



Chinese
Heritage
Association of
Australia Inc.

澳洲華人 heritage 協會

Media Release

Resumption of Heritage-listed Market Gardens alarms community

Chinese community leaders were shocked to learn about a plan to resume 60% of the heritage-listed Chinese Market Gardens at La Perouse, which was presented by representatives from the adjacent Eastern Suburbs Memorial Park Botany Cemetery, at a Chinese Community Consultations meeting on 26 July 2010, organised by the Community Relations Commission and the Land and Property Management Authority.

The cemetery and the market gardens are on Crown land. Two years ago, in response to representations to acquire this land by the Botany Cemetery and Eastern Suburbs Crematorium Trusts, the Department of Lands, prepared a *Draft Assessment of Crown Land - Chinese Market Gardens, Phillip Bay* and called for submissions. Many submissions (including ones from the National Trust and Randwick Council) were lodged in July 2008 for the retention of these seven (7) hectares to remain as heritage-listed Chinese market gardens.

The Draft Assessment identified three (3) suitable uses for this land:

- Environmental Protection
- Agriculture
- Nature Conservation

It stated that *the site currently has a very high capability for agriculture and is functioning very successfully in this purpose.* (p35)

It further states in relation to the cemetery proposal - *The site in its current state would most likely require significant engineering works to overcome the current constraints such as a high water table and flooding issues. Given the current environmental constraints and current state of the subject land, the site is considered not suitable for the establishment of a cemetery. As per the Australasian Cemeteries and Crematoria Association (2004) "Guidelines for the establishment of a Cemetery" if the water table is too high burials may not be possible.* (p36)

Daphne Lowe Kelley, president of the Chinese Heritage Association of Australia says, "The community recognises that with a growing population, there is increased demand for burial space but urges the State government not to acquiesce to this

demand to turn unsuitable land into burial plots. I am sure that no one wants to have their dearly departed spending their afterlife in a former swamp.”

Contact: Daphne Lowe Kelley 0417 655 233 lowekelley@bigpond.com

28 July 2010