

Tarquin Gardens Master Plan Update – February | 2019



“All gardening is landscape painting”

William Kent, 18th century landscape gardener

what is a landscape master plan?



- a framework for action
- usually a design concept
- based on agreed principles
- often with a timeframe
- adaptable to changing context
- includes priorities and staging
- identifies how it will be implemented
- includes a funding strategy

“If you fail to plan, you are planning to fail!”

Benjamin Franklin

what does a landscape master plan typically include?



- address, access and circulation
- planting design concepts
- signage and wayfinding
- lighting and irrigation
- maintenance strategy

a brief history of tarquin gardens



An example of a 1970s native plant garden

- mid-1970s garden design
- early native plant landscape era
- use of original native species
- most original plants long gone

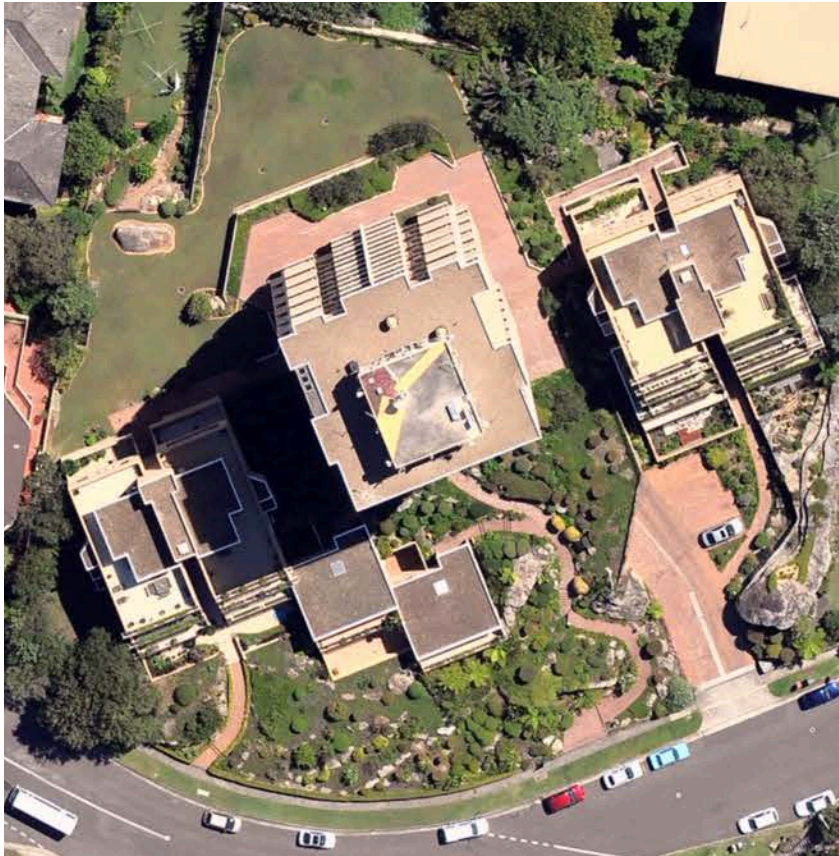


Tarquin gardens in 2012

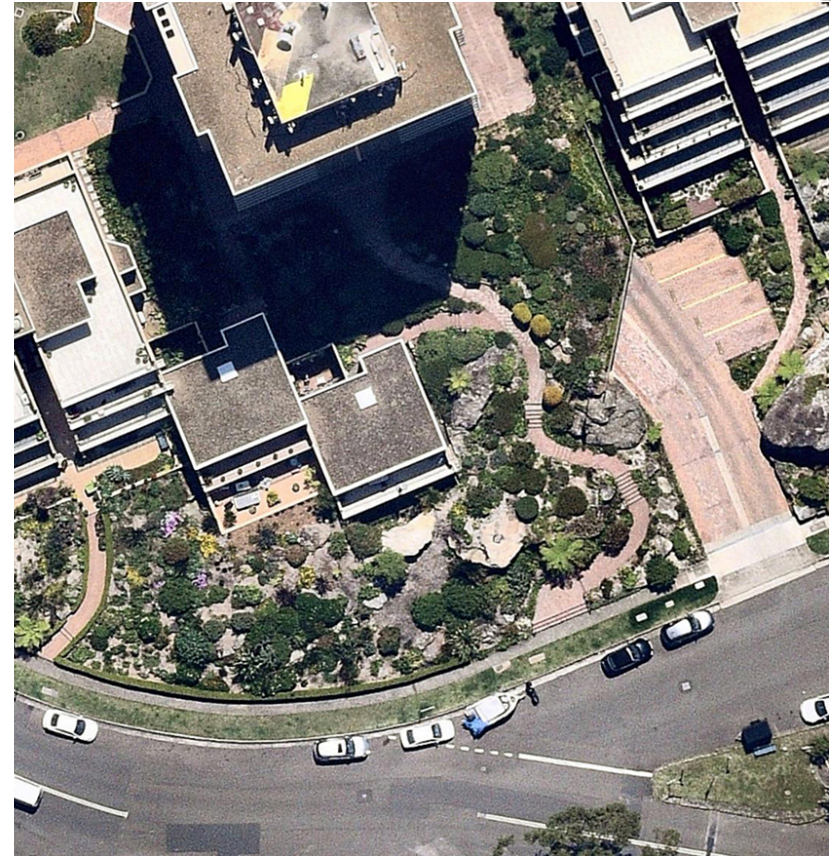


Tarquin gardens in 2012 – note the number of pruned plants and the large gaps in planting – top right

a brief history



- 2010**
- very green, but lots of weeds
 - numerous pruned 'flat tops' and 'round tops'
 - limited plant varieties
 - sandstone outcrops mostly obscured
 - extensive areas of uncontrolled yellow Gazanias



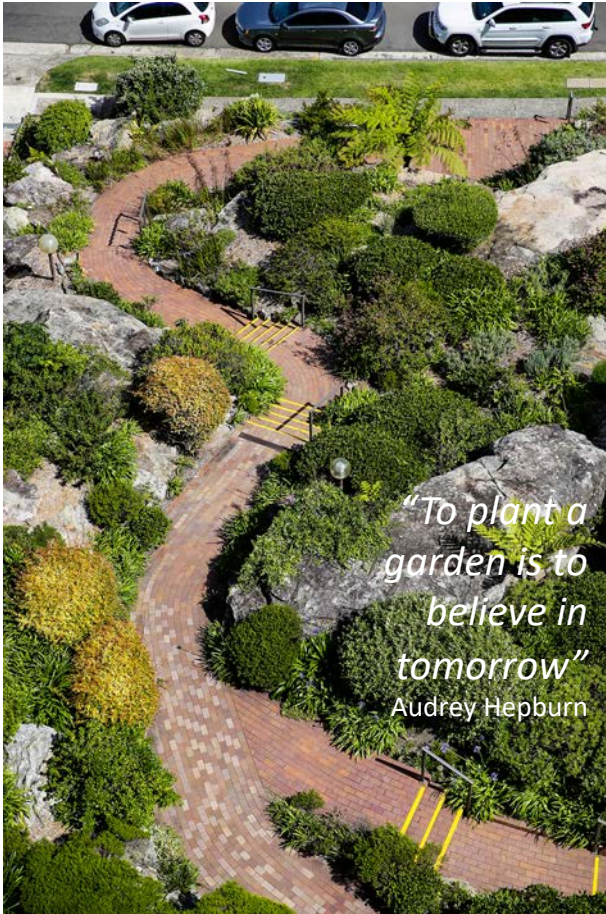
- 2018**
- minimal weeds
 - fewer 'flat tops' and 'round tops'
 - more variety of plants
 - more visible sandstone outcrops
 - more mulched areas suppressing weeds

