

## PORT AUTHORITY OF NSW HERITAGE INVENTORY

### State Heritage Inventory

SHI Number: 4560005		Study Number: 4920048	
Item Name: Western Channel Lighthouse			
Location: Southwest End Western Channel, Sydney Harbour			
Address: Southwest End Western Channel		DUAP Region:	
Suburb / Nearest Town: Southwest End Western Channel, Sydney Harbour		Historic Region: Sydney	
Local Govt Area: Waterway		Parish:	
State: NSW		County: Cumberland	
Other/Former Names: Western Channel Pile Beacon; Western Wedding Cake; Georges Head Pile Light; Sow and Pigs Pile Light			
Area/Group/Complex: Category 2 Aid to Navigation Port Safety Operating Licence (SYD-011)			Group ID: 2
Aboriginal Area:			
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 a group of Lighthouse Towers that together comprise the core of the navigational system for Sydney Harbour. It has significance as part of the group. A visually prominent manmade feature defining the shipping channel and thus forming an important part of the working harbour.			
Historical Notes or Provenance:  <p>The Western Channel Lighthouse is situated on the western side of the 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>In March 1924 it was reported a lighthouse was being constructed 'similar in character to what is known as the pile lighthouse in the eastern channel. This lighthouse will be painted white, and will show at night, at a height of 31 ft, a red fixed light.'</p>			
Themes:	National Theme: 3. Economy	State Theme: Transport	Local Theme: (none)

Designer:		
Maker / Builder:		
Year Started: 1924	Year Completed: 1924	Circa: No
<p>Physical Description: A white concrete tower on timber piles with copper dome. It is situated at the west end of the Sow and Pigs Shoal. The current tower replaced the previous 1947 tower after its collapse due to structural issues in 2006. The new concrete tower and deck is supported by steel piles and a concrete slab base, with the base clad in an octagonal skirt of white pickets to prevent access under the structure. The new lighthouse (constructed 2008) has reused the lantern house of the previous structure, with its copper dome and ball finial reconstructed to bring it back to a condition comparable to its original construction.</p> <p>The power source for the structure utilises solar panels fixed to the upper platform of the lighthouse. The structure also has an approximately 10m high anemometer and mast attached to the lower platform.</p> <p>This light and the similar Eastern Channel Lighthouse (SYD-010) are colloquially called Sydney Harbour's Wedding Cakes.</p>		
Physical Condition: The existing tower is in generally good condition.		
<p>Modification Dates: This tower appears to have been planned as far back as 1909. See Engineer -in-Chief's report attached to the SHT Commissioners tenth report. Year ending June 1910. Which states that</p> <p><i>"Instructions were received on 20th October last to make arrangements for the following additions and alterations in connection with the lighting of the Port:-... To place a buoy with an occulting red light in the Western Channel west of the Pile Light..."</i></p> <p>1924 - Original tower built</p> <p>1947 - Tower relocated. Light converted from fixed to occulting light in March.</p> <p>1984 - Relocation of Western Channel Lighthouse</p> <p>1988 - Major structural damage presumed to be caused by colliding vessel identified in lighthouse</p> <p>1990 - Gas was replaced by solar power</p> <p>1992 - Superstructure removed, repaired, levelled and repositioned</p> <p>1997 - Copper guttering replaced</p> <p>2006 - Western Channel Lighthouse collapsed 12 December 2006</p> <p>2008 – Reconstruction of the Western Channel Lighthouse utilising the repaired and restored lantern house enclosure, placed above a new tower and superstructure, replicating the appearance of the previous lighthouse.</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>		
Management: Statutory Instrument		

Further Comments: Port Authority of New South Wales aid to navigation under the Port Safety Operating Licence.						
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						
Criteria b)						
Criteria c) A visually prominent man-made feature defining the shipping channel and thus forming an important part of the working harbour.						
Criteria d)						
Criteria e)						
Criteria f)						
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.						
Integrity / Intactness:						
References:	Author:	Title:		Year:		
		Sydney Harbour Trust Commissioners Report		1910		
	Bayldon, F.J.	'History of the Pilotage Service' in RAHSJ Vol22		1936		
	Ibbotson, J.	Lighthouses of Australia- A visitors Guide.		2003		
	MSB	Sailing Directions		1983		
		'Alteration to Lights', The Sydney Morning Herald, page 20, <a href="http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article16107168">http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article16107168</a>		15/03/1924		
Studies:	Author:		Title:		Number:	Year:
	Heritage Group, Dept of Public Works		NSW Marine Ministerial Holding Corporation, Heritage and Conservation Register		4920048	1998
	Susan McIntyre-Tamwoy Heritage Consultants		Sydney Ports Corporation Heritage and Conservation Register		4560005	2004
	Anglin Associates		Sydney Harbour Maritime Services Board Heritage and Conservation Register		3002	1990
Parcels:	Parcel Code:	Lot Number:	Section:	Plan Code:	Plan Number:	
Latitude: -33.840469			Longitude: 151.264284			
Listings:	Name:		Title:	Number:	Date:	
	Heritage Act – S.170 NSW State agency heritage register		Western Channel Lighthouse	4560005	1/07/2004	

