

PORT AUTHORITY OF NSW HERITAGE INVENTORY

State Heritage Inventory

SHI Number: 4560031		Study Number: 4920047	
Item Name: Eastern Channel Lighthouse			
Location: South End Eastern Channel, Sydney Harbour			
Address: South End Eastern Channel		DUAP Region: Sydney South	
Suburb / Nearest Town: South End Eastern Channel, Sydney Harbour		Historic Region: Sydney	
Local Govt Area: Waterway		Parish:	
State: NSW		County: Cumberland	
Other/Former Names: Eastern Channel Pile Beacon; Eastern Wedding Cake; Eastern Channel Pile Light			
Area/Group/Complex: Category 2 Aid to Navigation Port Safety Operating Licence (Syd-010)			Group ID: 2
Aboriginal Area: Birrabirragal clan			
Curtilage/Boundary:			
Item Type: Built	Group: Maritime Industry	Category: Lighthouse Tower	
Owner: Port Authority of New South Wales			
Current Use: Aids to navigation under the Port Safety Operating Licence			
Former Uses:			
Assessed Significance: State		Endorsed Significance:	
Statement of Significance: Representative of group of lighthouse towers that together form the core of the navigational system of Sydney Harbour that enables it to operate as a world class port. Of State significance as part of the group. Of significance as a visually prominent, constructed feature defining the shipping channel and forming an important part of the working harbour and contributing aesthetically to the maritime landscape of Sydney Harbour.			
Historical Notes or Provenance: <p>The Eastern Channel Lighthouse is situated in a rocky reef known as the Sow and Pigs; a dangerous area of Sydney Harbour since the early days of the colony. The August 1834 wreck of the 'Edward Lombe' barque was one of the worst maritime disasters in Sydney's waters at the time, and prompted the commissioning of a lightship, known as 'Rose', in 1836 (image 5). The Rose marked the rocks of the Sow and Pigs as a guide to navigation and was replaced in 1856 by the cutter, HMS Bramble. HMS Bramble was then replaced in 1877 by another lightship, also known as Bramble, and then in 1912 by acetylene gas light buoys.</p> <p>The Eastern Channel Pile Light was first constructed in the 1880s. Two leading light towers were built on the Vaucluse shore about 1881 (4560003, 4560007) and about the same time a pile beacon was built on the southeastern corner of the Sow and Pigs Shoal exhibiting an orange light to denote the southern end of the channel.</p> <p>After a gale swept through Sydney on 5 July 1900, the Eastern Channel Pile Light was reportedly destroyed by a passing steamer called 'Greyhound', which had a garbage punt in tow and struck the piles, toppling the light. It was described as the first pile light to be erected inside Sydney Heads, and was used</p>			

'not only as a "friendly beacon" on a dark and stormy night, but also in connection with sailing races in the harbor [sic].' The Daily Telegraph described it as fixed on the 'south-eastern corner of a sand bank in 27 ft of water.' A temporary light was then erected and in August 1900, Messrs D Sheehy and Son commenced construction of a new pile light.

The Sydney Harbour Trust annual report for the period ending 30 June 1908 notes the Commissioners had 'reconstructed in reinforced concrete ['Monier structure', named after its French inventor Joseph Monier] the pile beacon at the southern end of the Eastern Channel, and a Cole acetylene plant and a fifth order dioptric light [lens]' was installed. From 1 October 1908, the light colour was changed from orange to green. Expenditure on the pile light for that year amounted to £427, 17 shillings and eight pence.

An article in the Evening News, it was reported the Eastern Channel Pile Light, known more commonly as 'the "Beacon"', was 'reconstructed in a permanent manner':

'The substructure consists of piles, supporting a strong platform. Upon this has been built a reinforced concrete lighthouse and tower. The base is octagonal in plan and contains an acetylene gas generating plant. The light tower is a structure of iron and glass, surmounted by a copper dome. A new lens has been fitted by Messrs Chance Brothers, Trinity House pattern. Externally the new light beacon has been painted white, and it presents a pleasing appearance.

It was rebuilt in 1946 and in 1947 the light was changed from fixed to occulting (Ward 1951 p84, 114, 117). This change was to conform to the International System of Lighting (MSB Annual Report 1947 p11).

In 1982 several articles in the Sydney Morning Herald published proposals, including one suggesting an obelisk-like structure standing 60 to 90 metres high in the form of a cathedral spire or 'Excalibur' sword, for a monument at the Sow and Pigs to commemorate the arrival of the First Fleet for the 1988 Australian Bicentenary. Instead, more modest navigational markers were installed at each corner of the Sow and Pigs by the former Port of Sydney in 1988 at a cost of \$30,000.

