design of the new park to reflect the 1836 shoreline, Munn's Slipway was located beneath the proposed new sandstone shoreline on the northern shore of Nawi Cove.

Condition

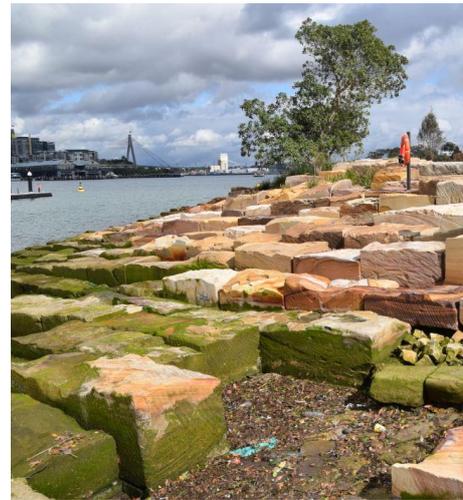
ICS was commissioned to undertake a condition assessment of the archaeological remains of Munn's Slipway, and to advise on options for conservation of the remains. The outcome of this assessment identified that whilst the remains would be best preserved by reburial, exposure of some or all of the remains would be a viable conservation outcome, particularly given the potential for interpretation, and the way the remains confirmed the accuracy of the location for the newly constructed shoreline.

Construction

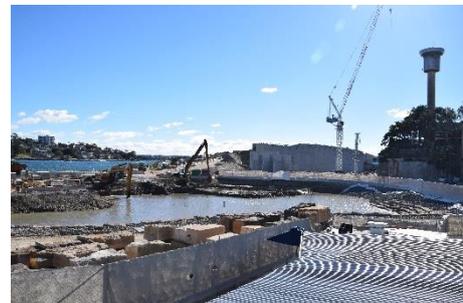
Initially, the remains of Munn's Slipway were reburied, to protect them during bulk earthworks required to excavate Nawi Cove and construct the headland. During this phase of the project, ICS was involved in a design exercise to determine how best to conserve the remains. Multiple iterations of the complex geometry for the shoreline stonework ultimately identified that the optimum solution



After excavation and treatment



After excavation and treatment



During excavation



After excavation and treatment

required omitting two portions of the new sandstone shoreline in a 'cutout', thus revealing the slipway remains. ICS provided detailed documentation and design for the conservation of the sandstone blocks forming the remains of Munn's Slipway, including selection and approval of materials for bedding and jointing of the small number of blocks which required reinstatement after construction of the new shoreline stonework.

ICS was present on site during the excavation of the surrounds to Munn's Slipway, including installation of bored piles and a reinforced concrete ring beam to contain the remains and support the surrounding shoreline stonework. Watching the skill of the excavator operators working with their buckets beneath the surface of the muddy water highlighted the commitment of the entire project team to care and conserve this valuable evidence of past activities on the site.

Treatment

- Condition assessment immediately following archaeological excavation
- Options for conservation of in situ remains
- Detailed design for exposure of in situ remains
- Documentation of works, including schedule of works and construction methodology
- On-site supervision during excavation and construction of surrounding shoreline stonework
- Resolution of technical issues during conservation works to remains
- Recommendations for long term monitoring, maintenance and management

Project Team

- Builder; Boulderstone/Lend Lease
- Landscape Architect; Johnson Pilton Walker
- Archaeologist; Austral Archaeology
- Heritage Consultant; Judith Rintoul



During excavation



During excavation



During excavation



After excavation and treatment