	State Environmental Planning Policy (Biodiversity and Conservation) 2021	Navigation light tower—western channel (Georges Head)	130	
	Within a National Trust conservation area	Sydney Harbour Landscape Conservation Area		24/01/1983
Data Entry:	Date First Entered: 19/06/2004	Date Updated: 18/01/2023	Status: Basic	

Image: 1



Caption: Western Channel Lighthouse (Prior to 2006 collapse)

Copyright: Port Authority of New South Wales

Image By: Susan McIntyre-Tamwoy Heritage Consultants

Image Date:

Image File: 4560005b1.jpg

Image: 2



Caption: Western Channel Lighthouse

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Image By: Zach Nix – NBRS

Image Date: 11.10.2022

Image File: 4560005b2.jpg

Image: 3



Caption: Western Channel Lighthouse – lower platform and base closeup

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Image Date: 11.10.2022

Image File: 4560005b3.jpg

Image: 4



Caption: Western Channel Lighthouse – upper platform and dome closeup

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Image By: Zach Nix – NBRIS

Image Date: 11.10.2022

Image File: 4560005b4.jpg



Image: 5



Caption: Georges Head [sic, Western Channel Light], precast top being placed on pile foundation

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Image By: NSW Government Printing Office

Image Date: 27/03/1924

Image File: 4560005b5.jpg

Image: 6



Caption: Western Channel navigation lighthouse 'wedding cake'

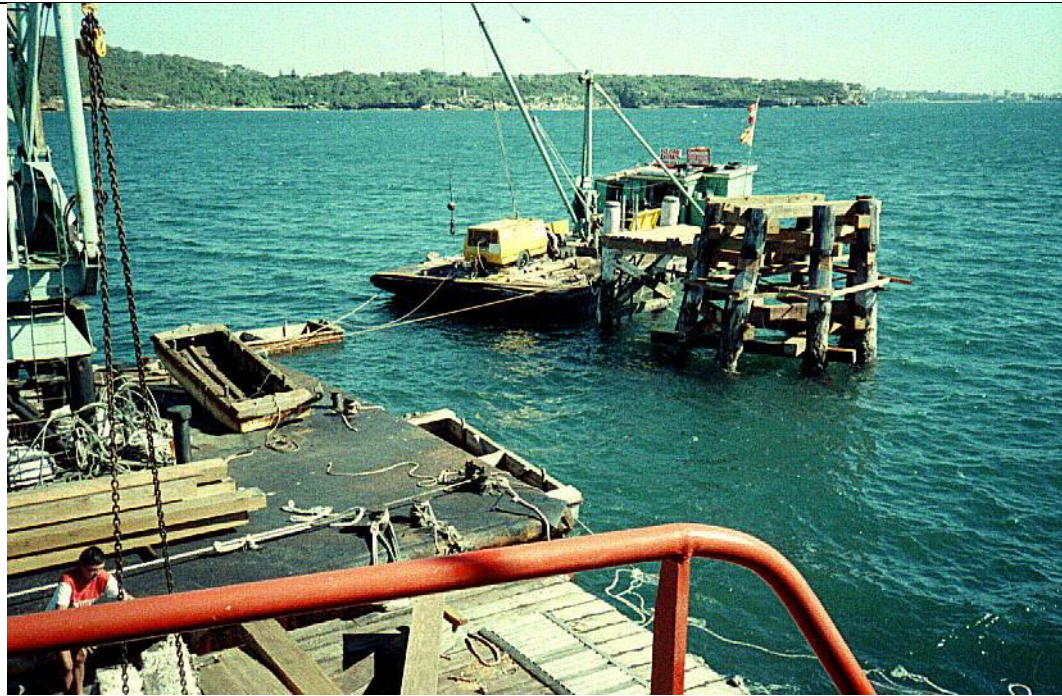
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Image By: unknown

Image Date: undated

Image File: 4560005b5.jpg

Image: 7



Caption: Western channel mark (Wedding cake) rebuild

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Image By: Graeme Andrews

Image Date: 1989

Image File: 4560005b6.jpg

Image: 8



Caption: Repair work to 'wedding cake' western channel marker

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Image By: Graeme Andrews

Image Date: 1992

Image File: 4560005b6.jpg

Image: 9



Caption: Repair work to 'wedding cake' western channel marker

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Image By: Graeme Andrews

Image Date: 1992

Image File: 4560005b6.jpg

Image: 10



Caption: 'Wedding cake' light, western channel, Sydney

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Image By: Graeme Andrews

Image Date: 1992

Image File: 4560005b6.jpg