achievements and lessons learnt



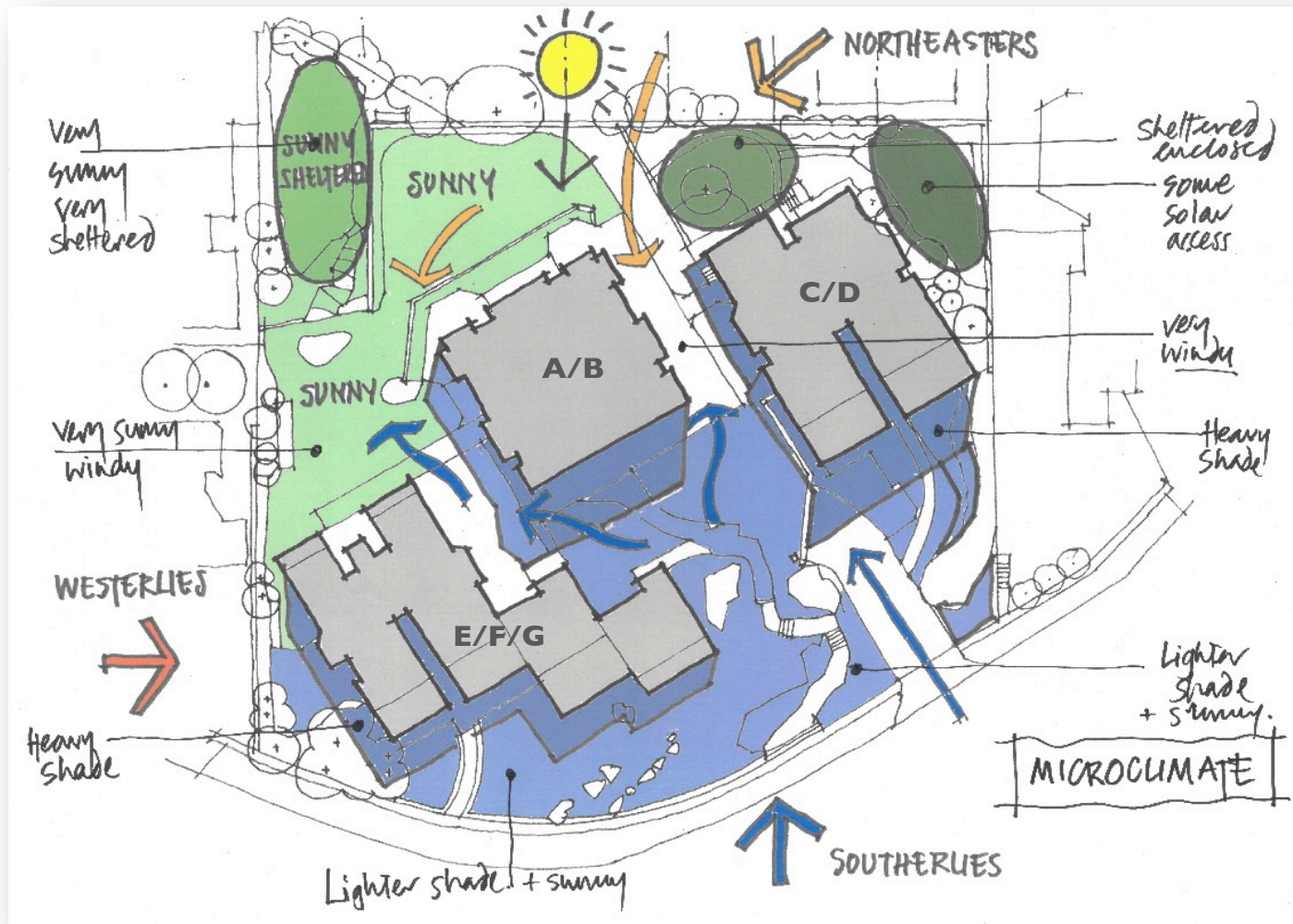
- master plan first prepared in 2011 (adopted 2012 and re-endorsed in 2014/2015)
- soils tested by experts and now being remediated
- large woody tree shrubs removed (“flat tops”)
- sandstone outcrops progressively revealed
- mulch (sourced by Chris) to suppress weeds and retain soil
- plants propagated (by Sandy) and used in the gardens
- three pilot areas planted in 2015 and lessons learnt
- garden maintenance refocused (eg reduced pruning)
- ongoing working bees, especially for mulching
- new solar powered garden lights tested

master plan principles



- **beautiful**: appealing, calming and inspiring
- **inclusive**: relevant to all residents in Tarquin
- **social**: a place to meet others and relax
- **valuable**: adds value to all properties
- **sustainable**: environmentally and financially
- **enduring**: based on a long term agreed plan
- **contemporary**: reflects best practice
- **maintainable**: not resource heavy (labour and \$s)
- **adapative**: progressively refined from lessons learnt
- **cherished**: 'owned' by its community

master plan strategy - microclimate



"The weather is like the government, always in the wrong."

