



The Hon Greg Hunt MP
Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister
for the Environment and Heritage

The Hon Joe Hockey MP
Minister for Human Services
Federal Member for North Sydney

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NEW COURSE FOR FORMER SUBMARINE BASE HMAS PLATYPUS

A disbanded Sydney submarine base could soon be revitalised as a site for public spaces, community sports facilities, studios and waterfront walking paths.

The Federal Member for North Sydney, Joe Hockey, said the options are canvassed in a draft plan for the former HMAS Platypus site at Neutral Bay.

The plan, unveiled today by Mr Hockey and the Federal Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for the Environment and Heritage, Greg Hunt, marks an historic opportunity for the community to have a say on the blueprint for the future of the prime 1.8 hectare harbour-side site.

Federal Member for North Sydney, Joe Hockey, said the rehabilitation of HMAS Platypus would benefit future generations.

“The plan aims to create a vibrant waterfront precinct. It demonstrates the Australian Government’s commitment to improving the access to foreshore areas of our much-loved harbour.”

Proposed Outcomes for HMAS Platypus:

- Creation of a vibrant waterfront location
- Adaptive re-use of buildings and facilities to suit the scale and character of the site such as waterfront dining, studios, rehearsal space, office space, training facilities and boat storage
- Terraces, streets, squares and gardens to enhance enjoyment of the site
- Pedestrian linkages to other open spaces and existing harbour foreshore pedestrian paths
- Remediation of contamination and the rehabilitation of the site and its buildings

“Since the Government announced the handover of the site the community has been widely consulted and I believe this draft plan is a major step to achieving a first class foreshore precinct,” Mr Hockey said.

“Improved pedestrian access and landscaping works will also enhance the character of the site.”

“Retaining Platypus as a great community asset has been a significant commitment that I was able to secure at the last federal election and this is another step in fulfilling that election promise.

“I want to particularly thank all of those members of the community who have contributed to the development of this plan and the campaign to save Platypus – it has been a long fight to ensure that this site didn’t become another development site,” Mr Hockey said

Mr Hunt congratulated Mr Hockey for his strong and ongoing leadership in working with the community to preserve this significant site.

“The former headquarters of the Navy’s Oberon submarine fleet and torpedo workshops are being returned to public use, becoming the eighth site in one of the finest foreshore parks in the world, managed by the Sydney Harbour Federation Trust,” Mr Hunt said.

“Yet another previously closed-off piece of valuable harbour land will be opened for the public to visit and enjoy and is a testament to community efforts to save the site.

“The draft plan proposes that buildings and facilities on the site be adapted to support a mix of uses that will suit the scale and character of the place and as part of the urban life of the city.

“In order to achieve this vision the site will require remediation and the rehabilitation of original buildings to ensure appropriate environmental standards are achieved for future public access.”

The draft plan will be on public exhibition from 18 January 2007 to 16 March 2007. Further information about the site and the draft plan’s public exhibition can be found at:
www.harbourtrust.gov.au

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

HMAS Platypus

The site was established as a gas works in 1876, and was resumed by the Commonwealth during World War II as a torpedo maintenance facility for the Royal Australian Navy.

In 1967, the site was officially commissioned as HMAS Platypus and became the headquarters of the Navy's Oberon-class submarine fleet.

In 1999 HMAS Platypus and the torpedo workshops were closed down when the Commonwealth decided to relocate the submarine base to HMAS Stirling in Western Australia.

Summary of the Comprehensive Plan

The Sydney Harbour Federation Trust released a Comprehensive Plan in 2003 for seven sites on or near the foreshores of Sydney Harbour. The draft plan released today builds on that plan.

The Trust has responsibility for: Woolwich Dock and Parklands; Cockatoo Island; Snapper Island; the former Defence lands at Middle Head-Georges Heights and Chowder Bay in Mosman; the North Head former School of Artillery; Macquarie Lightstation; and the former Marine Biological Station, Watsons Bay.

The former HMAS Platypus site was handed over to the Harbour Trust on 23 July 2005. As required by *The Sydney Harbour Federation Trust Act 2001*, the Trust has now prepared a draft amendment to the Comprehensive Plan to include this new site. The amendment should be read in conjunction with the Comprehensive Plan which is also at: www.harbourtrust.gov.au