

## **Torino 2006 voglia di Olimpiadi. Domande e risposte sui Giochi e la loro eredità.**

Intervento di Richard Cashman

# Urban Legacy in the Long Term: Sydney's Experience

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In this paper I will focus on the past and future of Sydney Olympic Park (SOP) as a case study of urban legacy in the long term.

Why is urban legacy, and Sydney Olympic Park, important in the long term?

Sydney Olympic Park was a central plank of the 1993 bid promises that the Olympic Games would help deliver a unique precinct, where it was most needed, that would advance sport, recreation and culture for the people of Sydney.

Context

To understand the post-Games history of Sydney Olympic Park one needs to appreciate the difficult post-Games climate. I like the phrase coined by a Barcelona newspaper at the time of the first anniversary of their Games in 1993 — 'The bitter-sweet awakening from the Olympic dream'.

Sydney Olympic Park: A Case Study

Sydney Olympic Park was and is the jewel of the Sydney 2000 Olympic crown, it constituted the grand design and a proud statement of the city's Olympic vision. The Park was bigger (in terms of the Olympic stadium), larger in terms of the size of the precinct and newer in terms facilities than any previous Olympic precinct.

Sydney Olympic Park worked smoothly and efficiently during the Olympic and Paralympic Games. However, Sydney Olympic Park has struggled since 2000 and its vision has been only partially realised.

Negative outcomes

1. A ghost town in 2001 and 2002.
2. A lack of events at Sydney Olympic Park.
3. A continuing drain on State (of NSW) revenue.
4. Local and international criticism of Sydney Olympic Park in 2001 and 2002.
5. A loss of public confidence in the Park.
6. The belated creation of the Sydney Olympic Park Authority (SOPA) on 1 July 2001 — nine months after the Games.
7. The belated development of a Master Plan in 2002 to diversify its character and make the Park more self-sufficient.
8. The problem of changing the brand of the Park from Homebush Bay to Sydney Olympic Park.

Outcomes — positive factors

1. Symbolic marking is an example of best practice.
2. Redefining the the Park in 2002 as 'a place for living, working, learning and leisure'.
3. Recruiting sports and sports administrative bodies to the Park.
4. The promotion of sports and environmental education at the Park.
5. The staging of the 2003 Rugby World Cup at the Park.

The future of Sydney Olympic Park

Sydney Olympic Park has struggled to realise its potential since 2000 and it is now clear that there was insufficient planning for the post-Games use of a unique Olympic landscape. It is also possible that a new focus on the Park as a multi-purpose landscape may showcase Olympic ideals where sport, both elite and mass, culture, the environment and education exist side by side. However, in 2005 SOP remains a financial drain on state resources and the public has yet to see an adequate return for a large investment in urban infrastructure.

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Conclusions

For urban infrastructure to work after the Games it is essential to develop a well-coordinated plan which is carefully articulated and publicised so that its principles are well understood and accepted by sports bodies and the public.

Practices to be avoided:

1. Having no well-developed and publicised post-Games plan before the Games.
2. Having no post-Games authority in place to administer the plan.
3. Not having accounted carefully for all post-Games expenses.
4. Not properly responding to post-Games criticism.

Practices to be emulated:

5. Wherever possible develop alternative uses for the Olympic venues and infrastructure.
6. Monitor post-Games public opinion generally and attitudes towards the post-Games plan in particular.
7. Undertake symbolic marking.
8. Recognise those, such as the volunteers, who have contributed to the Games.
9. Stage 'feeder' events to gain continuing benefit from the infrastructure created.