- Jerome K. Jerome

master plan strategy - microclimate



- windy and exposed gardens especially in nor'easters and southerlies and particularly at base A/B tower
- heavy shade to south of buildings, generally more shady on streetfront
- very sunny to north of buildings, but some areas very windy, some sheltered
- a rainforest type protected area behind C/D block
- lots of different microclimates resulting in niches that suit different plant types

master plan strategy – planting character precincts



planting character precincts

1. building entry area (ornamental/exotic)
2. transition areas (mixed native/semi-exotics)
3. street entry (landmark/accent natives)
4. framework planting (native)
5. rainforest planting (mixed natives and semi-exotics)
6. vegetable garden (all sorts!)
7. lawns
8. townhouse planting (owners' choice)

native or exotic?both are important



Exotics are increasingly including succulents and grasses that are quite drought tolerant and don't need much irrigation



Recently planted natives at Tarquin that are thriving without irrigation

Exotics/Ornamentals

- Not found in nature in Australia
- Sometimes having spectacular flowering
- Need to avoid exotics that are listed noxious weeds
- May increasingly include succulents
- Some have higher water and maintenance needs

Natives

- Generally to be found in nature on the Australian continent
- Usually propagated cultivars to improve their garden performance
- Often very resilient to high heat and drought
- Coastal natives tolerant of salt and higher humidity
- Many thriving with limited maintenance

master plan strategy – typical planting characters



master plan strategy – priorities for implementation



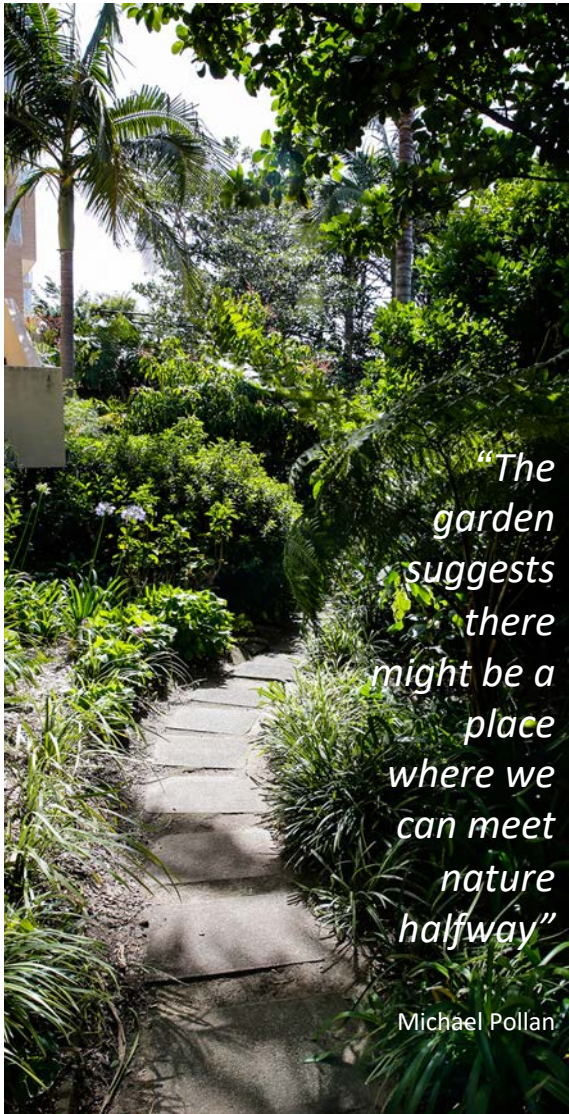
Priority area 1 – Ongoing planting of native framework

Priority area 1/2 – Entry Area - Priority 1 is design, Priority 2 is construction and planting

Priority area 3 – A/B tower building boundary planting beds

Priority area 4 – Northern planting areas

master plan strategy – priority area details



Priority 1 – streetfront framework planting (natives)

- continue planting but for larger areas at a time now weeds are under control and species tested

Priority 1/2 – building entry area (exotics)

- priority 1 is design of raised planting beds, paths and planting to be undertaken by Crosbie’s company CLOUSTON Associates (see sketch ideas on Meeting Room wall). Design commences as soon as currently commissioned survey is completed
- priority 2 is construction, proposed to be undertaken by an approved landscape contractor (CLOUSTON to supervise)

Priority 3 – transition areas

- planting of mixed natives and exotics, including grasses and succulent where appropriate

Priority 4 – southwest, north and northeast boundaries

- progressive inter-planting and replacement plantings of natives and exotics

Parallel Activities – lighting, signage and irrigation upgrades

frequently asked questions



An example of colourful all Australian native planting



the Grevillea recently planted on Tarquin's western boundary has been flowering for at least four months

Q: aren't native plants dull in colour ?

A: *many natives are less vivid than some exotics, but often have longer flowering seasons and do not usually require dead-heading after flowering.*

Q: why not mix native and exotic plants?

