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MEDIA RELEASE

HARBOUR TRUST RELEASES DRAFT CONCEPT FOR COCKATOO ISLAND / WAREAMAH

The Harbour Trust today unveiled an ambitious concept to transform Cockatoo Island / Wareamah into a world-class public destination, ensuring this important historical place remains open and accessible for future generations.

This early vision draws from the Island’s complex and layered past with the ideas and ambitions generated from community consultation held over the past two years.

The announcement follows the Federal Government’s work with the community in establishing the landmark review of the Harbour Trust, as well as the Government’s commitment to keeping sites in public hands and its broad agreement to the recommendations in the 2020 Independent Review of the Harbour Trust, which highlighted the need for a masterplan for the future of Cockatoo Island.

“In 2019, we spoke to our community about their vision for the Island’s future,” the Chair of the Harbour Trust, Joseph Carrozzi, said.

“We heard that people valued Cockatoo Island’s many historic layers and stories but wanted to see its untapped potential realised. The community told us that it wants more from Cockatoo Island, with more diverse experiences for more diverse audiences, and we heard that more needed to be done to respectfully acknowledge the Island’s First Nations’ past as a sacred women’s place and in identifying Cockatoo Island as a place of cultural connection.

“From these conversations with the community, we have developed an early vision that considers the Island’s potential while respecting and celebrating its important past.

“We want to create a truly special destination for both Sydneysiders and all visitors - a destination that acknowledges the historic significance of Cockatoo Island for First Nations Peoples, and its important role in the history of modern Australia, from our convict and colonial past to our industrial and military history.”

Harbour Trust



Australian Government
Sydney Harbour Federation Trust

Mr Carrozzi said the Draft Concept acknowledges the island as a meeting place of many stories and looks to revitalise the various precincts across the Island, including a new tidal terrace and a harbour Boardwalk; a creative precinct which is envisioned to become an active arts and creative hub for performance, exhibitions and events; and improved interpretation and visitor experience of convict buildings and supporting a working harbour through the Dockyards Precinct.

Cockatoo Island / Wareamah is a geographic pivot point in Greater Sydney. Located in the heart of Sydney Harbour, it links the city of Sydney, including the CBD, to Parramatta's burgeoning Central City and to Western Sydney. The Island is an UNESCO World Heritage site, considered one of the best surviving examples of convict transportation and forced labour.

At 18 hectares in area, Cockatoo Island is the largest of the harbour islands. With two of the world's most recognised icons of the Harbour Bridge and Opera House across the water, there is an opportunity for Cockatoo Island to play a larger part in Sydney's position on the global stage.

The Draft Concept connects the future with past and merges divergent cultural histories – it aims to turn the Island into a healed and rejuvenated landscape where people meet and come together, celebrate, share knowledge, learn from history, and experience Country.

The community is invited to provide their feedback on the Draft Concept to help shape the future vision and direction of the site.

The Harbour Trust is continuing its work with Two Point Co, a respected First Nations engagement consultancy, to help capture a genuine First Nations voice for this Draft Concept.

The Director of Two Point Co, Jason Timor, said. "The First Nations voice is critically important to shape the future of Wareamah and we are encouraging the community, Traditional Owners and key knowledge holders to take part."

To be a part of the conversation and have your say visit harbourtrust.gov.au to view the Draft Concept. Consultation closes 11 June 2021.

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ABOUT THE HARBOUT TRUST

The Harbour Trust protects and manages some of the most historically significant foreshore sites on Sydney Harbour, including Cockatoo Island, North Head Sanctuary, Sub Base Platypus in North Sydney, and Headland Park in Mosman.

MEDIA ENQUIRIES: Please contact Rebecca Hill at the Harbour Trust on 0409 266 248 or Rebecca.Hill@harbourtrust.gov.au