

WEBINAR

Cockatoo Island / Wareamah

**DRAFT
CONCEPT
VISION**



Cockatoo Island / Wareamah

Webinar 11 May 2021 Q+A

QUESTIONS	ANSWERS
ABORIGINAL HERITAGE	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">» If you are emphasising Aboriginal heritage, why aren't you handing the site back?» Indigenous is not a listed value on the National Register listing, how did the Trust ascertain that this is the driving value in this vision?	<p>In 2000, Cockatoo Island a land claim was submitted under the Native Title Act 1993 by a branch of the Aboriginal Tent Embassy. After appeals through lower courts, the High Court refused the Tent Embassy's application on March 13, 2001, and the group peacefully left the island after four months of settling there.</p> <p>Consultation in 2019 with First Nations communities has informed the Draft Concept Vision and revealed ways in which we can exist in relationship to the lands and waters on which we live and work.</p> <p>The Harbour Trust will continue to work with the Aboriginal community and Traditional Owners in creating a shared vision.</p> <p>Consultation outcomes from 2019 support our emphasis on the importance of Cockatoo Island / Wareamah as the only destination in Australia where you can find the story of the nation in one place, from First Nations occupation of the Eora Nation to colonial convict, industrial and maritime Sydney.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">» Will the site be alcohol free to respect pre-Colonial history	<p>The Draft Concept Vision includes opportunities for onsite events and hospitality offerings. It is not anticipated that the island will be an alcohol free zone.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">» Is there any place here for First Nations Maritime? E.g. Shane Phillips Tribal Warrior Maritime Training for young indigenous people and others?	<p>This suggestion has been recorded as feedback. The Harbour Trust will look to create partnerships, including First Nation groups as appropriate in the future.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">» Wareamah was obviously an important place for ceremony for riparian clans. With the creation of the Tidal Terrace, is there still room for contemporary ceremony to take place and be appreciated?	<p>This question was addressed in the webinar; it was confirmed that the Draft Concept Vision does provide space for contemporary ceremonies on the island.</p>

HERITAGE CONSIDERATIONS

» There are some lovely old buildings on Cockatoo, but there are also a few that are rubbish (Thinking about the very cheaply built brick and cement shed on eastern side in particular). What are the chances of demolishing these and replacing with either parkland or more period sympathetic buildings?

As part of planning for the site, detailed heritage studies are being undertaken to determine the appropriate future uses of heritage buildings. Investigations are also being made into the condition of other buildings on site, and options for restoration, repurposing, removing or replacing may be considered.

At this stage, the Harbour Trust’s objective is to further understand the community’s support for the proposed concepts, to ensure we continue in the right direction.

The Draft Concept Vision is not final, the current community consultation is allowing the community to provide further direction and feedback.

In 2010, the convict penal establishment was inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List, together with 10 other historic convict sites in Australia. This vision is respectful to that listing.

» Some of us like the cavernous, empty sheds the way they are, with old plant and old workbenches with people's names still on them. Walking into one is like walking back into history no less than walking into the buildings on the upper part of the island. Are there plans to keep at least one of the large ones in original condition?

The Draft Concept Vision seeks to retain the unique character of this place including its working harbour elements.

Under the Draft Concept Vision, the Industrial Precinct (referenced more broadly as the Creative Precinct) would see the majority of the large sheds retained, and the heritage plant and machinery would remain in situ with enhanced interpretation. This ensures important heritage structures will be preserved, interpreted and (subject to funding and further consultation) adapted for creative and public facing uses, consistent with the current usage (eg. art exhibitions, events, conferences). There is provision for some of the smaller ancillary (and non-heritage) sheds to be altered or removed to improve access and amenity, however the bulk of the structures will be retained and preserved. Any removals or alterations will be subject to a heritage assessment and further public engagement in the masterplanning and subsequent development application stages.

The Harbour Trust Volunteer Restoration team’s workshop is housed in the Industrial Precinct. The team work to restore heritage items on Cockatoo Island. The aim is to retain our volunteer restoration workshop.

» Have you considered using one as a regional mens' shed/work area? I don't think they ALL need to be kept in that condition, but I specifically ‘enjoy’ going into them as they are, so want one to remain sparsely occupied to retain that experience.