A: *many natives and exotics have different soil, water and nutrient requirements, so often don't do well together* with one thriving at the expense of the other (*some semi-exotics eg NZ flax have similar needs).*

Q: do we need permanent irrigation?

A: *yes, but probably only in key places, especially for areas of exotics. Only temporary irrigation should be needed during native plant establishment. Maybe 1-2 years max.*



Q: how can we reduce maintenance costs?

A: *by having a clear strategy for putting the right plants in the right places and grouping plants that need similar maintenance requirements*

Q: is the master plan fixed in stone if we adopt it?

A: *no, as tastes and contexts may change over time the details may need to adapt; but it's important to have a strong core strategy and adopted principles that should not generally change over time*

Q: what happens if new owners don't like the plan?

A: *they have every right to ask for it to be changed, subject to a majority of owners also wishing that to be the case and voting so at an AGM or EGM.*

frequently asked questions

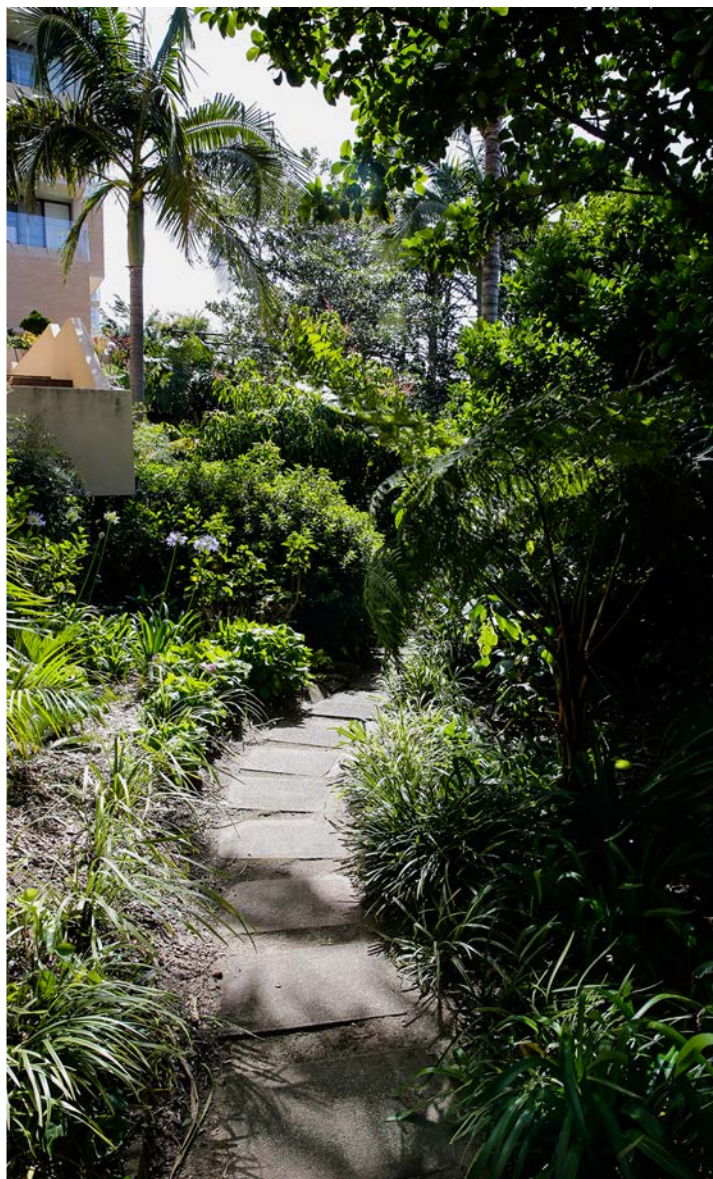
Q: can't we leave some of the larger exotics in place and plant natives around them?

A: *aside from many natives and exotics needing different conditions, this runs counter to the concept of planting character precincts. The existing plants would also tend to compete more effectively for water and light against the new plantings.*

Q: what about succulents? they are popular and low water demanding

A: *yes, there is definitely a place for succulents in the gardens especially for hot and dry north facing slopes such as the steps area leading down to the veggie garden. Some succulents are also quite shade tolerant.*





*“A garden is a grand teacher.
It teaches patience and careful watchfulness;
it teaches industry and thrift;
above all it teaches entire trust.”*

Gertrude Jekyll