



MEDIA RELEASE

DR DAVID KEMP, MP

Minister for the Environment and Heritage

K0125

30 May 2003

\$60 MILLION TO RESTORE SYDNEY HARBOUR LANDMARK

Minister for the Environment and Heritage, Dr David Kemp, today announced \$60 million to restore one of Sydney Harbour's historic jewels – Cockatoo Island – as part of a visionary \$115 million plan to revitalise Sydney Harbour's great landmarks.

Under the \$115 million plan – funded in the recent Federal Budget – the Sydney Harbour Federation Trust will progressively rehabilitate and restore seven historic foreshore landmarks for the people of Sydney over the next eight years.

Projects for the coming year will see parklands established at Middle Head-Georges Heights in Mosman, a maritime village built at Woolwich Dock, and further development of a sanctuary on North Head. On Cockatoo Island, power will be restored and essential remediation and decontamination works are underway on the island's historic convict and industrial precincts.

Dr Kemp said the plan is focused on reviving maritime industry on the waterfront and the restoration of historic buildings and facilities for educational, community and commercial uses. For example, docks and workshops at Cockatoo Island will be offered for lease to boat builders, sail makers and chandlers. The revenue from these activities will be reinvested into heritage conservation and public access works on the island.

“For almost 150 years, Cockatoo Island was the hub of industrial activity in Sydney Harbour as a major shipping yard primarily for the Australian Navy. Together with the convict precinct such industrial activity never encouraged public access to the island in the past, more so in the last 10 years when it lay dormant as a derelict site,” Dr Kemp said.

“Restoration and decontamination work has been underway on the island since August 2001 when it was handed over to the Sydney Harbour Federation Trust along with six other major landmarks in Sydney Harbour.

“Public access since then has been encouraged through guided tours with the aim of increasing Sydneysiders' knowledge of the island's history and convict heritage. These tours and a recent high profile charity event attracting 500 guests have generated a lot of public interest in Cockatoo Island which has enormous potential to become a popular tourist attraction.”

Public access to the island will increase with the construction of a network of walkways and expanded island tours.

“We envisage a step-by-step re-occupation of Cockatoo Island over the next decade with venues for events to be ready in the next 12 months. Planning cultural and heritage activities is also underway, to take place in the very near future,” Dr Kemp said.

“This vision for Cockatoo Island and Sydney Harbour as a whole is an exciting project that is going to deliver enormous benefits and opportunities to the people of Sydney, its tourism and its economy.”

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