Themes:	National Theme:	State Theme:	Local Theme:
	3. Economy	Communication	(none)
	3. Economy	Transport	(none)

Designer:

Maker / Builder: Sydney Harbour Trust

Year Started: 1908	Year Completed: 1908	Circa: No
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Physical Description: White tower on piles colloquially referred to as the eastern Wedding cake (the Western Channel Lighthouse is the other wedding cake). The Eastern Channel Lighthouse is very similar to the Western Channel Lighthouse in design. It is located at the southeast end of the Sow and Pigs Shoal, off Laings Point, Watsons Bay.

A white concrete tower on timber piles with a painted copper dome and decorative ball finial above. The base of the structure is clad in an octagonal skirt of white pickets to prevent access under the structure.

The power source for the structure utilises solar panels fixed to the upper platform of the lighthouse.

The original beacon was erected as the starboard leading light to the Eastern Channel at the Port of Sydney in the 1880s and then reconstructed in 1908. The crystal lens was replaced with plastic in 1990 when the power source was converted from gas to solar (Anglin 1990:3003).

The light is a solar green occulting light. Flash Rate OC 3 sec, 2 on 1 off.

<p>Physical Condition: The tower appears in a generally deteriorated condition. The structure may require rectification works to the substructure and a general scope of maintenance and repair works to the rest of the structure.</p> <p>Refurbishment works are planned in 2023.</p>			
<p>Modification Dates:</p> <p>1908 – pile light reconstructed in reinforced concrete and a Cole acetylene gas plant was installed (in place of oil as the illuminant) as well as a fifth order dioptric lens. The light was changed from orange to green from 1 October.</p> <p>1947 – rebuilt (Ibbotson 2003:41) the light was changed from fixed to occulting in March 1947 (Ward1951 114).</p> <p>1990 – converted to solar power.</p>			
<p>Recommended Management: Retain in situ and conserve</p> <p>Preparation of a Heritage Assessment of Port Authority of NSW Sydney Harbour Aids to Navigation in order to confirm relevance of group listing, assessed State significance and applicability of individual items.</p> <p>Preparation of a Maintenance and Conservation Works Schedule to ensure acceptable condition and assist in long-term conservation.</p>			
<p>Management: Statutory Instrument</p>			
<p>Further Comments: Port Authority of New South Wales aid to under the Port Safety Operating Licence, Category 2.</p>			
<p>Criteria a) Of historical significance for its importance in marking the dangerous Sow and Pigs Shoal. Further, significant as part of a collective group of Lighthouse Towers in Sydney Harbour. Of historical significance for its association with navigation aids employed during the 19th and early 20th century and still in use</p>			
<p>Criteria b)</p>			
<p>Criteria c) Of significance as a visually prominent constructed feature defining the shipping channel and forming an important part of the working harbour (DPWS Heritage Group 1999:4920047)</p>			
<p>Criteria d)</p>			
<p>Criteria e)</p>			
<p>Criteria f)</p>			
<p>Criteria g) Representative of group of Lighthouse Towers and beacons that together form the core of the navigational system of Sydney Harbour that enables it to operate as a world class port. Of State significance as part of the group.</p>			
<p>Integrity / Intactness:</p>			
References:	Author:	Title:	Year:
		Woollahra Heritage Briefs #49 'Navigating Past Woollahra'	
	Bayldon, F J	History of the Pilotage service in RAHSJ vol 22	1936
	Ibbotson, J	Lighthouses of Australia- A visitors Guide.	2003

	Ward A M	"The Entrance Channels Port Jackson Part 2" Port of Sydney Journal			1951
	Ward A M	"The Entrance Channels Port Jackson Part 1" Port of Sydney Journal Vol 3 – 3			1951
		'The Pile Light Demolished', The Daily Telegraph, page 7, http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article237309759			6/07/1900
		'The Pile Light Blown Over', Evening News, page 5, http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article112593314			5/07/1900
		'Shipping', The Australian Star, page 2, http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article230638114			22/08/1900
		'Beacon Light at Watson's Bay', Evening News, page 8, http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article114759256			2/09/1908
	NSW Government	Government Gazette of the State of New South Wales, page 5227, http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article226584405			1908
	Sydney Harbour Trust	The Sydney Harbour Commissioners' eighth report being for the year ended 30 th June 1908			1908
	Hugh Tranter	The wreck of the Edward Lombe, The Dictionary of Sydney, http://dictionaryofsydney.org/entry/the_wreck_of_the_edward_lombe			2019
		'New markers protect Sow and Pigs Reef', Australian fisheries, Vol 47, No. 8, page 13			1988
Studies :	Author:	Title:		Number:	Year:
	Heritage Group, Dept of Public Works	NSW Marine Ministerial Holding Corporation, Heritage and Conservation Register		4920047	1998
	Susan McIntyre-Tamwoy Heritage Consultants	Sydney Ports Corporation Heritage and Conservation Register		4560031	2004
	Anglin Associates	Sydney Harbour Maritime Services Board Heritage and Conservation Register		3003	1990
Parcels:	Parcel Code:	Lot Number:	Section:	Plan Code:	Plan Number:
Latitude: -33.841794			Longitude: 151.271825		
Listings:	Name:	Title:		Number:	Date:
	Heritage Act – S.170 NSW State agency heritage register	Eastern Channel Lighthouse		4560031	1/07/2004
	State Environmental Planning Policy (Biodiversity and Conservation) 2021	Navigation light tower—eastern channel (Bottle and Glass Rocks)		131	