» Thank you from the crane enthusiast. What with the Powerhouse going Fashionista Artsy, it's more important than ever to keep the plant around for people to chat about. I've chatted with both visitors and volunteers/staff about them, and it's a way for those of us with an engineering bent to connect and learn about the history and capabilities of these machines.

The island will remain industrial. The Draft Concept Vision aims to retain these important elements including the Cranes, Dry Docks and Slipways and integrate maritime and industrial interpretation, while activating the island to attract visitors. Allowing functions in the Powerhouse would involve retaining the existing machinery.

QUESTIONS

- » Loving the ideas - how do we ensure the ideas for the community, education, rewilding, convict & maritime heritage spaces survive any development process as the focus rather than the commercial opportunities prevailing & dominating as sadly has occurred with large chunks of Barangaroo and entirely with WestConnex which was meant to give back Parramatta Road for local regeneration & public transport but all dropped out of plans and EIS obligations even ignored?
- » Has the SHFT explored the idea of providing a permanent berth for the Heritage Fleet on Cockatoo island? This would celebrate and reconnect with our country's maritime heritage in a tangible way.
- » Cockatoo is a brutalist island with a brutalist past. Respecting the First Nations past is essential. However, the brutalist past seems to be dumbed down to a large degree - has the correct balance of interests been achieved?

ANSWERS

The Harbour Trust is running this extensive program of community consultation to ensure the broad community's needs and values are captured in the vision for the island.

Maximising revenue potential is not an ultimate driver of the Draft Concept Vision.

The Harbour Trust has aimed to highlight three interwoven themes in an authentic way driven by previous feedback from the community.

First, was Connecting to Country, using First Nation design principles to lead our thinking.

Second, was recognising the convict and military history.

Third, was to adapt the island so it can be loved and used by current and future generations, so it is visited and valued.

This suggestion will be noted as feedback, however the Harbour Trust understands that the Heritage Fleet will be located at a new museum to be built on harbourside land at North Sydney.

The Harbour Trust has a clear mission to ensure that historical and heritage sites are interpreted, open and accessible to the people of Australia and international visitors. This mission applies equally across the island's unique stories and connections between past and emerging divergent cultural histories.

Although it may not be entirely clear from the artist sketches, the intention is to highlight all elements of Cockatoo Island's past.

WAREAMAH TIDAL TERRACE

- » Loving the Wareamah tidal terrace... that looks very interesting. Was that area infill, and originally water before infill?
- » This Tidal area looks nice, but in the past Cockatoo Island has hosted Ninja Warrior, Concerts & other events. Once this concrete area is removed, there will not be this option anymore. Couldn't a swim area be on the other north western side near the Glamping?
- » Why does the Trust want to eliminate this stunning event space which is not just concrete but part of the heritage fabric of the island?

This question was posed to the panel during the webinar. It was discussed that it may have been a tidal space prior to infill.

Creation of a Tidal Terrace for this area would remove the ability for this space to host large events. One of the objectives of this community consultation is to understand the community's priorities and aspirations for the site.

This feedback has been noted for consideration.

QUESTIONS

ANSWERS

SLIPWAYS

- » How do you intend to activate the slipways?

It is proposed that the Slipways be adapted to include water play, flying foxes, sand play, swings, First Nations, Convict, Industrial and Maritime interpretation and educational gardens. This can be viewed on page 54 of the Draft Concept.

FITZROY DOCK

- » Please describe "short-term accommodation". Will this be a hotel adjacent to the Fitzroy Dock?

The additional level of accommodation proposed for within the Fitzroy Dock Precinct is suited to short-term stays, small conferences, work retreats, special events, weddings and weekend getaways.

- » Is there any intent to keep the powerhouse relics to be retained in place, refurbished and set-up as a museum. It would be a shame to just turn this into just an empty space for events.

The important relics across the island will be retained and preserved.

- » Is there any consideration for reactivating the dry docks for maritime use? Has there been consultation with the maritime industry about their needs and capacity for ship repair? With cranes and caissons intact, active use is the best way to preserve a dry dock.

It is proposed that the Cockatoo Dockyard continue its use as a working Dockyard.

The Harbour Trust is seeking feedback from across the industry including the maritime industry as part of this consultation.

CREATIVE PRECINCT

- » Do you have a model you're basing this on? Are there arts precincts that attract visitors to the extent you hope to, elsewhere in NSW, that give you confidence it will work?

The Harbour Trust will undertake detailed modelling in future stages of the project, should there be community support for such a vision.

