



*Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*

DECISION ABOUT INCLUSION OF A PLACE IN THE NATIONAL HERITAGE LIST

I, Ian Gordon Campbell, Minister for the Environment and Heritage, having considered, in relation to Kurnell Peninsula (the place), included in the National Heritage List on 20 September 2004 under section 324F (Emergency Listing) of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (the Act)–

- (a) the Australian Heritage Council's assessment whether the place meets any of the National Heritage criteria; and
- (b) the comments given to the Council under section 324G of the Act;

alter the boundary, pursuant to subsection 324J(5) of the Act, of the listed place described in the National Heritage List to that described in the Schedule below, and remove from the List for the place the National Heritage value that caused it to meet criterion (e) as prescribed by the regulations for the purposes of section 324D of the Act.

The descriptions of the values under criteria (a), (b), (g) and (h) are varied, including: removal of the natural National Heritage values ascribed to the place under criterion (a); and removal of the historic National Heritage values ascribed to the place with respect to La Perouse under criterion (a).

The entry for this place in the National Heritage List is now as set out in the Schedule.

Dated this 24<sup>th</sup> day of February 2005

Ian Gordon Campbell  
Minister for the Environment  
and Heritage

## SCHEDULE

## STATE

Local Government Area

Name:

Location

Values:

## NEW SOUTH WALES

Sutherland Shire**Kurnell Peninsula Headland:**

About 400ha, at Kurnell, comprising Botany Bay National Park, Lot 1 DP91704, the road reserve extending from Cape Baily Lighthouse in the east to the Park boundary in the west and the area between the seaward boundaries of the National Park and Lot 1 DP91704 and the Low Water Mark.

**Criterion**

(a) the place has outstanding heritage value to the nation because of the place's importance in the course, or pattern, of Australia's natural or cultural history.

**Values**

The Meeting Place Precinct, Kurnell Peninsula, was the site of first recorded contact between Indigenous people and Britain in eastern Australia, and symbolically represents the birthplace of a nation, and the dispossession of Indigenous people. This symbolism is reinforced by its proximity to Sydney, the site of the first British settlement, as well as its accessibility. The discovery of Botany Bay, including Kurnell Peninsula, in April 1770 by Lt. James Cook, Commander of the Endeavour, was a precursor to the colonization of Australia by Britain. The association of Cook's visit with the place is clear and well substantiated and has been celebrated since 1822.

The Meeting Place Precinct, including Captain Cook's Landing Place, includes memorials and landscape plantings commemorating the events of 1770. Place names such as Inscription Point and Point Solander, the remnant watercourse, the memorials to explorers and Indigenous inhabitants, and Cook's maps of the Peninsula, in conjunction with Cooks Journal, and those of officers and scientists, clearly illustrate the events of 1770. Attributes specifically associated with its Indigenous values include the watering point and immediate surrounds, and the physical evidence of Aboriginal occupation in the area broadly encompassed by the watering place and the landing stage.

Kurnell Peninsula, Botany Bay, was the first site on the east coast of the Australian continent explored by scientists from Britain, with many of the first type-specimens of flora and fauna collected near the landing site by both Banks and Solander. Of particular note in 1770 was the naming of the *Banksia* genus after Joseph Banks. Cook's naming of 'Botany Bay' in 1770 would result in its adoption as an emotive term

for a destination, which came to be associated with convictism for much of the nineteenth century.

Although Cooks' mapping of the east coast of Australia in 1770 did not appreciate the extent and importance of Port Jackson, nor the existence of Bass Strait, his running surveys were an outstanding achievement, which enabled the continental characteristics of Terra Australis, and its relationship to Papua New Guinea and New Zealand, to be defined fully for the first time. Cook's survey of Botany Bay in 1770, and clear description of the headlands at its entrance, provided information about a safe harbour with fresh water for British ships which followed.

The headland area of Kurnell Peninsula, in its landmark role bounding the entrance to Botany Bay, is significant to the nation as the destination for the First Fleet under Captain Arthur Phillip in 1787. Although first settlement occurred at Sydney Cove in January 1788, Cook's first voyage, with his first landfall in Australia at Kurnell Peninsula, Botany Bay, informed the subsequent British declaration of terra nullius through his reports, and, as the destination of the First Fleet, began the process that would lead to British possession of the Australian continent by 1830.

(b) the place has outstanding heritage value to the nation because of the place's possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of Australia's natural or cultural history.

Kurnell Peninsula was the first landfall made by Cook on continental Australia during his successful mapping of the eastern coastline, and is the point of first recorded contact between the British and Indigenous Australians in eastern Australia.

The impact of the event and the events themselves are well described. The association of the events with the place is clear and well substantiated.

The place possesses rare aspects of Australia's cultural heritage and is of outstanding heritage value to the nation.

For Attributes refer to the first entry for Criterion (a).

(g) the place has outstanding heritage value to the nation because of the place's strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons.

'Captain Cook's Landing Place' at Kurnell Peninsula is considered by many to be of outstanding heritage value to the nation for its association with the 'the birth of the nation'. The events hold a different meaning for Indigenous Australians, marking the commencement of colonization of Australia, and dispossession, underpinned by the doctrine of *terra nullius*. The story of Cook's first landing on the east coast of Australia is nationally important, and Captain Cook's Landing Place has become a symbolic place representing an important national story.

The story of Cook's voyage, including Cook's landing place at Kurnell and first contact between the British and Indigenous Australians on the eastern seaboard, has become an integral part of Australian folk-lore and our collective psyche. There are 'Captain Cook' stories in many parts of Aboriginal Australia, including remote areas such as Central Australia and the Victoria River Downs, Northern Territory. The events have been well documented by many authors, acknowledging the place's important association with Indigenous Australian's at a national level.

Captain Cook's Landing Place is within the Meeting Place Precinct and part of the reserve set aside in 1899. For Attributes refer to the first entry for Criterion (a).

(h) the place has outstanding heritage value to the nation because of the place's special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in Australia's natural or cultural history

The Meeting Place Precinct, Kurnell Peninsula, is significant to the nation as the first landfall of Captain James Cook during his successful mapping of Australia's eastern coastline in 1770. This event has been celebrated by the placing of memorials since 1822 and through commemorations such as the bicentenary in 1970.

On this, Cook's first of three voyages in the Pacific, Joseph Banks was botanist, assisted by Daniel Solander and the artists Sydney Parkinson, Alexander Buchan and Herman Sporing. The artists were to produce botanical, zoological and ethnographic drawings. Banks and Solander collected 83 specimens, many of which are now the type specimens of species and genera, including *Banksia*. Both Banks and Solander as scientists on Cook's crew are remembered by local geographical place names; Cape Banks and Point Solander have defined the entrance to Botany Bay since 1770.

Attributes clearly associated with the landing are included within the Meeting Place Precinct. Although the location of botanical specimens collected by Banks and Solander was referred to generically as 'Botany Bay', the landing place, as the site of first exposure to the environment, was a key source of botanical specimens and species types. A number of species, including *Angophora costata* woodland on the adjacent headland areas and a native violet at the watering place, named after Banks, occur in close proximity to the landing site.