HUNTER'S HILL COUNCIL

SIGNIFICANT TREE REGISTER
TREE PROFILE SHEET

1. LOCATION OF PROPERTY

Street: Huntleys Point Road

Suburb: Huntleys Point

Post Code: 2111

Other: Located near Huntleys Point Wharf

2. DETAILS

Listed Significant Trees:

Botanical Name	Common Name
Ficus rubiginosa	Port Jackson Fig

Public or Private Type: Public—park tree

Group or Individual: Individual

Date of Assessment/Inspection: 15.03.2015

3. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The *Ficus rubiginosa* (Port Jackson Fig) marks the location of the path of the Great Northern Road, which led to the former Gladesville Bridge and Wharf. The specimen has significance due to its association with the former Gladesville Bridge and Wharf and the continuation of the theme of tropical style planting common in the late 19th century and early 20th century (*historic value*).

The Port Jackson Fig is of great visual prominence on the Parramatta River and creates a sense of place and scale in this location. The Fig is considered to have excellent landmark qualities (*aesthetic value*).

The Port Jackson Fig is considered an outstanding example of the species with a broad domed canopy (*botanical/scientific).*

The *Ficus rubiginosa* (Port Jackson Fig) is considered to have significance at a local level in terms of historic, aesthetic and botanical/ scientific value.

4. IMAGES

5. SIGNIFICANCE ATTRIBUTES

Cultural/Social/Commemorative ☐ Historic ■ Botanical/Scientific ■ Ecological ☐ Visual/Aesthetic ■

6. SIGNIFICANCE LEVEL

Local ■ State ☐ National ☐

7. BACKGROUND

The *Ficus rubiginosa* (Port Jackson Fig) is located on the far eastern fringe of Gladesville Reserve, adjacent to Huntleys Point Wharf. Betts Park is located to the east of the Port Jackson Fig.

The Port Jackson Fig stands on the path of the Great Northern Road, which led to the former Gladesville Bridge and Gladesville Wharf. The former Gladesville Bridge opened to traffic in February 1881 and was constructed as part of a series of bridges built during the 1880s, which also saw the construction of the Fig Tree Bridge and the Iron Cove Bridge. It was the only crossing of the Parramatta River east of Parramatta at the time of construction, with punts and ferries (steamers) providing the main methods of crossing the river.[1]

The original bridge only carried one lane of traffic in each direction as well as a tramway. The bridge stood on iron cylinders with a sandstone pier at each end of the bridge. The sandstone piers are all that remain today of the original bridge, with the northern pier adjacent to the Huntleys Point Ferry Wharf, and the southern in Howley Park, Drummoyne.[2]

Construction on the new Gladesville Bridge started in December 1959, and took five years to complete. It was officially opened on 2 October 1964.

Whilst Port Jackson Figs are endemic to the Hunters Hill area, the specimen is thought likely to have been planted due to its situation in the landscape. The species has been widely cultivated in private gardens, large estates, institutional lands and public parkland throughout the Hunters Hill area and Sydney. The species has a long association with Sydney and is highly representative of an iconic Sydney tree species. Plantings of figs in public parks and large gardens reached its height in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

The specimen is considered an outstanding example of the species with a broad, domed pendulous canopy. The Fig has an elevated position on the foreshore area at Huntleys Point and with high visibility from the Parramatta River. The location and size of the Fig provides it with excellent landmark qualities. The tree has rarity as a landmark and is a large symmetrical specimen well representing its taxa.

Ficus rubiginosa (Port Jackson Fig) is a locally native species naturally growing as a lithophyte clinging to clefts in rock and sandstone scarps. The species has the potential to self-seed.

References:

[1] Baxter, J W, Gee, A F & James, H B: *Gladesville Bridge*. Proceedings Instn Civil Engrs, Vol 30, March 1965, pp489–530 (Paper No.6860).
[2] Baxter, J W, Gee, A F & James, H B: *Gladesville Bridge*. Proceedings Instn Civil Engrs, Vol 30, March 1965, pp489–530 (Paper No.6860).