



# MEDIA RELEASE

**The Hon Peter Garrett MP**

*Minister for the Environment, Heritage and the Arts*

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## **PLANS FOR REMEDIATION OF FORMER HMAS PLATYPUS SITE APPROVED**

A Memorandum of Understanding between the Sydney Harbour Federation Trust and the Department of Defence to clean up the former HMAS Platypus site on the Neutral Bay foreshore in Sydney Harbour has been finalised, Environment Minister Peter Garrett said today.

"The finalisation of the MoU between the Sydney Harbour Federation Trust (SHFT) and the Commonwealth Department of Defence means work can now get under way to clean up this historic site," Mr Garrett said.

"The former government made a promise to transfer the site to the Trust in 2004, so I'm very pleased that the Rudd Government has now finally been able to resolve this issue and get this project underway.

"I have asked the Sydney Harbour Federation Trust to conduct further community consultation, including a community information day, before decontamination work starts on the site."

A draft plan was prepared for the site by the Sydney Harbour Federation Trust with the help of extensive consultation with community and stakeholders. The draft plan proposed the remediation of contamination and the rehabilitation of the site and buildings to create a sequence of urban waterfront squares, terraced gardens and pedestrian links with adjacent foreshore areas.

"Following consultation with the New South Wales Government, I have also approved the draft plan which would provide public access to the site following remediation and adaptive re-use of the former industrial buildings."

The Sydney Harbour Federation Trust was set up in 2001 to manage former defence lands around Sydney Harbour.

The cost of remediation is estimated to be \$46 million and allows for removal of bulk material by barge. This responds to local community concern about truck access and the 15 tonne load limit on local roads. The project is expected to take up to 2 years to complete.

The former HMAS Platypus is located between High Street and the harbour foreshore at Neutral Bay on Sydney's North Shore. The site of approximately 1.8ha was a gasworks from 1876, and was resumed by the Commonwealth in 1942 and used for torpedo maintenance and as a submarine base until 1999. The site is heavily contaminated, primarily due to its prior use as a gas works.