	Within a National Trust conservation area	Sydney Harbour Landscape Conservation Area		24/01/1983
Data Entry:	Date First Entered: 12/07/2004	Date Updated: 16/01/2023	Status:	Basic

Image: 1



Caption: Eastern Channel Lighthouse

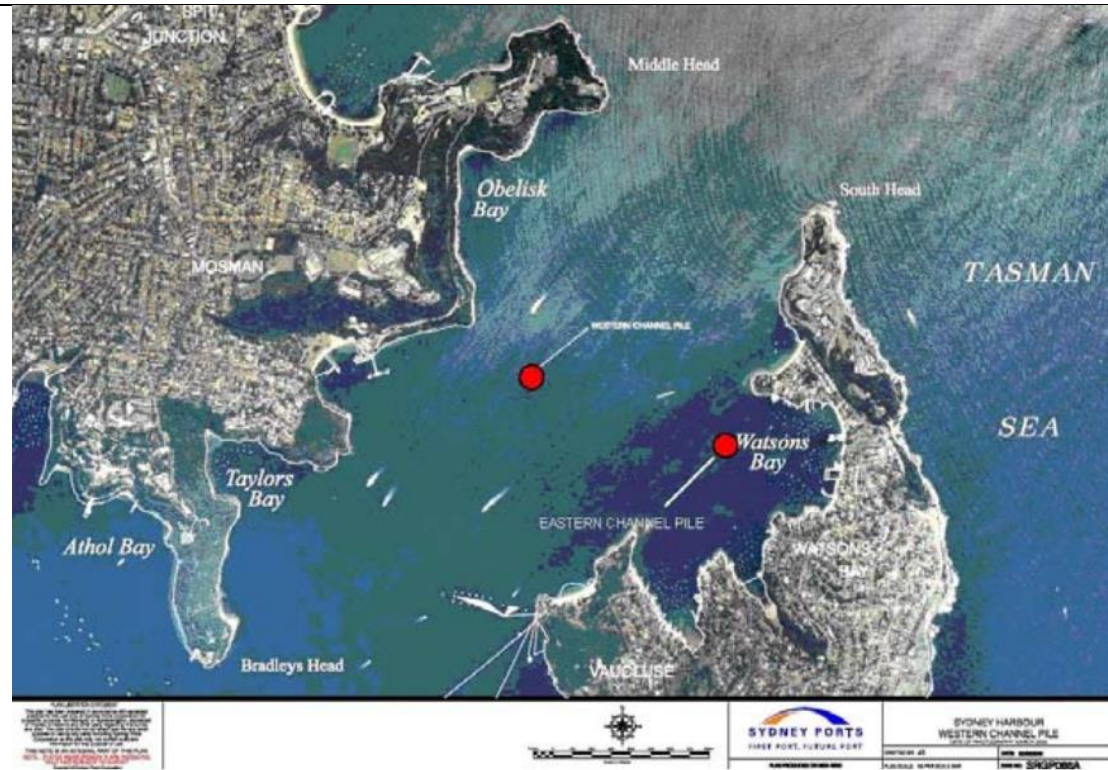
Copyright: Port Authority of New South Wales

Image By: Susan McIntyre-Tamwoy Heritage Consultants

Image Date:

Image File: 4560031b1.jpg

Image: 2



Caption: Location of Eastern and Western Channel Lighthouses

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Image Date:

Image File: 4560031b2.jpg

Image: 3



Caption: Eastern Channel Lighthouse

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Image File: 4560031b3.jpg

Image: 4



Caption: Eastern Channel Lighthouse – Closeup

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Image File: 4560031b4.jpg

Image: 5



Caption: 'No.2 Port Jackson N.S.W. The Floating Light - (Morning)' [oil painting depicting the 'Rose' lightship]

Copyright: Out of copyright, courtesy of State Library of New South Wales, DG 334

Image By: George Edwards Peacock

Image Date: 1846

Image File: 4560031b5.jpg

Image: 6



Caption: Eastern Channel Pile Light

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Image By: unknown

Image Date: c1900s

Image File: 4560031b6.jpg