

6.0 CONSERVATION & MANAGEMENT POLICIES

Approach & Objectives

Following consideration of the cultural significance of the park, and defining the issues and threats to this significance, policies and objectives should be devised to guide the future conservation and development of the historic place. All conservation works considered within this plan are guided by the principle of minimum intervention as set out in the Burra Charter, under the general aim of doing - *as little as possible, but as much as is necessary*. The conservation and management objectives for Merrion Square Park are as follows:

Protection of Built Heritage

Ensure the protection of the built heritage through its repair and the preservation and improvement of its settings.

Repair & Maintenance

Provide regular on-going maintenance as the most effective way to preserve historic places. Repairs and landscape management are to be carried using methodologies that conform to the guiding principles as set out in the ICOMOS charters, using appropriate details, quality materials, and historically accurate planting schemes. Repair works are to



Fig. 80 View along former path blocked from use by Depot.



Fig. 81 View of stone edging to former fountain.

be prioritised in terms of urgency, and informed by regular inspection and expert advice.

Intervention

Where interventions are found to be necessary to provide improved access, visibility, or to repair or stabilise a structure, these are to be designed to the highest standards of best conservation practice and should not detract from the interpretation of the architectural heritage.

Reversibility

All interventions should follow the principle of the reversibility, so that a structure can be returned to its former state where possible.

Expert Advice & Skills

Ensure that all building conservation works are carried out under the direction of suitably qualified professionals (architects and structural engineers) and undertaken only by suitably skilled and experienced tradesmen.

Continued Liaison

Liaise with the different stakeholders (Dublin City Council, local residents, visitors, Merrion Square Innovation Network and others) in relation to proposed development works within and adjacent to the park to share knowledge and ensure that best practice is adhered to in relation to any future proposals for improvements or adjacent developments.

Settings & Key Views

Protect and enhance the settings of the square, park and associated structures including key views through planning policy and landscape management plans.

Inspections

Set in place procedures for on-going monitoring of the condition of the park, its associated structures and the planting to ensure their long-term preservation.

Monitoring

Review this Plan at agreed intervals (to coincide with Development Plans or Local Area Plans) to benchmark progress in implementation, reassess priorities, assimilate new information or changes in legislation or methodologies.



Fig. 82 View of *Mother & Child* by Patrick Roe.

Further Research & Investigation

Multi-disciplinary research into the built and landscape heritage of the square and its wider context should be supported.

Depth in Time

Ensure that the conservation and preservation of the park along with the historic structures lining the square, respects all the layers that contribute to the cultural significance of the place.

Authenticity

Ensure that the importance of continuity and change in the proper understanding of the built and landscape heritage is communicated to the general public. This is particularly important for the park and associated



Fig. 83 View of flower beds just inside the east entrance.

structures that have become overgrown and difficult to interpret.

Ownership

Consider rights of stakeholders in relation to the access, conservation and presentation of the built and natural heritage.

Access for All

Where the integrity and character of the park can be maintained, ensure that access is improved for the benefit of people with disabilities.

Public Safety

Prioritize public safety in relation to the condition and use of the park, especially due to its city centre location.

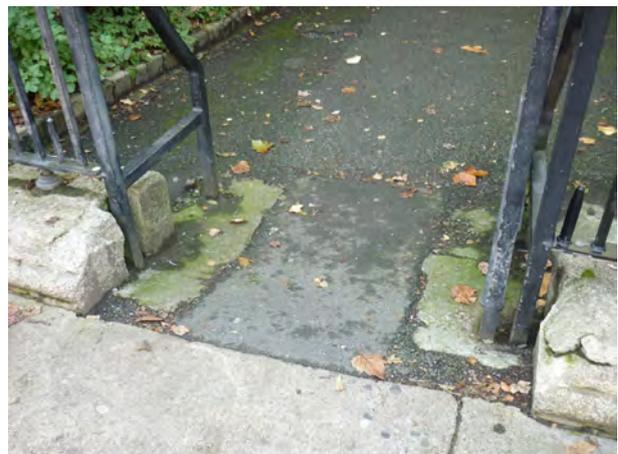


Fig. 84 View of ramped threshold to gate to Merrion Square North.

Interpretative Infrastructure

Provide interpretive facilities and signage within the park so that the general public can meaningfully interpret the cultural and natural heritage and enjoy the amenities. Signage should be well-designed and coordinated and located so as not to detract from their setting.

Visitor's Facilities

In order to allow visitors to extend the length of their visits to the park so that they can fully enjoy the cultural heritage, the provision of refreshment facilities – shelters, café and toilets should be considered.

Settings for Events

The use of the park and square as a setting for cultural events should be promoted and enhanced, as long as it does not cause damage to the heritage.



Fig. 85 Children taking part in Archaeofest in August 2013.

Formal & Informal Learning

Ensure that the presentation of the cultural heritage of the square and park is aimed at as broad an audience as possible.

On-Going Interpretation

Ensure that as knowledge and understanding of the park improves through further research that interpretation media are updated accordingly.



Fig. 86 View of National Defence Force Memorial.

Sustainability

Promote and support development of amenities and marketable products that can raise revenue that can be allocated for the conservation and improved presentation of the square.

Branding

Build on the brand development of the square initiated by the Merrion Square Innovation Network for the promotion of the park as a tourism asset.

Conservation Area

Include the park in future Architectural Conservation Area designation and other local authority development plan objectives to reinforce understanding of the park by the general public and to aid forward planning for service providers and building and planning professionals.

Outreach & Participation

Organize and support events that promote understanding of the architectural, landscape and natural heritage and that will help to communicate its cultural significance.

School Outreach

Encourage schools to take advantage of the potential of the park as a teaching resource, a place to explore the city's cultural heritage or enjoy nature in an urban setting.