FUNDING AND INVESTMENT

- » Congratulations on the bold vision for CI. There is a significant array of activities envisaged to attract, engage and immerse visitors. To become a visitor destination in its own right, it must be highly relevant to locals, as visitors want to hang out with locals. Protecting the essence of the place is key to developing an authentic experience in telling its stories. How will such a compelling visitor experience be funded, delivered and sustained?

At this stage we want to ensure we are developing the right shared vision for the site.

This is only part of the journey, which started nearly 20 years ago with the formation of the Harbour Trust.

Funding is a next step. Detailed costing will be undertaken as we finalise the concept plan in light of the community feedback we receive.

The Draft Concept Vision is ambitious, and it will need investment in stages over time.

- » What happens if you spend all this money and it DOESN'T work? What is your fallback position/plan B?

The Harbour Trust is undertaking a significant and staged program of community consultation to ensure the right vision is created.

QUESTIONS

ANSWERS

FURTHER QUESTIONS

- » How are you defining amenities? I think of toilets etc. but I heard Mike [Horne] refer to trees.

Amenities broadly refers to something that helps to provide comfort, convenience and/or enjoyment. It refers to a spectrum of elements ranging from restrooms to shade, dining and more.

- » Are plans for Spectacle and Snapper Island going to be developed in conjunction with Cockatoo island?

The Harbour Trust is currently engaging with the community on the Draft Concept Vision for Cockatoo Island / Wareamah and the Draft Concept for North Head.

Snapper Island is currently owned by the Commonwealth Department of Finance. The Harbour Trust's comprehensive Plan, made in 2003, sets out a vision for the renewal of Snapper Island, based on the potential transfer of the island to the Harbour Trust. The Harbour Trust sought feedback on a Discussion Paper for Snapper Island between 18 November 2020 and 12 February 2021. The Consultation Outcomes report can be viewed on the Harbour Trust website.

Spectacle Island is managed by the Department of Defence.

- » Could there be an opportunity in the planning to include a Sustainable Living Expo - which would show the impacts of our present lifestyle and also the ways in which we can live more sustainably?

At this early stage, we are consulting on a Draft Concept Vision. In the future, there will be further clarity about what events may be suitable on the island and potential leasing and exhibition opportunities. There will be further opportunities for community input as part of detailed master planning, should there be community support for the vision.

- » Hi all - love the concepts and I am very excited to see it all unfold. In our business we bring many students to island to interact and stay - and I am excited to see the story telling platform unfolding. I read the plans at length and one thing I did not notice is any reference to the seagull issue - are there plans afoot to manage this?

Seagull management is considered at an operation level, however increased activation of the island will reduce seagull activity in areas used by the general public.

- » Wow, that's interesting! You occasionally flood the drydocks as part of maintenance of them? I didn't know they still "worked". How often is that done? (I've never seen them flooded)

The dry docks are kept in a flooded state.

- » Cruise ships have killed the Cinque Terre's small villages - they have been over-run with tourists (preCovid) - what an awful ambition for Cockatoo.

The Draft Concept Vision does not propose constructing infrastructure for cruise ships to dock at Cockatoo Island.

- » Would the proposed hotel accommodation be located in buildings that are already there and repurposed?

The new accommodation proposed may see the adaptive reuse of existing buildings, or new builds within the existing floors space, for example, on land occupied by buildings with no heritage value.

FURTHER FEEDBACK

- » Re the location of the tidal pools - before the island became a convict prison this side of the area was sandstone cliffs - rising up to 65 feet tall.
- » Absolutely +++ on telling the stories of the different layers of history together!
- » I think there should be more emphasis on Sydney's Maritime History as a Working Harbour, especially since so much shipbuilding was done at Cockatoo Island.
- » "Sydney Heritage Fleet" could restore Fitzroy Dock for vessel maintenance, have their fleet of historic vessels on display & workshops setup. They could demonstrate traditional boatbuilding & maintenance. This could be a great tourist drawcard too for Cockatoo Island. It seems this was ignored from previous submissions
- » '+1 for the glamping. I've done that about a dozen times and enjoy it.
- » Please keep the wonderful tunnels open!
I'm not concerned with losing space for 'Australian Gladiator' and the like on the apron.
There was a fantastic activation with a music festival back in Easter 2005 that was just wonderful, with palimpsests of industrial heritage evident at every stage.